

***From our North Georgia Conference Standing Rules: “All committees, boards, teams, councils, commissions and agencies of the annual conference shall be composed of equal numbers of clergy and lay unless The Book of Discipline provides otherwise.”***

**North Georgia Conference Committee, Boards, Commissions, etc.**

### **Committee on Standing Rules**

It's common for organizations to have a set of “standing rules” that outline definitions, procedures and various details related to how business and other work should be conducted and accomplished.

Per our standing rules, our NGC Committee on Standing Rules is charged with the task of *“addressing the submission of new rules and maintaining the standing rules of the annual conference in the following ways: to receive requests for amendments, assure rules maintain internal consistency, make editorial changes as needed, present changes to the conference and review revised standing rules for publication in the conference journal.”* Some of this work, led by the committee's current chair, Byron Thomas, is done via email, prior to Annual Conference. In addition to this annual responsibility, the committee is also charged with, *“the quadrennial task of examining the rules of the annual conference for consistency with the new Book of Discipline and to recommend any editorial changes to bring about that consistency.”*

Also per our standing rules, this committee has 10 members.

### **Committee on Registration and Assistance**

The amount of work that goes into planning and conducting our NGC Annual Conference is almost mind boggling. One of the groups key to ensuring our Annual Conferences are run smoothly and in a way that is hospital to all delegates and guests is the Committee on Registration and Assistance.

Per our standing rules, the responsibilities of this committee are, *“to conduct registration, along with the host committee; certify delegates; and to issue badges accordingly. Using guidelines to verify eligibility, the committee helps retired pastors receive financial assistance, and during the week of annual conference, the committee maintains a table to assist visitors with name tags and other needs.”* Members of the Committee on Registration and Assistance also assist with the recruitment and coordination of the many volunteers who help make Annual Conference a time of both accomplishing important business and enjoying the richness of fellowship with other NGC friend and colleagues.

Also per our standing rules, this committee has 10 members.

### **Committee on Daily Proceedings**

Have you ever had the experience of talking with a colleague following an important meeting, a meeting during which valuable updates were reported, and important decisions were considered and made, only to realize you each had different perceptions about exactly what was said during the meeting, what decisions were made, and just as importantly, who was responsible for which “next steps?” I’m guessing we’ve all had that experience at one time or another. Effective organizations have structures and processes in place to mitigate the possibility of this happening. Our NGC Committee on Daily Proceedings is a key component of our structure and processes for ensuring the clarity, transparency and documentation of Annual Conference activities, business and decisions made.

Per our standing rules, this committee *“is responsible for certifying the written record of the annual conference and reporting to the annual conference on the committee’s review of the material. The committee on daily proceedings works with the editor of the conference journal/ conference secretary as needed to ensure compliance with Disciplinary standards in ¶ 606.3 and for clarification of the written record of the annual conference session.”*

Also per our standing rules, this committee has 10 members.

### **Committee on Resolutions**

The richness of our NGC is our diversity: diversity of culture and ethnicity; diversity of experiences; diversity of expertise, education and training; diversity of theological and ecclesiological experiences; diversity of perspectives. The strength of our NGC is our connectional structure which not only supports, but encourages that diversity to be brought into expression. One of the ways our diversity is invited into expression is through the process of submitting and presenting Resolutions to our Annual Conference. Resolutions, defined by our Book of Discipline as the “official expressions of the United Methodist Church,” that are affirmed by the Annual Conference are then forwarded to our General Conference as petitions for consideration and vote.

Per our standing rules, the Committee on Resolutions is the group responsible for processing *“all resolutions presented to the annual conference that are not submitted to the programmatic committees through dialogue with the submitter and all agencies of the annual conference affected by the resolution. This committee makes sure that, with occasional exceptions, resolutions submitted by the deadline of February 1 of the Annual Conference year are included in the handbook. The resolutions committee is responsible for reviewing each resolution to determine if it can properly come before the annual conference, making revisions as needed in consultation with the submitter of the resolution, ensuring consistency with The Book of Discipline and North Georgia Standing Rules/Guidelines, submitting to the conference secretary by the deadline for the conference handbook, and presenting resolutions to the conference.”*

Also per our standing rules, this committee has 10 members.

## **Commission on Equitable Compensation**

Many of you have worked in organizations where every few years the Human Resources department conducts a benchmarking survey to ensure the organization is maintaining fair and competitive structures and policies related to job classes and salary ranges and compensation for its employees. Our NGC Commission on Equitable Compensation serves a similar function.

Our Book of Discipline describes its role and function: *“It is the purpose of the commission on equitable compensation to support full-time clergy serving as pastors in the charges of the annual conference by: (a) recommending conference standards for pastoral support; (b) administering funds to be used in base compensation supplementation; and (c) providing counsel and advisory material on pastoral support to district superintendents and committees on pastor-parish relations; and (d) submitting an arrearage policy to be adopted by the annual conference.”*

Per our Book of Discipline, membership *“shall be composed of an equal number of lay and clergy persons, including at least one layperson and one clergy person from churches of fewer than two hundred members, who are nominated by the conference nominating committee and elected by and amenable to the annual conference. It is recommended that in selecting of commission members, consideration shall be given to inclusiveness. In addition, one district superintendent named by the cabinet shall be a member.”*

Per our standing rules, this committee will have 20 members *“with one representative from each district. Members shall be nominated by the annual conference committee on nominations.”*

## **Board of Pensions and Health Benefits**

As its name implies, the Board of Pensions and Health Benefits is the Conference agency tasked with administering the Conference-sponsored benefits plans, including recommending funding for those plans. This board ensures the structures, processes and funds are available, per our Book of Discipline, to support and attend to, *“the interests and work of providing for and contributing to the support, relief, assistance, and pensioning of clergy and their families, other church workers, and lay employees of the institutions, organizations, and agencies within that annual conference of The United Methodist Church, except as otherwise provided for by the general board.”*

Our Book of Discipline outlines the following regarding membership on this board: *“It is recommended that the board be composed of not less than twelve members not indebted to pension and benefit funds, plans, and programs; one-third laywomen, one-third laymen, and one-third clergy; and in accordance with ¶ 605.3 elected for a term of eight years and arranged in classes as determined by the annual conference; and in addition thereto, any clergy member of the conference or lay member of a church within the conference who is a member of the General Board of Pension and Health Benefits. Active and retired participants in pension and benefit funds, plans, and programs,*

*whether or not currently receiving benefits, and not indebted as provided above, are eligible to serve on the board. All lay members shall be professing members of local churches. A vacancy in the membership of the board may be filled by the board for the remainder of the conference year in which the vacancy occurs, subject to the same qualifications before provided; and at its next session the conference shall fill the vacancy for the remainder of the unexpired term.”*

Per our standing rules, this board will have 24 members *“arranged in classes and serving a term of eight (8) years to include representatives of both lay and clergy, nominated by the annual conference committee on nominations.”*

### **Board of Trustees of the Annual Conference**

Like many organizations, the NGC holds and is responsible to steward a variety of property assets aimed at supporting its mission, which in our case is to make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world. Our Board of Trustees is charged with the responsibility, and is vested with the authority, to steward property assets held in trust by our Annual Conference, on behalf of our Annual Conference. In addition to receiving, collecting and holding in trust such assets, another critically important dimension of this Board’s responsibility, as outlined in our Book of Discipline, permits our Board of Trustees to *“intervene and take all necessary legal steps to safeguard and protect the interests and rights of the annual conference anywhere and in all matters relating to property and rights to property whether arising by gift, devise, or otherwise, or where held in trust or established for the benefit of the annual conference or its membership.”* Our book of Discipline also provides guidance to our Board of Trustees related to the investment of these assets: *“The conference board of trustees is encouraged to invest in institutions, companies, corporations, or funds that make a positive contribution toward the realization of the goals of the Social Principles of our Church. The board of trustees shall act as a socially responsible investor and report annually to the annual conference regarding its carrying out of this responsibility. Among the tools the board may use are shareholder advocacy, selective divestment, advocacy of corporate disinvestment from certain countries or fields of business, and affirmative investments (as in affordable housing, care of the environment, minority business and banks, and so forth), as well as other appropriate strategies.”* Our Book of Discipline further states, *“Funds committed to this board may be invested by it only in collateral that is amply secured and after such investments have been approved by the said board or its agency or committee charged with such investment, unless otherwise directed by the annual conference”* and instructs the Board of Trustees to, *“make to each session of the annual conference a full, true, and faithful report of its doings, of all funds, monies, securities, and property held in trust by it, and of its receipts and disbursements during the conference year. The beneficiary of a fund held in trust by the board shall also be entitled to a report at least annually on the condition of such fund and on the transactions affecting it.”*

Our Book of Discipline outlines the following regarding membership on this board:  
*“the board shall consist of twelve persons, and it is recommended that one-third be*

*clergy, one third laywomen, and one-third laymen, in accordance with the provisions of ¶ 610.5.4 Said persons must be of legal age as determined by law, and lay members shall be members in good standing of local churches within the bounds of the conference. Such persons shall be the directors of the corporation. They shall be elected by the conference for staggered terms of four years, except for the first board, one-fourth of whom shall be elected for a term of one year, one-fourth for a term of two years, one-fourth for a term of three years, and one-fourth for a term of four years, and shall serve until their successors have been elected; provided, however, that existing incorporated trustees of any annual conference may continue unaffected while the charter or articles of incorporation are amended to bring them into conformity with this paragraph.”*

Per our standing rules, this board will be “*composed of twelve (12) persons, nominated by the annual conference committee on nominations, serving in four (4) year terms, except for the first board. It is recommended that it be composed of one-third (1/3) clergy, one-third (1/3) lay women, and one-third (1/3) lay men.*”

### **Council on Finance and Administration**

Many of us who work in, or have worked in more secular settings have probably heard CEOs or CFOs say something like, “no money, no mission.” The spirit of that axiom is, or course, no less true in church settings than it is in secular ones. Thank goodness for those of you, laity and clergy, who have expertise and experience in the various aspects of financial and budgetary management and leadership. Our NGC Council on Finance and Administration, roughly analogous to a local church Finance Committee, is charged with some very straightforward, and yet incredibly complex and nuanced responsibilities. Similar to local church Finance Committees, responsibilities of the Council include oversight of the financial staff, responsibility for auditing the financial statements, ensuring adherence to the budget based on revenue collections, and providing assistance in raising the funds to support the budget.

Our Book of Discipline states it succinctly: “*The purpose of the council shall be to develop, maintain, and administer a comprehensive and coordinated plan of fiscal and administrative policies, procedures, and management services for the annual conference.*” Among the other (but by no means all), specific responsibilities of the our Council on Finance and Administration outlined in our Book of Discipline are: “*To receive, consider, report, and make recommendations to the annual conference regarding the following prior to final decision by the annual conference: (a) any proposal to raise capital funds for any purpose; (b) funding considerations related to any proposal that may come before the conference; (c) any requests to conduct a special conference-wide financial appeal, whether by special collections, campaigns, or otherwise in the local churches of the conference...To recommend to the annual conference for its action and decision the methods or formulas by which apportionments to churches, charges, or districts for duly authorized General, jurisdictional, conference, and district funds shall be determined...To recommend to the annual conference procedures for funding local churches,*

*including the theology of financial giving...to advise local churches about making their church buildings, facilities, and programs accessible...To recommend to the annual conference for its action procedures for dealing responsibly with situations in which budgeted funds, as approved by the annual conference, are inadequate to meet emerging missional needs or unforeseen circumstances...To have authority and supervision over the conference treasurer/director of administrative services subject to ¶ 619; to establish policies governing the treasurer/director's work...To establish uniform and equitable policies and practices in the employment and compensation of personnel, in consultation and cooperation with other conference agencies that employ staff, unless the annual conference has designated another agency to carry this responsibility." Our Book of Discipline also stipulates "The council shall be amenable and report directly to the annual conference."*

Our Book of Discipline outlines the following regarding membership on this board:

*" a) Each annual conference shall elect, at its session next succeeding the General Conference or jurisdictional conference, a conference council on finance and administration or other structure to provide for the functions of this ministry. It is recommended that it be composed of not less than five nor more than twenty-one members; it is recommended that there be at least one layperson more than clergy included on the voting membership of the council. Persons shall be nominated for membership in a manner determined by the conference in accordance with ¶ 610.5. It is recommended that churches of less than two hundred members be represented on the conference council on finance and administration. The term of office shall begin with the adjournment of the annual conference session at which they are elected and shall be for a period of four years and until their successors are elected. b) No member or employee of any conference agency and no employee, trustee, or director of any agency or institution participating in the funds of any conference budget shall be eligible for voting membership on the council. Any vacancy shall be filled by action of the council until the next conference session, at which time the annual conference shall fill the vacancy. c) The following shall be ex officio members of the council in addition to the number set by the annual conference under ¶ 612.2a : (1) the conference treasurer/director of administrative services, without vote; (2) any members of the General Council on Finance and Administration who reside within the bounds of the conference, with vote unless voting membership is in conflict with another provision of the Book of Discipline , in which case their membership shall be without vote; in either case, they shall not be eligible to serve on an agency receiving funding; (3) the presiding bishop, without vote; (4) a district superintendent chosen by the cabinet, without vote; and (5) the director of connectional ministries or equivalent, or another representative of the conference council on ministries, without vote. d) The executive director of the conference or area United Methodist foundation may be included in the membership, without vote."*

Per our standing rules, this council will be "composed of five to twenty-one (5-21) persons, with one (1) lay person more than clergy included on the council. The council shall designate an audit committee comprised of one lay CFA member, one clergy CFA member and a CPA who is not a member of CFA. The council shall designate a person-

*nel committee, whose responsibilities will include those defined in ¶ 613.13. The personnel committee shall be comprised of two (2) clergy CFA members, one lay CFA member, two lay human resources professionals who are not members of CFA, and the conference lay leader. Members with voice and no vote are the conference treasurer and the cabinet representative. Members shall be nominated by the annual conference committee on nominations.”*

### **Georgia UM Pastors’ School Board of Managers**

All United Methodist clergy are expected to continue their process of professional development and learning throughout their ministry. In fact, the Discipline requires that an assessment of professional development and learning be a component of annual clergy evaluations. Through the planning and work of the Georgia UM Pastors’ School Board of Managers, pastors from the North Georgia Conference and South Georgia Conference are offered the opportunity to join together for a time of professional development and continuing education each year at Pastors’ School.

Our standing rules outline the role and membership of this board: *“There shall be a Georgia United Methodist Pastors’ School board of managers, composed of persons by virtue of office and at-large members named by the annual conference committee on nominations. The purpose of the Georgia United Methodist Pastors’ School shall be to provide an annual school for continuing education for United Methodist clergy of the North and South Georgia annual conferences, while modeling and promoting a spirit of cooperation and goodwill between the two annual conferences and members thereof. The Georgia Pastors’ School shall be governed by a board of managers composed of 30 clergy from both annual conferences. The members shall be named to the board of managers according to nominating guidelines established by each annual conference. The officers are nominated and elected from the board of managers. The chairperson and dean of the pastors’ school shall rotate between the two annual conferences from quadrennial to quadrennial.”*

### **North Georgia United Methodist Housing and Homeless Council**

This past year, especially during and as a result of the pandemic, we have all become more acutely aware of the exponentially growing crisis so many members of the communities we serve are facing as a result of poverty and homelessness. As their website ([NGHHC.org](http://NGHHC.org)) outlines, our North Georgia United Methodist Housing and Homeless Council “is an agency of the North Georgia Conference and was created to help churches and other non-profit organizations minister to people experiencing poverty and homelessness...While the Housing and Homeless Council does not provide direct services,” they provide grants “to organizations across north Georgia...Funding for the grants comes from the Homeless Offering, usually received in United Methodist Churches the fourth Sunday in February as designated by the North Georgia Conference. Congregations are welcome to receive the offering on any Sunday that works for their particular calendar. Any other donations given to the Housing and Homeless Council, including proceeds from the pin sales, also go to support the grant funding.”

Per our standing rules: *“There shall be a North Georgia United Methodist housing and homeless council which shall be composed of no more than 36 persons nominated by the conference committee on nominations and elected by the annual conference. Each district shall be represented by no fewer than two members, one of whom shall be a clergy member in that district and one of whom shall be a lay person who shall be a member of one of the churches in the district that they represent. In addition, the following other persons shall be members: a district superintendent designated by the cabinet; a member of the congregational excellence staff designated by the director of connectional ministries or designated person; the director of the council, who shall be a non-voting member; and representatives of Persons Living in Poverty and Refugee Resettlement.”*

### **Board of Discipleship and Advocacy**

Per our standing rules:

H. 1. There shall be a board of discipleship and advocacy responsible for the ministry programming of the annual conference. The board of discipleship and advocacy shall have authority to form committees as the *Discipline* may require or for carrying out its responsibilities. The board of discipleship and advocacy may enlist additional persons to assist in its work and may also form time-limited task forces to address particular issues or emphases. The board of discipleship and advocacy shall be accountable to the director of connectional ministries or designated person for oversight. Budget for the board of discipleship and advocacy shall be included in the budget for congregational excellence. The board of discipleship and advocacy shall have the responsibility of strengthening the local church through discipleship and strengthening the annual conference through the prophetic voice of advocacy that calls us all to be better; to lead and assist the congregations and districts of the conference in their efforts to communicate and celebrate the redeeming and reconciling love of God as revealed in Jesus Christ to persons of every age, ethnic background, and social condition; to invite persons to commit their lives to Christ and to Christ’s church and to enable persons to live as Christian disciples in the world.

H. 2. The board of discipleship and advocacy shall include a chairperson, vice chairperson, and secretary, nominated by the conference committee on nominations and elected by the annual conference. Ex-officio members shall include the conference lay leader or designated person, the director of connectional ministries or designated person, congregational excellence staff, a cabinet representative for discipleship, a cabinet representative for advocacy, and a youth named by the conference youth organization.

H. 3. The work of the board of discipleship and advocacy shall be to promote and facilitate a holistic approach to the development of Christian disciples. The work of the board shall be inclusive of ministries of age level, life-span, and family ministries (630.1b children, 649.1 youth, 650.1 young adults, 651.1 older adults, and Safe Sanctuaries), Christian unity and interreligious relationships (642.1), church and society (629), camping and retreat ministries (630.1b), creation care, disability concerns (653), disaster response (§ 633.4.b.22), education (630.2), ethnic local church concerns (632.1), evangelism (630.3), global ministries (633, 633.3), health and welfare ministries (§ 633.4.b.27), higher education and campus ministries (634.1), native American concerns (654), peace with justice (629.2), religion and race (643.1), refugee resettlement (§ 633.4.b.20), spiritual formation (630.1b), status and role of women (644), stewardship (630.5), worship (630.4), and other areas as the board of discipleship and advocacy or the annual conference may determine.

## **Board of Congregational Development**

Per our standing rules:

J. 1. There shall be an annual conference board of congregational development. The annual conference board of congregational development shall be charged with the responsibility of developing, implementing and continually updating a comprehensive plan for planting new churches and working with existing churches to create other new places for new people within the bounds of the North Georgia annual conference. The responsibilities shall specifically include establishing, nurturing, supporting and guiding new faith communities from conception through birth and until the district superintendent, the new church and the office of congregational excellence agree that the support is no longer necessary.

J. 2. The board of congregational development shall work with the bishop, cabinet and district strategic growth teams to determine locations for new places of worship. It shall also have responsibility for the training, assessing and recommending persons to the bishop and cabinet for appointment as necessary.

J. 3. The board of congregational development shall encourage local churches to partner with the annual conference board of congregational development to birth new places of worship.

J. 4. The board of congregational development shall serve as liaison with jurisdictional and general conference board and agencies related to the work of congregational development.

J. 5. The board of congregational development shall work with the North Georgia Conference board of trustees for the purpose of managing, buying, selling, and holding developmental properties owned by the annual conference.

J. 6. The board shall develop an annual budget for presentation to the annual conference Council on Finance and Administration to support the work and ministry of the board of congregational development.

J. 7. The director of congregational excellence and the chair of the board of congregational development shall be members of the Conference Common Table. The director of congregational excellence shall serve as an officer of the annual conference and shall be a member of the bishop's extended cabinet.

J. 8. The annual conference board of congregational development shall be composed of four (4) at large lay persons *recommended by the director of congregational excellence* and approved by the nominations committee; four (4) clergy *recommended by the director of congregational excellence* and approved by the nominations committee; chairperson of the committee on black congregational development, chairperson of the committee on Latino congregational development, chairperson of the committee on Korean/Asian congregational development, and an advocate for multi-cultural/multi-ethnic congregational development; cabinet representatives to the three committees of the board of congregational development as appointed by the bishop; one cabinet representative to the board of congregational development; a council on finance and administration representative; director of connectional ministries or designated person; conference treasurer; director of congregational excellence; and associate directors of congregational excellence or staff liaison for that specific area. This totals 23 persons.

J. 9. The chair, vice-chair and secretary of the board of congregational development shall be recommended to the bishop and cabinet *by the director of congregational excellence* and submitted to the annual conference committee on nominations for inclusion in their report to the annual conference for election.

J. 10. The board of congregational development shall be organized with a chair, a vice-chair and secretary. The term of office shall be one quadrennium, but each may be elected for one additional term, provided no one shall hold the same office for more than 8 years. The board of congregational excellence shall meet at least quarterly and may meet more often at the request of the director of congregational excellence or the chair of the board.

J. 11. There shall be a committee on black congregational development composed of a chairperson (recommended by *the director of congregational excellence* in consultation with the cabinet representative and approved by the annual conference or conference nominations team ad interim per Standing Rule C.1), 7 or more lay and clergy members with specific attention to age, gender and district balance as pursuant to ¶ 610.5 and ¶ 605.3 and including at least one small membership black congregation representative (recommended by *the director of congregational excellence* in consultation with the chairperson of the committee and the cabinet representative and approved by the annual conference or conference nominations team ad interim per Standing Rule C.1). The ex-officio membership of the committee shall include: a cabinet representative, the congregational excellence staff person for black congregational and leadership development, the conference commission on religion and race representative, and the conference ethnic local church concerns representative. This committee shall make recommendations to the executive committee with regard to persons and places for the planting of new black congregations and strengthening existing black congregations. The committee shall collaborate with each of the district strategic growth teams advocating on behalf of black church congregational development needs. It shall also be responsible for any training and resourcing needs that are important from a cultural perspective in planting new and strengthening existing black churches. The committee shall also be responsible for partnering with congregational excellence, the board of ordained ministry and the center for clergy excellence to ensure the implementation of a comprehensive black church leadership development plan. It shall request funds necessary for this training to be included in the board of congregational development budget. This committee shall meet at least quarterly and may meet more often at the request of the director of the board of congregational excellence, the committee staff person, or the chairperson.

J. 12. There shall be a committee on Latino congregational development composed of a chairperson (recommended by *the director of congregational excellence* in consultation with the cabinet representative and approved by the annual conference or conference nominations team ad interim per Standing Rule C.1); 3 or more lay and clergy members with specific attention to age, gender and district balance as pursuant to ¶610.5 and ¶605.3 (selected by the director in consultation with the chairperson of the committee and the cabinet representative and approved by the annual conference or conference nominations team ad interim per Standing Rule C.1); a cabinet representative; and the staff person for Latino congregational development. This committee shall make recommendations to the executive committee with regard to persons and places

for the planting of new Latino congregations and strengthening existing Latino congregations. The committee shall collaborate with each of the district strategic growth teams advocating on behalf of Latino church congregational development needs. It shall also be responsible for any training needs that are important from a cultural perspective in planting new Latino churches. It shall request funds necessary for this training to be included in the board of congregational development budget. This committee shall meet at least quarterly and may meet more often at the request of the director of the board of congregational development or the chairperson.

J. 13. There shall be a committee on Korean/Asian congregational development composed of a chairperson (recommended *by the director of congregational excellence* in consultation with the cabinet representative and approved by the annual conference or conference nominations team ad interim per Standing Rule C.1), 3 or more lay and clergy members with specific attention to age, gender and district balance as pursuant to ¶ 610.5 and ¶ 605.3 (selected by the director in consultation with the chairperson of the committee and the cabinet representative and approved by the annual conference or conference nominations team ad interim per Standing Rule C.1), a cabinet representative, and the staff person for Korean/Asian congregational development. This committee shall make recommendations to the executive committee with regard to persons and places for the planting of new Korean/Asian congregations and strengthening existing Korean/Asian congregations. The committee shall collaborate with each of the district strategic growth teams advocating on behalf of Korean/Asian church congregational development needs. It shall also be responsible for any training needs that are important from a cultural perspective in planting new Korean/Asian churches. It shall request funds necessary for this training to be included in the board of congregational development budget. This committee shall meet at least quarterly and may meet more often at the request of the director of congregational excellence or the chairperson of the board of congregational development.

***Boards and Committees whose membership is determined, per our Book of Discipline or per our Standing rules, by virtue of holding positions on other groups, or by nomination from the particular group where member openings exist, or by nomination of our Bishop and/or our Nominations Committee in consultation with leadership already serving on specified groups in our NGC structure:***

#### **Board of Ordained Ministries**

From “*the enlistment and recruitment of ministerial leadership for our churches,*” to “*renewing a culture of call in the church,*” to examining “*all applicants as to their fitness for the ordained ministry and make full inquiry as to the fitness of the candidate for (1) annual election as local pastor; (2) election to associate membership; (3) election to provisional membership; and (4) election to full conference membership*” to providing “*a means of evaluating the effectiveness of ministerial leaders in the annual conference*”

the role and responsibilities of the Board of Ordained Ministries, as outlined in our Book of Discipline, are numerous.

Also outlined in our Book of Discipline is the composition of this Board: *“Each annual conference at the first session following the General Conference, shall elect for a term of four years a Board of Ordained Ministry. At least six ordained elders and deacons in full connection and, when possible, at least two associate members or local pastors who have completed the Course of Study shall be included as members of the board with voice and vote. Each annual conference shall elect at least one-fifth laypersons, which may include diaconal ministers, and may at its discretion elect further lay members, up to one-third of the membership of the board. All laypersons shall be professing members of local churches in the annual conference. The board membership shall include women and ethnic persons, at least one ordained clergyperson in the retired relationship, at least one ordained clergyperson in extension ministry, and when possible at least one young adult clergyperson in full connection age 35 or younger, and a district superintendent named by the bishop to represent the cabinet. No district superintendent or extended cabinet member shall be the chairperson of the Board of Ordained Ministry. Two-thirds of the members who are elders shall be graduates of seminaries listed by the University Senate. a ) Members shall be nominated by the presiding bishop after consultation with the chairperson of the board, the executive committee, or a committee elected by the board of the previous quadrennium, and with the cabinet. To ensure adequate board membership, consultation shall include an evaluation of the workload of the board in meeting disciplinary and annual conference responsibilities. Vacancies shall be filled by the bishop after consultation with the chairperson of the board. An elected board member may serve a maximum of three consecutive four-year terms. The chair of the Order of Deacons, the chair of the Order of Elders, and the chair of the Fellowship of Local Pastors and Associate Members shall be members of the Board of Ordained Ministry (§ 1c ) and its executive committee.”*

Per our standing rules, *“There shall be a board of ordained ministry composed of up to seventy-five (75) persons nominated by the bishop as outlined in ¶ 635.1, including those who serve by virtue of their office.”*

### **Committee on Nominations**

The committee charged with gathering and considering the list of potential candidates for membership on the various NGC committees, boards, etc., and then making recommendations to our Annual Conference regarding who will serve on them, is the Nominations Committee.

Our standing rules outline the role of this committee: *“There shall be an annual conference committee on nominations whose duty shall be to nominate all lay and clergy members of the boards, councils, teams, commissions, committees, and other agencies of the north Georgia conference.”* Further, *“The executive committee of the annual conference committee on nominations, composed of the bishop, the conference lay leader, the director of connectional ministries or designated person, three (3) other members of the annual conference committee on nominations named by the bishop, will coordinate*

*the comprehensive nominations process of identification, recruitment, training, selection and evaluation for the annual conference. Where vacancies in essential elected positions occur between annual conference sessions, the executive committee may fill the positions until the next annual conference elects.”*

Our standing rules also outline the composition of this committee: *“The committee shall be composed of the bishop, who shall be the chairperson; the district superintendents and extended cabinet; the conference lay leader and associate conference lay leaders; the district lay leaders; the commission on religion and race representative; the conference presidents of United Methodist Men and of United Methodist Women; the chairpersons of the conference young adult organization and the council on youth ministry; and not more than five (5) members-at-large who shall be named by the bishop for inclusiveness.”*

### **Annual Conference Planning Committee**

All of you who have attended a session of Annual Conference, whether in-person for virtual, have a sense of how much planning and organization is required in order to accomplish this wonderful event. Our Annual Conference Planning Committee is the group who works tirelessly to do this.

*Per our standing rules, “there shall be an annual conference planning committee responsible for setting the agenda for sessions of the annual conference, recommending the site of the conference annually, and overall coordination of annual conference. Applications to host the conference shall be for a period of four consecutive years in one site. The application shall be submitted to the bishop not less than two and one-half years before the proposed invitation date and must include adequate data to satisfy the planning committee of the suitability of the proposed site, with special attention to housing, food service, seating, congregating areas, parking and all standard public services necessary to accommodate large numbers of people. All facilities must meet ADA Accessibility Guidelines. All applications to host the conference must include an itemized account of anticipated expenses. The site must provide seating for all members of the conference, both clergy and lay, and for visitors and guests. The annual conference planning committee shall select one site for four years and must reconfirm the site selected for each of the four years of the approved application. When for unforeseen circumstances related to finances, logistics or other compelling reasons the annual conference is not able to hold annual conference at the agreed upon site, the annual conference planning committee is authorized to work with the conference council on finance and administration to secure an appropriate alternate site.”*

Also per our standing rules, *“The annual conference planning committee shall consist of the following persons: the bishop; the annual conference lay leader; the associate conference lay leader(s); the conference secretary; the dean of the cabinet; the conference presidents of United Methodist Women, United Methodist Men, conference youth organization, conference young adult organization and the conference young adult committee*

*representative; the chairpersons of the conference committee on registration and assistance and the board of ordained ministry; the director of connectional ministries or designated person; the director of center for clergy excellence, executive assistant to the bishop, the chairperson of the conference council on finance and administration; the conference treasurer; and other persons selected by the bishop to assure proper representation of persons related to the work of the committee, such as the host district superintendent and the host pastor. The bishop or his/her designee shall be the chairperson of the annual conference planning committee.”*

### **Conference Board of Laity**

The description of our NGC Committee on Resolutions noted that the richness of our NGC is diversity, and the strength of our NGC is our connectional structure. While this is, no doubt, true, it is the laity across our Conference who provide the leadership for our ministries, and whose energy, spirit and commitment make all of our ministries possible, as together we seek to make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world. The Conference Board of Laity is key to the role of laity across our NGC.

Our Book of Discipline describes the importance of the Board of Laity: *“The purpose of the conference board of laity shall be: a) To foster an awareness of the role of the laity both within the local congregation and through their ministries in the home, workplace, community, and world in achieving the mission of the Church; to develop and promote programs to cultivate an adequate understanding of the theological and biblical basis for lay life and work among the members of the churches of the annual conference. b) To develop and promote stewardship of time, talent, and possessions within the annual conference in cooperation with the conference council on ministries or other appropriate conference bodies. c) To provide for the training of lay members of annual conference. d) To provide support and direction for the ministry of the laity on the local, district, and annual conference levels and to promote the observance of Laity Sunday. e) To provide organization, direction, and support for the development of local church leaders.”*

Our Book of Discipline further outlines key responsibilities for the ministry of the laity: *“a) To*

*develop and promote programs to cultivate an adequate understanding of the theological and biblical basis for ministry of the laity among the members of the churches of the annual conference; to give special emphasis to programs and services that will enable laity of all ages to serve more effectively as leaders in both church and community. b) To provide support and direction for such lay programs as Lay Servant Ministries, the observance of Laity Day, and the work of lay leaders on the local and district levels. c) To give support and direction to the conference and district program for local church leadership development, coordinating and developing training experiences that will enable persons of all ages to serve more effectively as members of local church councils on ministries, church councils, and the committees, commissions, and task forces related to these groups. d) To organize a conference committee on Lay Servant Ministries that will fulfill the requirements of ¶¶ 266-268 on behalf of the conference.”*

Per our standing rules, *“The following shall comprise the membership of the board: the conference lay leader, associate conference lay leaders, the district lay leaders, the*

*conference director of lay servant ministries, the presidents and two representatives elected by each of the conference organizations of United Methodist Men and United Methodist Women, the presidents of the conference young adult organization and the conference youth organization; and in addition, the conference scouting coordinator, the lay chair or lay vice-chair of the general conference delegation and up to four at-large members elected by the board, in consultation with the annual conference committee on nominations as needed from time to time for inclusiveness and/or operations; and as ex-officio, a district superintendent designated by the cabinet, the director of connectional ministries or designated person and the presiding bishop.”*

*Our standing rules further state, “The conference lay leader and no more than four (4) associate conference lay leaders shall be elected quadrennially by the annual conference on nomination of the conference committee on nominations after consultation with the board of laity. The conference lay leader shall serve as chair of the conference board of laity. No person may serve as the conference lay leader for more than eight (8) consecutive years. No person may serve as the associate conference lay leader for more than eight (8) consecutive years. The conference lay leader and the associate conference lay leaders shall be members of the board of laity by virtue of their election to the offices they hold. Years of service as an associate conference lay leader shall not be considered in determining the eligibility of a person to serve as conference lay leader.”*

### **Georgia UM Commission on Higher Education and Collegiate Ministry**

Our mission as United Methodists is to make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world. Local church ministries for children and youth begin to cultivate the formation of discipleship at an early age, and in a variety of ways. The Georgia UM Commission on Higher Education and Collegiate Ministry is charged with the task of ensuring the process of making disciples continues, is supported, and is effective for young adults attending the colleges and universities across our State of Georgia.

Our standing rules outline the membership of this commission, which is a collaborative ministry of the North and South Georgia Conferences: *“There shall be a Georgia United Methodist Commission on Higher Education and Collegiate Ministry. The commission shall have twenty-three (23) voting members, ten (10) elected by the North Georgia Conference and eight (8) elected by the South Georgia Conference. Proposed members shall be nominated by the Committees on Nominations from the two annual conferences after receiving input from the commission regarding possible nominees. Half of the elected members from each annual conference shall be laypersons. The presiding bishop of each annual conference shall designate one district superintendent from that annual conference to be a voting member of the commission. The director of connectional ministries or designated person of each annual conference shall designate one staff member from each annual conference to be a voting member of the commission. The executive director of the commission shall be a voting member of the commission. Presidents and chaplains (or position equivalent to chaplain) of United Methodist colleges and universities in Georgia, the Dean of Oxford College, and the directors of Wesley Foundations/Fellowships in Georgia shall all be ex officio*

*members of the commission without vote. Members of the Division of Higher Education from the North and South Georgia conferences, if any, shall be ex officio members of the commission without vote. Leadership positions of the commission shall be held by members from both annual conferences.”*

### **Consent Agenda Committee**

*Per our standing rules, “the consent agenda committee, composed of the conference secretary, the chairperson of the committee on standing rules, the director of connective ministries or designated person, and the conference lay leader or his/her designee, in consultation with agencies or individuals presenting reports, recommendations or resolutions, may present in the conference handbook a written list of items which shall be known as the consent agenda. Items on the consent agenda shall be considered as adopted by consent of the annual conference unless they are removed from this list at a time set aside for this purpose on the second day of conference.”*

### **Committee on Episcopacy**

Similar to our churches’ Staff-Parish Relations Committee, Annual Conferences have a Committee on Episcopacy. Our Book of Discipline outlines the important responsibilities of this committee: *“The committee shall meet at least annually. It shall be convened by the bishop and shall elect a chairperson, a vice chairperson, and a secretary. The bishop and/or chairperson are authorized to call additional meetings when desired.*

*3. The functions of the conference committee on episcopacy shall be: a) To support the bishop of the area in the oversight of the spiritual and temporal affairs of the Church, with special reference to the area where the bishop has presidential responsibility. b) To be available to the bishop for counsel. c) To assist in the determination of the episcopal needs of the area and to make recommendations to appropriate bodies. d) To keep the bishop advised concerning conditions within the area as they affect relationships between the bishop and the people of the conference agencies. e) To interpret to the people of the area and to conference agencies the nature and function of the episcopal office. f) To engage in annual consultation and appraisal of the balance of the bishop’s relationship and responsibilities to the area and annual conferences, the jurisdiction, general Church boards and agencies, and other areas of specialized ministry, including, at all levels, concern for the inclusiveness of the Church and its ministry with respect to sex, race, and national origin, and understanding and implementation of the consultation process in appointment-making. g) To report needs for episcopal leadership to the jurisdictional committee on episcopacy through the duly elected conference members of that committee. 4. The conference council on finance and administration shall make provision in its budget for the expenses of this committee.”*

Our Book of Discipline outlines the following regarding membership on this committee: *“ There shall be a conference committee on episcopacy elected quadrennially by the annual conference at the session following the General Conference. The committee’s membership shall number at least seven, but no more than seventeen.*

*One-fifth of the committee's membership shall be appointed by the bishop. In addition to the lay and clergy members of the jurisdictional committee on episcopacy, who shall be ex officio members with vote, it is recommended that the committee consist of the following: one-third laywomen, one-third laymen, and one-third clergypersons, provided that one layperson shall be the conference lay leader. All lay members shall be professing members of local churches. Special attention shall be given to the inclusion of racial and ethnic persons, youth (§ 256.3), young adults, older adults, and people with disabilities. No member of the staff of the annual conference or any of its agencies, nor an immediate family member of such staff, shall serve as a member of the committee, except that a member of the jurisdictional committee on episcopacy or the conference lay leader shall not be disqualified from membership as a result of this provision."*

*Per our standing rules, this committee will be "composed of fifteen (15) persons. It is recommended that it be composed of one-third (1/3) clergy, one-third (1/3) lay women, and one-third (1/3) lay men, provided that one (1) lay person be the conference lay leader. One-fifth (1/5) of the membership shall be appointed by the bishop. The lay and clergy members of the jurisdictional committee on episcopacy shall be ex-officio members."*

### **Episcopal Residence Committee**

Our Book of Discipline stipulates that we have committee responsible for ensuring the provision of housing for our Bishop. This committee, the Episcopal Residence Committee, has the following responsibilities, as outlined in our Book of Discipline:

*" a) To make recommendations to the annual conference(s) regarding the purchase or sale of an episcopal residence. b) To prepare an annual budget covering the cost of providing the episcopal residence, which may also include utilities, insurance, and normal costs of upkeep in maintaining the residence. c) To forward the proposed budget to each conference council on finance and administration, including a recommendation for the proportionate share of the proposed budget to be borne by that annual conference, such proportionate share to be approved by each annual conference as it acts on budget recommendations (§ 614). d) To supervise the expenditure of funds allocated from all sources for expenses related to the provision of the episcopal residence and to account for such expenditures annually to each annual conference in the episcopal area. e) To give oversight in all matters related to upkeep, maintenance, improvements, and appropriate insurance coverages for the episcopal residence."*

Our Book of Discipline outlines the following regarding membership of this committee: *"The committee shall be composed of the following persons: a) The chairperson or designate of the conference committee on episcopacy from each conference. b) The president or designate of the conference council on finance and administration from each annual conference. c) The president or designate of the conference board of trustees from each annual conference. d) Consultants without vote, with specific expertise related to the tasks of the committee, may be utilized. 3. The chairperson of the episcopal residence committee shall be the representative of the committee on episcopacy of the annual conference in which the episcopal residence is currently located."*

### **Committee(s) on Investigations**

“...all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.” We know, of course, that Paul’s words in Romans 3 are true. Our sin, and our need for redemption is one of the things that defines our community and the communities we serve. While unfortunate, there are times when the way we, as professing Christians, bring our sin into expression rises to a level calling for intervention and action. This is true of clergy; and this is true of laity. When this happens with clergy, our NGC Committee on Investigations becomes involved.

Per our Book of Discipline, *“In each annual conference, there shall be a committee on investigation to consider judicial complaints against clergy members of the annual conference, clergy members on honorable location or administrative location from that annual conference, local pastors, and diaconal ministers...The committee shall be nominated by the presiding bishop in consultation with the Board of Ordained Ministry (for clergy members) and the conference board of laity (for professing members) and elected quadrennially by the annual conference. If additional members or alternates are needed, the annual conference may elect members to serve for the remainder of the quadrennium. Committee members shall be in good standing and shall be deemed of good character. The committee should reflect racial, ethnic, and gender diversity. The committee on investigation shall elect a chair and organize at the annual conference. None of the members or alternates shall be members of the Board of Ordained Ministry, the cabinet, or immediate family members of the above. Should a member of the committee on investigation have been a party to any of the prior proceedings in the case that finally comes before the committee, he or she shall be disqualified from sitting on the committee during its consideration of that case, and his or her place shall be taken by an alternate member. Seven members or alternates seated as members of the committee shall constitute a quorum. a) In cases of complaints against clergy members of the annual conference, clergy members on honorable location or administrative location from that annual conference, or local pastors, the committee shall consist of four clergy members and three professing members. b) In cases of complaints against diaconal ministers, the committee shall consist of four clergy members and five professing members, two of whom shall be diaconal ministers if available within the bounds of the annual conference.”* Our Book of Discipline outlines and describes each step in the investigation process, including processes for elevating complaints to higher levels with the UMC, ensuring the rights of those against whom complaints have been filed, and appeals.

Per our standing rules, this committee will be composed of *“...four (4) clergy in full connection, three (3) professing members, and six (6) alternate members, three of whom shall be clergy in full connection and three of whom shall be professing members. The committee shall be nominated by the presiding bishop in consultation with the board of ordained ministry (for clergy members) and the conference board of laity (for lay persons) and elected quadrennially by the annual conference. If additional members or al-*

*ternates are needed, the annual conference may elect members to serve for the remainder of the quadrennium. Committee members shall be in good standing and should be deemed of good character. The committee should reflect racial, ethnic, and gender diversity ¶ 2703.”*

Also per our standing rules, *“There shall be a diaconal committee on investigation as provided by ¶ 2703.2. (per Discipline, nominated by Bishop in consultation with BOM)”*

Our Book of Discipline also outlines this process for laity: *“When respondent is a layperson —In all cases, the pastor or district superintendent should take pastoral steps to resolve any complaints. If such pastoral response does not result in resolution and a written complaint is made against a professing member for any of the offenses in ¶ 2702.3, the pastor in charge or co-pastors (¶ 205.1) of the local church, in consultation with the district superintendent and the district lay leader, may appoint a committee on investigation consisting of four professing members and three clergy in full connection (both clergy and professing members must come from other congregations, exclusive of the churches of the respondent or the complainant). Committee members shall be in good standing and should be deemed of good character. The committee should reflect racial, ethnic, and gender diversity. When the pastor in charge is (or co-pastors are) bringing the charge, the district superintendent, in consultation with the district lay leader, shall appoint the committee on investigation. Five members shall constitute a quorum.”*

### **Administrative Review Committee**

While rare, our conference is sometimes presented with circumstances requiring involuntary changes to the status of NGC pastors. To ensure procedures outlined in our Book of Discipline are followed when considering or taking such action, each annual conference has an Administrative Review Committee.

Our Book of Discipline outlines the composition and role of this committee: *“There will be an administrative review committee composed of three clergy in full connection and two alternates who are not members of the cabinet, the Board of Ordained Ministry, or immediate family members of the above. The committee shall be nominated by the bishop and elected quadrennially by the clergy session of members in full connection with the annual conference. Its only purpose shall be to ensure that the disciplinary procedures for discontinuance of provisional membership (¶ 327.6), involuntary leave of absence (¶ 354), involuntary retirement (¶ 357.3), or administrative location (¶ 359) are properly followed. Additionally, if in the event of unresolved issues related to medical leave (¶ 356.4) a fair process hearing (¶ 361.2) occurs, the administrative review committee shall ensure that fair process was followed. The entire administrative process leading to the action for change in conference relationship shall be reviewed by the administrative review committee, and it shall report its findings to the clergy session of members in full connection with the annual conference prior to any action of the annual conference. The administrative review committee shall notify the parties of the review of the process. The administrative fair process hearing procedures (¶ 361.2) should be*

*followed by the administrative review committee. Prior to its report, if the committee determines that any error has occurred, it may recommend to the appropriate person or body that action be taken promptly to remedy the error, decide the error is harmless, or take other action.”*