

ANNUAL CONFERENCE 101 – “What You Need to Know”

AC or A/C (annual conference) – is not just the equipment that keeps you freezing cold during the morning sessions, but it is the body that meets once a year to represent United Methodists in a geographical area and conduct business related to that annual conference. It is both a geographic area and an annual meeting. You are a member of the North Georgia annual conference. Each local church or charge elects a lay member to equal the number of clergy members appointed to that church/charge (*a pastoral charge consists of one or more churches; a pastoral charge of two or more churches may be designated as a circuit or cooperative parish*). The annual conference, by its own formula, provides for the election of additional lay members to equalize lay and clergy membership of the annual conference. *More on pp. 23-24 of Handbook.*

YA (young adult) – not just something you say when you agree with something that has been said from the stage, but includes those members of the annual conference who are 40 years of age and younger to age 18.

Robert’s Rules of Order (short version) more on p. 25 of the Handbook:

- **Point of Privilege:** Pertains to noise, personal comfort, etc. - may interrupt only if necessary!
- **Parliamentary Inquiry:** Inquire as to the correct motion - to accomplish a desired result, or raise a point of order.
- **Point of Information:** Generally applies to information desired from the speaker: "I should like to ask the (speaker) a question."
- **Orders of the Day (Agenda):** A call to adhere to the agenda (a deviation from the agenda requires Suspending the Rules).
- **Point of Order:** Infraction of the rules, or improper decorum in speaking. Must be raised immediately after the error is made.
- **Main Motion:** Brings new business (the next item on the agenda) before the assembly.
- **Divide the Question:** Divides a motion into two or more separate motions (must be able to stand on their own).
- **Amend:** Inserting or striking out words or paragraphs, or substituting whole paragraphs or resolutions.
- **Withdraw/Modify Motion:** Applies only after question is stated; mover can accept an amendment without obtaining the floor.
- **Extend Debate:** Applies only to the immediately pending question; extends until a certain time or for a certain period of time.
- **Limit Debate:** Closing debate at a certain time, or limiting to a certain period of time.
- **Postpone to a Certain Time:** State the time the motion or agenda item will be resumed.
- **Object to Consideration:** Objection must be stated before discussion or another motion is stated.
- **Lay on the Table:** Temporarily suspends further consideration/action on pending question; may be made after motion to close debate has carried or is pending.
- **Take from the Table:** Resumes consideration of item previously "laid on the table" - state the motion to take from the table.
- **Call the Question:** Closes debate if successful – and calls for a vote.

- **Appeal Decision of the Chair:** Appeal for the assembly to decide - must be made before other business is resumed; NOT debatable if relates to decorum, violation of rules or order of business.

Standing rules – not just what you have to do when standing up, but the specific rules governing the 2009 NGA AC in addition to the rules governing us as United Methodists set up by the Book of Discipline. One of the very first orders of business will be to set the Standing Rules. *See also pp.155-177 in Handbook.*

Amendments – Our General Conference adopts amendments to the Book of Discipline and to the Book of Resolutions. Most amendments are automatically incorporated in the updated books. However, the 2008 General Conference also proposed thirty-two amendments to the Constitution of The United Methodist Church. Our Constitution, which you can find in the beginning of the Book of Discipline, is the foundational document establishing and governing The United Methodist Church. In addition, to a two-thirds vote of the General Conference, these proposed changes to the Constitution require further approval at annual conferences the following year. Every 2009 Annual Conference will receive, review and vote on each of the Constitutional Amendments. Each Annual Conference in the world will receive the same amendments and an aggregate vote of two thirds of all those voting across all the annual conferences will be required before these amendments will be approved. *More on pp 115-143 in Handbook or at www.umc.org*

Apportionments – the amount of money that each church is supposed to pay to do the work of the connectional church. Each church gets a fair “portion” of the cost of the work of the United Methodist Church. The formula is in the conference Handbook.

Central Conferences – those conferences outside of the United States.

CCPI - The Central Conference Pension Initiative (CCPI) is a long-term solution to providing retirement financial security for dedicated clergy and surviving spouses in central conferences (Generally this is Europe, Africa and the Philippines.) who would otherwise have little or nothing. More than \$14.2 million has been contributed from Annual Conference, local churches, and individuals through the end of 2008. All CCPI funds are kept separate from U.S. pension funds. The charitable gifts collected by the CCPI are invested and managed by the General Board of Pension and Health Benefits, and are used to provide financial support for retired clergy and surviving spouses in the central conferences, those conferences outside the United States. For more information, visit <http://www.ccpi-umc.org>.

Christian Conferencing - regular meeting with other Christians for the purpose of conversation, teaching, accountability, mutual encouragement, and support for discipleship. When Christ chooses and calls people (John 15:16) into relationship with him, he calls them into community. To be a Christian and a disciple of Jesus Christ is to be, by definition, part of a household that is defined by love, compassion, and justice. At the Annual Conference session, we occasionally get the opportunity to discuss in small groups the issues upon which we vote and make decisions.

Jurisdictional Conference –composed of a group of annual conferences in a geographical area, whose delegates are elected by each annual conference based on the total number of members of the UM churches in that conference. Half of the delegates are lay and half are clergy. It meets every four years.

General Conference – has full legislative power over all matters distinctively connectional. It is the main body that speaks and acts on behalf of the United Methodist Church worldwide, and meets every four years. Delegates are elected by annual conferences – half clergy and half lay. The last General Conference was held in 2008. Only the General Conference has the authority to make official statements for the church. Its statements are found in *The Book of Discipline* and *The Book of Resolutions*.

Bar – Sitting inside the bar at annual conference is something entirely different than what newcomers would think it is. It is not where you can order drinks, but is the area designated by the conference secretary for voting members, and is voted on at the opening of the annual conference session. Visitors sit in a designated area outside of the bar.

Extended Cabinet – is not another large piece of furniture, but includes the bishop and the 12 district superintendents, plus the conference lay leader, executive assistant to the bishop, director of ministerial services, director of connectional ministries, director of new church development, conference secretary and conference treasurer. For names and faces of those people, go to <http://www.ngumc.org/pages/detail/21>

Consent Agenda – helps expedite business during the ac session by adopting reports to be included in the Conference Journal that do not require action by the ac.

CBOL – Conference Board of Laity - the elected lay leadership of the Annual Conference whose mission it is to do the following:

- foster an awareness of the role of the laity,
- develop the advocacy role for laity,
- increase the participation of laity in the life of the church,
- encourage laypersons in the general ministry of the church
- develop and promote programs to cultivate an adequate understanding of the theological and biblical basis for lay life and work
- develop and promoting stewardship of time, talent, and possessions
- provide for the training of lay members
- provide support and direction for such lay programs as lay speaking
- encourage observance of Laity Sunday, and the work of lay leaders on the local and district levels
- organize a conference committee on lay speaking ministries

The CBOL is elected every 4 years. For more information, see pp.106-111 in the Handbook or visit <http://www.ngumc.org/pages/detail/597>.

CLL – Conference Lay Leader - the representative of the Laity at the level of the Annual Conference. This person presides at the Board of Laity and acts as a resource and representative of all laity in the Annual Conference. Our Conference Lay Leader is Mrs. Jane Finley. There are four associate lay leaders: Mathew Pinson, Dianne Traynham, Dianne Spencer, and Ron Davis.

Lay orientation – annual conference is made up of lay and clergy members. They split up during the first session of AC to take care of conference business related to either group. The conference Lay Leader and associates review some of the key business, leaders of various committees are introduced, and other information regarding AC is reviewed.

Clergy executive session – the clergy session is not a time where clergy share secret handshakes or show off our latest ink. Instead, clergy vote on bringing in new ministers to the

conference, reviewing the work over the past year of Deacons and Elders Orders, and certify the status of all.

Ordination/Commissioning/Provisional/Full Connection – Clergy in the UMC are ordained either deacon or elder in full connection. Those who are commissioned have passed the BOM and have been commissioned as provisional members (previously called probationary members) usually for a three year period until they are ordained.

Extension Ministries – Ministries of the UMC that are beyond the confines of local church settings such as Action Ministries, Wesley Woods, Candler School of Theology, etc. Clergy can be appointed to serve local churches, conference staff, or extension ministries/conference related agencies.

Color coded nametags – *Laity*: blue for lay delegates, red for alternate delegates and yellow tags for deaconesses and diaconal ministers. Laity can vote in all matters if they have a blue or yellow tag. Red tags (alternates) can only vote if your primary delegate authorizes you to vote in their absence, and no absentee ballots may be used.

Clergy: white tags are deacons or elders ordained in full connection; green tags are provisional and associate members; brown tags are full and part time local pastors; orange are student local pastors; purple are supply pastors and honorably located pastors (purple is also a general category for other laity). Only clergy with white tags can voted on constitutional amendments. The other color tags allow voting on all other business except General/Jurisdictional conference delegates. *See p. 10 in handbook.*

Some of the abbreviations you may hear:

NGUMC – North Georgia Annual Conference of the United Methodist Church

CF & A – Conference Finance and Administration

BOM – Board of Ordained Ministry

OMS - Office of Ministerial Services

UMW - United Methodist Women

UMM – United Methodist Men

GBOD – General Board of Discipleship

GBHEM – General Board of Higher Education and Ministry

GBCS – General Board of Church and Society

GBGM – General Board of Global Missions

GCORR – General Commission on Religion and Race

GBOPHB – General Board of Pension and Health Benefits

Connectional – all United Methodists are connected so that we can do more in ministry and mission because we do it together. The local United Methodist congregation is not independent. It is connected to the district, the annual conference, a jurisdictional conference, General Conference and worldwide to the central conferences.

Connectional Table (CT) – (not another piece of furniture!) At the 2008 AC, the conference decided to restructure and to include as a part of the new structure of the conference a body called the Conference Connectional Table. It's responsibility is to focus and guide the mission and ministry of The United Methodist Church within the boundaries of the North Georgia Annual Conference. It is to give leadership and guidance in setting the vision of the annual conference and in conducting an on-going process of refining and revising that vision. The Director of Connectional Ministries, in consultation with the resident Bishop, shall chair the Connectional Table, which shall be composed of the following persons:

Resident Bishop, Director of Connectional Ministries, District Superintendents, Executive Assistant to the Bishop, Director of Ministerial Services, Director of New Church Development, Conference Treasurer, Secretary of the annual conference, Conference Chancellor, Conference Lay Leader, Associate Conference Lay Leaders, and the heads of every major committee and team of the annual conference, including the Conference Young Adult Chairperson.

There shall be an executive committee of the connectional table composed of: Bishop, Director of Connectional Ministries, Conference Lay Leader, Dean of the Cabinet, Chairperson of the Board of Connectional Ministries, Chairperson of the Council on Finance and Administration.

The Connectional Table is to meet regularly twice each year and additional times as considered necessary by the Bishop and the Director of Connectional Ministries, and it reports each year to the annual conference regarding the conference's stewardship of its vision and its commitment to the mission and ministry of The United Methodist Church.

(From the 2008 Conference Journal, Standing Rule 30)

Connectional Ministries – this office (led by Director, Mike Selleck), and along with the Connectional Ministries Board, coordinates most of the ministries of the conference and is responsible for resourcing local churches to be more effective in ministry. The Office of Connectional Ministries exists "to serve as steward of the vision of the annual conference...to serve as leader of the continuous process of transformation and renewal...to ensure alignment of the total resources of the conference to its vision...to ensure the connections among the local, district, annual conference, and general church ministries...to coordinate the recruitment and training of conference program leaders...to provide oversight and leadership in the conference's program and ministry..." (2008 Annual Conference Journal, Standing Rule #31)

Teams – This is how the work of the church on the conference level is done! Much of the work of Connectional Ministries is divided up into teams: Advocacy, Nurture, Outreach, Parish Life, and Witness. Each team is made up of several committees.

- Advocacy includes: Christian Unity and Interreligious Concerns; Church and Society; Disability Concerns; Ethnic Local Church Concern (ELCC); Native American Concerns; Religion and Race (CORR); the Committee on the Status and Role of Women (COSROW); and Persons Living in Poverty.
- Nurture includes: Christian Education; Older Adults, Children, Youth and Young Adult Ministries; Camping and Retreat Ministries; and Adult and Family Ministries.
- Outreach includes: Health and Welfare; Resettlement (Immigration, Refugee, Homeless and Disaster Displacement); Missions/Global Ministries; United Methodist Volunteers in Mission (UMVIM); and Disaster Response.
- Parish Life includes: Existing Church Development and Grants; Natural Church Development (NCD); Small Membership Churches; and Church Staff Development (CSD).
- Witness includes: Vocation/Career Life Planning; Evangelism; Archives and History; Stewardship; and Worship.

More information on Connectional Ministries, the Teams, and the leadership of these teams can be found on pages 84-92 in your Annual Conference Handbook, in the Nominations report, or at www.ngumc.org/pages/detail/600

UM Publications

Occasionally, you might here people reference publications. Here are just a few:

The Advocate: For many years, the United Methodists of Georgia benefited from having a newspaper common to both Annual Conference. It was known as the Wesleyan Christian Advocate. Beginning in 2009, North Georgia Conference will benefit from having its own publications simply called *The Advocate*. It will be produced in conjunction with *The Reporter*.

The Reporter: This is an excellent newspaper that converse United Methodist-related news stories. Not part of any denominational body, the Reporter is an independent voice whose board is composed of faithful United Methodists.

The Interpreter: A magazine that every church leader, lay or clergy, are given a subscription to. It is full of great ministry ideas.

The Book of Discipline: Sounding stricter than you think. This book contains everything a United Methodist needs to know to conduct our business. The book contains the basis of our theological and social stances. It also contains our rules for how to “do church” at every level of the church, from the local church, to annual conference, to global church. It also delineates our process for seeking ordination. This book is edited every four years by the global meeting of United Methodists, General Conference.

The Book of Resolutions: With a self explanatory title, this book contains resolutions adopted by the United Methodist Church at General Conference. Remaining in effect for eight years, they are helpful at interpreting various social stances our church takes.

UM Publishing House is the publishing body of the United Methodist Church. More popularly known as “Cokesbury Bookstore”, they provide our denomination with enriching and creative resources for doing ministry. In addition to publishing curriculum for Bible Studies, small groups, and Sunday School, they also are responsible for publishing our *Book of Discipline*, *Book of Resolutions*, *The United Methodist Hymnal*, *The Faith We Sing*, *The Book of Worship*, and other official resources of the United Methodist Church, such as the helpful guideline pamphlets for committee members of United Methodist congregations. They also publish text books for religious studies. An interesting point, by church law, any profits from the Publishing House must be designated for pensions for “retired or disabled preachers, their spouses, widows, or widowers, and children or other beneficiaries of the ministerial pension systems.” By practice, North Georgia’s share of profits has been given to the Central Conference Pension Initiative.

Web stuff/FB group/Twitter (account and hash group) - The NGUMC and Young Adult Ministries of the NGUMC can be found online in several places:

NGUMC Young Adults: www.umcyoungadults.org

NGUMC Young Adults Facebook Group:

<http://www.facebook.com/group.php?gid=112918843205&ref=ts#/group.php?gid=39532507232&ref=ts> (or Search for “NGUMC Young Adults)

Follow the NGUMC Young Adults of Twitter: www.twitter.com/umcya

NGUMC – www.ngumc.org

NGUMC Facebook Group (you must be logged into Facebook to access this page):

<http://www.facebook.com/inbox/?ref=mb#/group.php?gid=112918843205&ref=ts> (or Search for “North Georgia Conference of the United Methodist Church)

Who's that sitting up on stage? The person sitting on the right of center "running" the meeting is Mike Watson, bishop of North Georgia. Seated next to him are the Conference Secretary (DonnAnn Weber) and the conference chancellor, a.k.a. attorney (Tom Cook). Just behind Bishop Watson is the bishop's executive assistant (Jamie Jenkins) and director of ministerial services (John Simmons) Also up there is the director of connectional ministries (Mike Selleck). The woman with the head piece/ear phones is Etta Mae Youmans, who is making sure everything is going as it should on stage and coordinating with Mary Lou Gilbert, the production manager. They are all there to make sure our work is done properly and smoothly. Occasionally, there will also be a visiting bishop or a retired bishop joining those three at the head table. On the left side of the stage and at the tables on the floor are the associate conference secretaries. They are taking notes about the proceedings, tracking attendance, and are available to assist in conference running smoothly, as well. Usually there are a number of people on the risers at the back of the stage. These are people who are presenting reports during the current session.

What is the Oak Room and how do I get there?

The Oak Room is a place where young adults can gather. We'll have wi-fi available and a comfortable place to sit, catch up and converse with other young adults. You will find the Oak Room on the bottom floor of the Foundry Building (the smaller facility behind the classic center). The Oak Room is around the corner from the Chic-fil-a kiosk, which is a convenient source of caffeine!

The Which Wich restaurant, located across from the UGA Arch on E. Broad Street, just down from the Classic Center, is offering to give to the 'NGUMC Disaster Response' ministry a part of the receipts from Annual Conference delegates who eat there during annual conference . Visit: <http://www.ngumc.org/pages/detail/660> for details about Disaster Response.

Just let the cashiers know you are with NGUMC Annual Conference and mention Disaster Response Ministry, they will tally up the purchases.

Please encourage delegates to pay cash rather than credit card, this will eliminate the 4-5% credit card processing fees. All Credit card customers are welcome as well. WW will have to subtract the 4-5% fees and then donate the 10% after.

This handout has been prepared by your Conference Young Adult Task Force:

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