

Chapter 11

Standing Rules, Personnel Policies, and Media Crisis Response

A. Standing Rules

The Standing Rules of the Tennessee Annual Conference represent the means by which we organize and oversee our work of making disciples for the transformation of the world. It is the organizational plan of the Tennessee Annual Conference, setting forth the rules by which we govern ourselves, in compliance with ¶604 of the *2016 United Methodist Book of Discipline*. As our *Book of Discipline* says about itself, our Standing Rules reflect the “...most current statement of how United Methodists [in the Tennessee Annual Conference] agree to live together and ‘maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.’”

The Committee on Standing Rules presents these rules for renewal and adoption by each session of the Tennessee Annual Conference.

Section 1 – Authorization for the Committee on Standing Rules

- 1.1 The Committee on Standing Rules has the responsibility to:
 - a) Propose new policies and standing rules;
 - b) Propose needed amendments to existing policies and standing rules;
 - c) Provide guidance to the annual conference at any point where conference action may be at variance with a policy or standing rule.
- 1.2 The Standing Rules of the Annual Conference must be in compliance with the provisions of ¶604 of the current edition of *The United Methodist Book of Discipline*.

Section 2 – Annual Conference Session Procedures

- 2.1 The conference shall follow the latest edition of *Robert’s Rules of Order* except where it is in conflict with the current *Book of Discipline*.
- 2.2 All motions and resolutions shall be supplied to the conference secretary in writing on a form provided for this purpose by the conference secretary.
- 2.3 Any entity planning to present a report at any annual conference session shall submit the report to the Office of Connectional Ministries at least 10 weeks prior to the opening day of annual conference for inclusion in pre-conference materials.
- 2.4 All resolutions not included in the pre-conference materials shall be submitted to the Committee on Resolutions at least 30 days prior to the first day of the annual conference session. The chair of the resolutions committee shall submit to the annual conference, in their original form, all resolutions so submitted. In addition, the committee may present to the annual conference for consideration a revised version of any such resolution.
- 2.5 The roll call of the Tennessee Annual Conference shall be taken from the registration.

- 2.6 The agenda of the conference shall be that as it is corrected and distributed on the first day of annual conference with the understanding that the bishop may adjust the agenda for the good of the order.
- 2.7 All speeches other than reports shall be limited to three minutes.
- 2.8 Voting cards shall be the means of identifying who is eligible to vote on all issues requiring a vote.
- 2.9 The annual conference session shall meet at a location accessible to persons with disabilities.
- 2.10 All annual conference reports to be included in the journal shall be e-mailed to the journal editor 10 weeks prior to the opening day of annual conference. Any corrections and/or additions received after this date shall, at the discretion of the journal editor, be included in the succeeding journal. Handwritten and typewritten reports shall not be accepted for publication in the journal. All reports should be typed, using Microsoft Word according to the specifications on the conference website. Photos must be submitted as separate JPG files and must include permissions from all persons pictured. Photos submitted will be used as space permits in the journal. Use Tennessee Conference Journal Style Sheet posted on the conference website for guidance on capitalization, punctuation, and so forth to ensure that the journal has a consistent look and flow. Files that contain tables should be submitted in Microsoft Excel format. No PDF or directly scanned images will be accepted.
- 2.11 Agenda items and reports not requiring action by the annual conference other than a vote to receive said item for publication in the journal, shall be placed on a consent agenda. In order for any item or report to be eligible for placement on the consent agenda, it must have been available online with the pre-conference materials. Any item may be removed from the consent agenda if ten members of the conference petition for removal.
- 2.12 Equalization and youth participation: Whenever it shall occur that the person serving as the director of Administrative Services, director of Connectional Ministries, or director of Ministerial Concerns is a lay person, then each person so serving shall be an at-large lay member of the annual conference. The conference secretary shall determine annually the number of laypersons needed to equalize lay and clergy members of the annual conference. The at-large members are to be allocated as nearly as possible on an equal basis to the districts. When the number of members to equalize cannot be distributed evenly between the districts, the members shall be allocated to the districts in alphabetical order of districts. The at-large members are to be elected by each district conference.

Each district conference shall elect two youth (ages 12-17) and two young adults (ages 18-30) as at-large members of the annual conference.

Section 3 -- Election of Delegates to General and Jurisdictional Conference

- 3.1 Clergy and lay delegates to General and jurisdictional conferences shall be elected as provided in the Constitution of The United Methodist Church (paragraphs 34-36 of *The Book of Discipline*).
- 3.2 Ballots:
 - a) Ballots will be provided by the office of the conference secretary
 - b) Fifty percent plus one valid ballots cast shall be necessary to elect
 - c) Ballots with more or less than the number to be elected shall be rejected as invalid
- 3.3 Candidacy of persons eligible to serve as delegates, whether clergy or lay to General and/or jurisdictional conference, may be established either by declaration or nomination:
 - a) To declare candidacy for election to serve as a General or jurisdictional conference delegate, the eligible person must submit to the Office of Connectional Ministries, no later than 10 weeks prior to the opening day of annual conference, for inclusion in the pre-conference materials a statement concerning:

1. His/her activities at the local church, district, and annual, jurisdictional, and general conference levels;
 2. An assessment of the principal needs of the general Church and how those needs should be met; and
 3. Any other information felt pertinent to introducing himself/herself to those members of the annual conference who may not be familiar with his/her views on issues confronting the Church.
- b) To nominate a person for candidacy to be elected to serve as a General or jurisdictional conference delegate and have the nomination included in the pre-conference materials, the nominator(s) must:
1. Determine the eligibility of the person to be nominated.
 2. Secure from the person to be nominated and submit to the Office of Connectional Ministries the proposed nominee's written consent to accept the nomination.
 3. Submit to the Office of Connectional Ministries, no later than 10 weeks prior to the opening day of annual conference, for inclusion in the pre-conference materials, a statement concerning:
The activities of the nominee at the local church, district, and annual, jurisdictional, and general conference levels,
An assessment of the opinions of the nominee regarding the principal needs of the church and how those needs should be met, and
Any other information (such as age and ethnicity) felt to be pertinent to introducing the nominee to those members of the annual conference who may not be familiar with that nominee's views on issues confronting the church.
- c) Statements submitted in the establishing of candidacy, whether by declaration or nomination, shall be limited to 200 words, and shall be submitted via e-mail.
- d) Persons do not have to declare candidacy or be nominated for candidacy in order to be eligible for election to serve as a General or jurisdictional conference delegate.
- e) The initial ballot for election to General Conference will have a ballot number assigned only to those who, by declaration or nomination, have expressed their desire to be considered as a candidate. All subsequent ballots will assign numbers to write-in candidates during the election process.
- 3.4 Reserve delegates: After the jurisdictional conference delegates are elected, two lay and two clergy reserve delegates shall be elected. The delegation's budget will include funding for one lay and one clergy reserve delegate to attend General and jurisdictional conferences. In the event of a tie in the election for reserves, the delegation will be providing funding for two lay and two clergy reserves.

Section 4 – Suspension, Adoption, and Amendment of Standing Rules

- 4.1 Any standing rule, with the exception of SR 4.2, SR 4.3, and SR 4.4, may be suspended at any session of the annual conference by a two-thirds majority vote of those present and voting.
- 4.2 Any proposal for the adoption of a standing rule, or for the amendment of an existing standing rule, shall be submitted to the Committee on Standing Rules at least 30 days prior to the first day of the annual conference session. The Committee on Standing Rules will present their recommendations to the annual conference, and their recommendations may be adopted or amended from the floor by a two-thirds majority of those present and voting.
- 4.3 Any additions or amendments to the Standing Rules shall take effect at the conclusion of the annual conference session in which they are adopted.
- 4.4 Any proposal for an addition or change in the parsonage standards shall be presented to the annual conference through or by the cabinet and through the Committee on Policies and Standing Rules.

Section 5 – Procedural Policies

- 5.1 All boards, agencies, and other entities of the annual conference in the performance of their duties shall adhere to the appropriate provisions in the current *Book of Discipline*.
- 5.2 Conference master calendar: There shall be a master calendar of all conference and district dates which will be maintained by the Office of Connectional Ministries staff. All district and conference committees, councils, commissions, boards, task groups, and institutions amenable to the conference shall coordinate all dates with the Connectional Ministries office and establish dates upon the master calendar for all events that call for general participation of the people of our churches.

The master calendar shall be coordinated with the general Church calendar, such that, where possible, conflict with national meetings will not occur.
- 5.3 Any entity that claims a relationship to the Tennessee Annual Conference of The United Methodist Church must be endorsed and/or authorized by and accountable to an officially recognized board, commission, committee, or council of the Tennessee Annual Conference.

Section 6 – Inclusion in the Journal

- 6.1 Parsonage standards shall be printed each year in the journal. The standards shall be reviewed quadrennially by the Committee on Policies and Standing Rules, which shall submit to the annual conference a report to the cabinet detailing any proposed amendments to the parsonage standards.
- 6.2 The annual conference and district organizational structure shall be included each year in the journal.
- 6.3 Personnel policies and standing rules shall be included in the pre-conference materials and in the journal each year.
- 6.4 The Memorial Rolls and Historical Annual Conference Sessions shall be included in their entirety in the conference journal in the quadrennial year in which General Conference occurs. In the intervening three years, a supplement listing the conference clergy who have died and the annual conference sessions held since the last quadrennial year shall be printed in the conference journal.

Section 7 – Organizational Policies

- 7.1 Policies regarding incorporation: Boards, agencies, or constituent bodies may not apply for incorporation apart from the express authority given by the annual conference. Boards, agencies, or constituent bodies may not take title to property except by the express authority given by the annual conference. The title to all properties acquired for the annual conference or its boards, agencies or constituent bodies shall be taken and held in the name of the Tennessee Conference, United Methodist Church, Inc., a Tennessee nonprofit organization. Provided that this requirement shall not pertain to the Board of Trustees of Martin Methodist College, Board of Directors of the United Methodist Foundation for the Memphis and Tennessee Conferences, and the Board of Pensions which may take and hold title to such properties as they are authorized to acquire by the action of the annual conference.

The annual conference shall be incorporated as a Tennessee nonprofit corporation with the name Tennessee Conference, United Methodist Church, Inc. The corporate officers shall be the resident bishop (president), lay leader (vice-president), conference secretary (secretary), and the conference treasurer (treasurer). The conference treasurer shall also serve as registered agent. The conference chancellor may provide legal counsel to the corporation. The conference trustees may approve bylaws and other corporate documents as needed to maintain compliance with Tennessee law, *The Book of Discipline*, and the conference standing rules and policies.

- 7.2 The Tennessee Conference Personnel Committee shall be responsible for personnel procedures and policies that apply to all offices and employees of the Tennessee Annual Conference. Policies and procedures shall not conflict with requirements of *The Book of Discipline of The United Methodist Church*.

Section 8 – Nominations to Boards, Commissions, Committees, and other Entities

- 8.1 The Annual Conference Committee on Nominations shall be composed of the bishop, as chairperson; the district superintendents; the conference lay leader; the conference president of United Methodist Men; the conference president of United Methodist Women; the chairperson of the Conference Council on Youth Ministries; the chairperson of the Conference Council on Young Adult Ministries; the executive director of Connectional Ministries; the director of Administrative Services; the conference secretary; the conference chancellor; two persons recommended from its members by the Commission on Religion and Race, one of whom is recommended to be African-American, one of whom is recommended to be of another ethnic minority; two persons recommended by its members from the Cooperative Ministries; two persons recommended from its members by the Commission on Status and Role of Women; and one pastor and one layperson from each of the districts, recommended by the district conference.
- 8.2 The Committee on Nominations shall develop policies and procedures for applying for and nominating vacancies, including use of the conference website, and shall distribute and post those procedures by September 30 in the year before quadrennial elections. The Committee on Nominations shall publicize by November 30 the list of vacancies for conference entities.
- 8.3 When a minister is appointed district superintendent, he/she shall vacate any office or membership held on any conference board, commission, committee, or agency. The newly formed cabinet shall then appoint district superintendent(s) to each board and agency of the conference except where required by *The Book of Discipline*, and to the Council on Connectional Ministries.
- 8.4 No person shall serve as a member of the same conference board, council, commission or agency, or on a committee, which has as its parent body a conference board, or agency, for more than eight years in a period of 12. Exempted from compliance with this rule are: clergy and lay persons serving as ex-officio members; members of the Board of Directors of Campus Ministries at APSU, MTSU, TSU, Vanderbilt, Fisk, Belmont, and TTU; Board of Trustees of Martin Methodist College; members of the Board of Directors of the United Methodist Foundation for the Memphis and Tennessee Conferences; officers of UMW and UMM; the conference lay leader; and members of the Conference Board of Ordained Ministry.
- 8.5 No person shall serve as a chairperson of any conference entity or as conference secretary or conference lay leader for more than eight years in a period of 12.
- 8.6 No person shall serve as a member of any entity of the annual conference when there is real or potential conflict of interest of an ongoing and thoroughgoing nature. When such conflict arises, that person shall be replaced immediately by the appropriate nominating committee, provided, however, that when a real or potential conflict of interest arises on a single issue, the person affected shall withdraw from the meeting until the discussion of and voting on that issue is complete. Should it arise that there is a difference of opinion as to which of these remedies is appropriate to any given situation, it shall be the duty of the chairperson of the entity, in consultation with the district superintendent assigned to relate to that entity, to determine which remedy is appropriate.
- 8.7 The Committee on Nominations shall nominate persons to entities as authorized by the annual conference. It shall also nominate the officers of the Connectional Ministries Lead Team, as well as the conference lay leader, conference secretary, journal editor, and conference statistician at the session immediately following General Conference (not including special called General Conferences).
- 8.8 Persons elected by the annual conference shall take office upon the adjournment of the annual conference session at which they were elected unless *The Book of Discipline* provides otherwise.
- 8.9 Persons elected by the district conference may take office at the time they are elected.
- 8.10 All quadrennial conference boards and agencies shall meet following the adjournment of annual conference, but prior to August 15, and report officers to the conference secretary.

Section 9 – Boards, Commissions, Committees, and Other Entities

- 9.1 Every board, commission, committee, council, or other entity of the annual conference is recommended to have at least one African-American clergy person and one African-American lay person as elected members and at least one other ethnic minority when these persons are available.

Every board, commission, committee, council, or other entity of the annual conference shall be inclusive in its membership in relation to lay/clergy, gender, and ethnic minorities unless otherwise stipulated in *The Book of Discipline*.

- 9.2 No person shall be eligible to serve as chairperson of more than one conference entity or a member of more than two conference entities simultaneously. This rule does not apply to ex-officio positions; to members of the cabinet; or to lay members of the boards of directors at APSU, MTSU, TSU; Vanderbilt, Fisk, TTU, and Belmont; or to lay members of the Board of Trustees, Martin Methodist College; lay members of the Board of Directors of the United Methodist Foundation for the Memphis and Tennessee Conferences, and officers of UMW or UMM.
- 9.3 The members of any group, whose composition is left to the discretion of the annual conference and is not stipulated by *The Book of Discipline*, shall be elected quadrennially and the composition of such groups shall be governed by ¶610.5 of *The Book of Discipline of the United Methodist Church, 2016*.
- 9.4 Persons who are elected to membership on the entities of the annual conference who are absent without excuse, for 50 percent or more of the meetings of that entity in a given year, shall be replaced on that entity. Replacement shall be nominated by the Conference Committee on Nominations, or other appropriate nominating source, and elected by the annual conference, except as may be otherwise stipulated in *The Book of Discipline*. Replacement members of various boards, councils, and committees of the Connectional Ministries Lead Team shall be affected by the team, according to its procedure.

Section 10 – Disability Concerns

- 10.1 A representative of the Committee on Disability Concerns shall be appointed to all Tennessee Annual Conference committees responsible for planning, designing, constructing, and /or remodeling properties owned by the annual conference.
- 10.2 The representative of disability concerns in each district of the Tennessee Annual Conference shall be a member of the District Committee on Building and Locations.
- 10.3 All offices or spaces rented or leased by districts or agencies of the Tennessee Annual Conference shall, insofar as reasonably possible, conform to the accessibility standards of the Americans with Disabilities Act.

Section 11 – Finance and Trustees

- 11.1 The fiscal year of the annual conference shall be the calendar year.
- 11.2 All financial requests of the annual conference shall be presented to the Council on Finance and Administration for consideration and recommendation, using the format requested by the Council on Finance and Administration.
- 11.3 For conference benevolences as defined in ¶614.3c of the *2016 United Methodist Book of Discipline*, the following process shall be used:
- a) All budget requests must be made through the Connectional Ministries Lead Team who will determine how these requests connect to the missional priorities of the annual conference.

- b) The Connectional Ministries Lead Team will present all budget requests to the Council on Finance and Administration for final review, approval, and presentation to the annual conference.
- 11.4 No conference appropriation shall be made toward the erection of a new church or addition thereto until such church building is properly and adequately insured.
- 11.5 No entity of the annual conference shall borrow from any source a composite amount of money greater than 80 percent of the expected annual revenue for that entity, without the express written authorization from the Conference Council on Finance and Administration.
- 11.6 No financial liability shall be made upon the annual conference without the express authorization of the Council on Finance and Administration and the conference which may be through the budget and expense approval process. The conference treasurer is authorized to sign any contract on behalf of the annual conference not otherwise authorized by the currently effective *Book of Discipline of The United Methodist Church* or the Standing Rules of the conference. The Council on Finance and Administration may designate other persons to sign contracts with financial implications on behalf of the conference for specific purposes or amounts.
- 11.7 Any major financial campaign for capital improvement or debt retirement of conference institutions or properties shall be presented to and received by the prior annual conference.
- 11.8 All annual conference entities receiving financial support from the annual conference (except the episcopal office, the district offices, Martin Methodist College, Campus Ministry, and Miriam's Promise) shall have their treasury functions performed by the Office of Administrative Services.
- 11.9 The moving expenses (actual cost of moving van but not including packing) of incoming district superintendents shall be paid from the District Superintendent's Fund.
- 11.10 Churches shall arrange for the moving of incoming ministers or pay the cost of the moving van (not including packing) incurred within the boundary lines of the annual conference.
- 11.11 Conference-wide fund raising of any kind by a conference entity shall be initiated only after consultation with and approval by the Council on Finance and Administration. When programs or services are involved, consultation with the Conference Council on Finance and Administration shall come after presentation to the Conference Council on Connectional Ministries through the appropriate commission, council, or committee. Final approval for such fund-raising activities shall be given by the annual conference.
- 11.12 The authorization for the establishment of short term committees related to the annual conference may include reimbursement for expenses incurred by committee members, in accordance with Council on Finance and Administration policies and oversight.
- 11.13 The conference director of Connectional Ministries in consultation with the Annual Conference Planning Committee shall submit an annual budget for the expenses of annual conference sessions to the Conference Council on Finance and Administration.
- 11.14 The expenses of at-large members necessary for the equalization of lay and clergy members of the annual conference shall be paid by the annual conference from the annual conference expenses line item not to exceed a per diem for lodging and food established each year by the Conference Council on Finance and Administration. In addition, reimbursement for travel shall be at the conference's current mileage rate.
- 11.15 The conference treasurer is authorized to pay all invoices clearly related to budgeted lines which they determine to be a proper conference expense, subject to available funding. In the case of requests that are not clearly related to a single budgeted line item, invoices under \$10,000 are delegated to the treasurer with the authority to approve the request. Requests between \$10,000 and \$25,000 must also be approved by the

CFA executive committee. Requests above \$25,000 must be approved by a poll of a majority of CFA members. CFA will defer any requests above \$250,000 to the annual conference for its decision.

- 11.16 ~~Whenever church property is transferred to the annual conference through its board of trustees (voluntarily or according to ¶ 2549.3b, *Discipline* (2016)), the annual conference board of trustees is authorized to hold, maintain, insure, or dispose of such property on behalf of the conference, subject to any disciplinary requirements or restrictions. Repayment of debt to the conference or district, including up to five years of unpaid apportionments, shall be a priority claim on the net proceeds of any sale. Move to new section 14~~

Section 12 – Records

- 12.1 Annual conference records are maintained by various persons representing the Conference Board of Ordained Ministry, Board of Pensions, Commission on Archives and History, district boards of ministry, the conference secretary, the Office of Ministerial Concerns, the bishop's office, and the offices of the district superintendents. These records are the property of the annual conference and shall be maintained, disposed of, or archived according to *The Book of Discipline*, G.C.F.A. Guidelines, and/or the guidelines outlined by these policies. The annual conference records are composed of service records, permanent files, ministerial files, confidential files, district files, some of the bishop's office files, and other records as deemed necessary by the annual conference.

Active files shall be maintained by the authorized person or persons representing the group compiling or maintaining the active files for the conference. These files shall be kept with confidentiality with only those persons entitled to have access. When these files are no longer deemed necessary to the conference entity, they will be transferred to the confidential and permanent annual conference files for storing.

The files of the bishop's office and the district offices shall be maintained and kept by those offices.

- 12.2 All other confidential annual conference files shall be kept as follows:
- a) They shall be securely stored on property of the Tennessee Annual Conference.
 - b) The custodians of these files shall be the conference secretary, the director of the Office of Ministerial Concerns, and the director of Administrative Services.
 - c) Permanent and confidential files shall be confidential with limited access only to the custodians, those entitled by *The Book of Discipline*, by action of the annual conference, or by court order.
 - d) The person who is the subject of the file may be permitted to view its contents with the supervision of one of the custodians. If the person objects to something in the file, he/she may place a written statement stating the objections, etc. in the file.
 - e) Confidential files shall be destroyed eight years after the death of the person.
 - f) Permanent files shall be kept forever.
- 12.3 The annual conference records shall contain the following:
- a) Service record files shall contain service records of ministry, records relating to pensions, records relating to health insurance, and any correspondence relating to ministry.
 - b) Permanent files shall contain permanent records of the Board of Ordained Ministry, the Board of Trustees, the director of the Office of Ministerial Concerns and permanent records of the conference secretary.
 - c) Confidential files shall contain psychological trial records and any material relating to the character of a person.

Section 13 – Training

- 13.1 Inclusiveness training is required for all first-time pastors and all persons serving under appointment; they are also required to update their training by taking at least one CEU each quadrennium in the subject area of racial/ethnic inclusiveness. Inclusiveness training is included in the lay servant ministries and certified lay minister programs. The Office of Ministerial Concerns will be the entity that will maintain the record

keeping and verification of those persons who have completed the inclusiveness training. Connectional Ministries staff and the Office of Ministerial Concerns will work in cooperation to offer the inclusiveness training seminars.

- 13.2 All first-time pastors and all persons serving under appointment in the Tennessee Conference shall be required to complete one CEU of the Basic Sexual Ethics Training and one CEU of the Basic Safe Sanctuary Training. All persons serving under appointment in the Tennessee Conference shall be required to take at least one CEU each quadrennium in the subject areas of sexual ethics and safe sanctuary training. This advanced training will be available only to those who have previously completed the basic training. Both sexual ethics and safe sanctuary training shall be included in lay servant and certified lay ministry training programs. Local church ministry staff is encouraged to complete both the sexual ethics and safe sanctuary training. The Office of Ministerial Concerns will be the entity that will maintain the record keeping and verification of those persons under appointment who have completed the sexual ethics and safe sanctuary training. Connectional Ministries staff and the Office of Ministerial Concerns will work in cooperation to offer the sexual ethics and safe sanctuary training seminars.

Section 14 – Conference Policy on the Use or Disposition of a Closed Local Church

Parsonage standards provide uniformity so that ministers and churches may know what to expect of each other and to minimize moving and storage expenses. It is understood that some churches provide a housing allowance in lieu of a parsonage.

- 14.1 Whenever church property is transferred to the annual conference through its board of trustees (voluntarily or according to ¶ 2549.3b, *Discipline* (2016)), the annual conference board of trustees is authorized to hold, maintain, insure, or dispose of such property on behalf of the conference, subject to any disciplinary requirements or restrictions. Repayment of debt to the conference or district, including up to five years of unpaid apportionments, shall be a priority claim on the net proceeds of any sale.
- 14.2 This section 14 applies to all real, personal, tangible, and intangible property of a local church following its closure by the annual conference, unless the conference has given direction for a specific disposition. Section 14 does not apply to items deposited or set aside for safekeeping as provided in ¶2549.4 of *The Book of Discipline 2016*; or property for which the annual conference provides specific dispositional direction.
- 14.3 A committee consisting of (1) a cabinet representative to be designated by the bishop; (2) the chair of New Church Development or his/her designee; (3) the chair of Congregational Transformation or his/her designee; (4) the chair of the Conference Board of Trustees or his/her designee; and (5) the chair of the Council on Finance and Administration or his/her designee serving as ex officio, may provide recommendations to the trustees regarding whether the property should be retained or sold; and how the property, or proceeds therefrom, may be used for the furtherance of new and existing ministries within the conference, either presently or in the future. If the property is retained for use in ministry, the recommendation of such committee shall include a recommendation for how best to fund the cost of maintaining the property.
- 14.4 The committee established in 14.3 may also provide guidance concerning the determination of what constitutes “urban transitional communities” (¶2549.7) based upon the context of ministry within the annual conference.

Section 15 – Parsonage Standards

Parsonage standards provide uniformity so that ministers and churches may know what to expect of each other and to minimize moving and storage expenses. It is understood that some churches provide a housing allowance in lieu of a parsonage.

- 15.1 In order to provide an atmosphere that enables clergy to care for their families, and to provide economy, convenience, and good will for both parsonage families and churches, *we propose the following minimum standards:*
- a) Energy-efficient heating and cooling facilities
 - b) Stove, refrigerator, dishwasher, washer, and dryer
 - c) Furniture for living room, dining room, and one bedroom
 - d) Shades or blinds and curtains or draperies for all windows
 - e) Suitable floor coverings
 - f) Adequate lawn mower or adequate hired care for the parsonage yard, the choice of which shall be provided to be negotiated with the pastor
 - g) Proper insulation, storm windows, and storm doors
 - h) Garage or carport
 - i) Dead bolts for all exterior doors
- 15.2 Recommended standards:
- a) Storage of the items listed above, should the parsonage family wish not to use them, shall be provided by the parsonage family, and that storage of items not listed above shall be provided by the charge
 - b) All parsonage furnishings shall be bought new, with worn out furnishings being replaced in a timely manner
 - c) An adequate amount shall be carried in a parsonage account or in the annual budget for the charge to maintain, repair, or upgrade parsonage and furnishings when necessary
 - d) Any charge buying, building, or renovating a parsonage shall select either a house plan or a house that:
 1. Provides accessibility to persons with handicapping conditions and keeps steps to a minimum in accordance with ¶2544.4b of *The Book of Discipline (2016)*
 2. Offers at least three bedrooms, but preferably four bedrooms
 3. Includes at least one and one-half bathrooms, but with two bathrooms or more being preferable
 4. Includes both a living room and a family room or den
 5. Provides adequate closet or storage space for the parsonage family
 6. Provides a garage or carport
 7. Includes the trust clause required by ¶2503.2 of *The Book of Discipline (2016)*
- 15.3 As required by ¶2533.4 of *The Book of Discipline (2016)*, the parsonage committee, the trustees, or a committee of the chairperson of the Trustees, the chairperson of the Pastor Parish Relations Committee, and the pastor shall schedule an annual review of the parsonage in cooperation with the parsonage family, and report their findings to the administrative board/council, and include their report as part of the Pastor Parish Relations Committee report at charge conference. Said report shall include at least the following:
- a) A declaration that the parsonage meets the standards set forth by the Tennessee Annual Conference or details how and when the charge shall bring its parsonage into alignment with these standards
 - b) The age and condition of appliances
 - c) The age and condition of furniture
 - d) The date when the parsonage was last painted
 - e) The annual budget or the amount in the parsonage account for parsonage maintenance and improvement