

STANDING RULES

ANNUAL DISTRICT CONFERENCE

1. DISTRICT CONFERENCE - TIME AND PLACE

The annual District Conference shall be at a date set by the District Board of Administration in cooperation with the General Superintendent. The District Board of Administration shall determine the meeting place for the District Conference.

2. DISTRICT ELECTIONS

Voting for all district positions except District Superintendent shall be on a single ballot and elected by plurality. Any tie vote shall be resolved by the incumbent DBA. The following offices are elected by the conference:

District Superintendent
District Secretary
District Treasurer
District Board of Administration
Action Committee
Nominating Committee
General Conference Delegates

All other positions are to be appointed by the District Board of Administration.

3. DELEGATES' CREDENTIALS

It shall be the duty of the pastor to register the elected lay delegates to District Conference for his/her church by the due date set by the District Superintendent.

4. REPORTS TO DISTRICT CONFERENCE

All reports by district leaders to the Annual District Conference shall be prepared and sent to the district office no later than one week prior to District Conference.

5. SERVICE REPORTS

The Minister's Annual Service Report shall be submitted online by May 1.

6. CONFERENCE ATTENDANCE

It shall be the duty of each ordained and licensed minister to attend the entire District Conference session unless otherwise excused by the District Board of Administration.

7. COMMUNION SERVICE

District Conference shall commence with a communion service. The communion table is to be prepared by the host church. All pastors and delegates are urged to be present.

8. DISTRICT CONFERENCE ACTION COMMITTEE

- A. The District Conference shall elect a District Action Committee that shall be separate from the District Board of Administration, which shall consist of the District Superintendent, or his/her appointed substitute, as chairperson, the District Treasurer, and four members-at-large, two ministerial and two lay members.
- B. The District Action Committee shall assist any delegates who desire to bring action to the floor (cf. *Discipline* 1150). Proposed resolutions coming through the District Action Committee must be sent to the District Office by April 1.

9. NOMINATING COMMITTEE

There shall be a nominating Committee consisting of the District Superintendent, ex officio chairperson, two ordained ministers and two lay members elected by the District Conference. The elected members shall not succeed themselves (cf. *Discipline*, paragraph 1172). Officers, boards, and committees shall be elected through the use of a nominating ballot prepared by the nominating committee, with the provision that nominations may be made from the floor. The nominating committee will seek the widest possible input from churches in the district.

10. REPORT TO LOCAL CHURCH

Within two weeks following the close of the district conference, a report will be brought to the local congregation or local board of administration by a delegate, highlighting events of the conference and changes in the Standing Rules.

DISTRICT ADMINISTRATION

11. DISTRICT OFFICERS

- A. The District Superintendent is the chief administrative officer of the district. The election, duties, and responsibilities of that officer are specified in the *Discipline* 1300-1310.
- B. The district shall have an Assistant District Superintendent. The office shall be filled annually among the ordained ministers of the district (*Discipline* 1320-1323) upon nomination by the District Superintendent and appointment by the District Board of Administration.
- C. The District Treasurer shall be elected by the District Conference (*Discipline* 1335). The District Treasurer shall be the treasurer for all District funds and additional assistant treasurers may be approved by and report to the District Board of Administration in accordance with best accounting practices.

12. DISTRICT BOARD OF ADMINISTRATION (DBA)

- A. The District Board of Administration shall consist of thirteen members including the District Superintendent (chair), the Assistant District Superintendent, the District Secretary, the District Treasurer, and nine members-at-large elected by the District Conference in such a manner that six members of the District Board of Administration shall be lay members. The members at large, the District Secretary and the District Treasurer shall serve two-year terms. It is recommended that no more than two members of the DBA are from the same congregation at any time.
- B. The executive committee of the District Board of Administration shall be composed of the four executive officers (Superintendent, Assistant Superintendent, Secretary, Treasurer) and one lay member to be appointed by the District Board of Administration upon nomination by the District Superintendent.

13. DISTRICT BOARD OF MINISTERIAL DEVELOPMENT

- A. The District Board of Ministerial Development shall consist of the District Superintendent, as chairperson or his/her appointee, the Assistant District Superintendent, the District Secretary who shall also serve as recording secretary, and nine additional members, four of which shall be ordained ministers and five shall be laypersons. The four ordained ministers and five laypersons shall be elected by the District Board of Administration. The term of office for the elected members shall be three years with the elections so arranged that approximately one-third shall be elected each year.
- B. The Council on Ordination shall consist of ordained ministers serving on the District Board of Administration and the District Board of Ministerial Development.

14. DISTRICT SPIRITUAL FORMATION

The district shall offer a variety of spiritual formation ministry opportunities during the year. The DBA will work with the District Superintendent to appoint or designate the leader and/or the committee for each ministry or for each activity or event. The opportunities offered by these ministries will be partially supported by distributions from the District Camp Endowment Fund via the DBA guidelines and as approved by the DBA. These ministries may include Refresh Retreat and Family Camp, Youth Camp, or District sponsored activities, Kid's camps (as a stand-alone event or part of Refresh), and other District wide activities or events for adult groups such as men, women, and seniors. Spiritual Formation Ministries that may have an annual director appointed by the DBA or elected by the district include Children, Youth, Men, Women and Seniors.

15. DISTRICT BOARD OF CHURCH MULTIPLICATION

- A. The Board of Church Multiplication shall consist of the District Superintendent or his/her designee, as chairperson, the District Director of Church Multiplication, three ordained ministers and three laypersons appointed by the District Board of Administration.
- B. This board is charged with the task of researching, initiating, promoting, and funding the multiplication of local churches and cooperating with the District Board of Administration in the oversight of such initiatives.

16. DISTRICT BOARD OF CHURCH DEVELOPMENT AND SUSTAINABILITY

- A. The District Board of Administration may appoint a Board of Church Development and Sustainability to assist in overseeing and supporting churches which are categorized as Developing Churches.
- B. The Board of Church Development and Sustainability shall consist of the District Superintendent and his/her designee as chairperson, the District Director of Church Development and Sustainability, and up to three ordained ministers and three lay persons appointed by the District Board of Administration.

This board is charged with the task of oversight of all Developing Churches within the district. This delegated responsibility is to involve reviewing the church's support for its pastor, recommending to the DBA a financial budget, and helping to develop a Local Advisory Council in each church. The board will also help to resource these churches by recommending district grants, seeking assistance from other churches, and providing guidance with the goal of each church meeting the criteria for an established church (see *Discipline*, paragraph 518).

17. REFRESH RETREAT & FAMILY CAMP

The Refresh Retreat & Family Camp committee shall plan and promote, provide staff, and oversee the operation of Refresh Retreat & Family Camp (except for the main camp services). The Refresh Retreat & Family Camp chairperson shall be appointed by the DBA. The District Superintendent or his/her appointee (approved by the DBA) shall oversee the main camp services along with the Refresh Retreat & Family Camp committee chairperson. The DBA shall establish the dates of Refresh Retreat & Family Camp and engage the camp evangelists and musicians. The Refresh Retreat & Family Camp committee shall submit their budgets to the spring DBA meeting.

18. SOCIAL CONCERNS DIRECTOR

The District Board of Administration may appoint a Social Concerns Committee who shall make available information and resources as requested by the District Superintendent and the local church.

19. INSURANCE COORDINATOR

The District Board of Administration shall appoint an Insurance Director and may appoint a committee consisting of the District Superintendent as chairperson, Insurance Director, one ordained minister and one lay member.

DISTRICT STATISTICAL AND FINANCIAL INFORMATION

20. STATISTICAL AND FISCAL YEAR

Pastors shall submit the Local Church Statistical Report (LCSR) one week prior to the District Conference, or by the date set by the District Administrator. The closing date for the district statistical and financial year shall be May 31.

21. DISTRICT SUPERINTENDENT'S SALARY

Any changes for the District Superintendent's benefits for the ensuing year shall begin at the beginning of the month following approval by the District Conference.

22. BUDGET COMMITTEE

The District Board of Administration shall appoint a Budget committee to construct a District Expense Budget. Members shall be the District Superintendent as chairperson, District Treasurer, one ordained minister and one lay member.

23. AUDITING

The District Board of Administration shall provide for the auditing of all the district's financial records annually, either by an elected District Auditing Committee or by employing a certified public accountant, chartered accountant, or public accountant.

PASTORS

24. PASTORAL VOTE

When a pastoral vote is necessary according to the *Discipline*, it shall be taken on a date designated by the District Board of Administration. If a favorable pastoral vote is a majority, but less than eighty percent (80%), the DBA shall review pastoral relations and the pastor shall remain only at the recommendation of the DBA.

25. PASTORAL SUPPORT

- A. The churches of the district, in addition to the regular stipulated salary, are urged to pay mileage for the use of the pastor's car in church work (it is suggested that the mileage rate allowed by the IRS be used), pastor's utilities, telephone, health insurance premiums, life insurance premiums and social security.
- B. The churches of the Western New York District shall furnish their parsonages with both a stove and a refrigerator.
- C. Churches who enter into a financial agreement with the pastor may, when needful, make adjustments of his/her obligation quarterly. The salary agreement is with the pastor involved rather than the office filled. A full settlement of the pastor's salary shall be made before the time of the Annual District Conference.

26. PASTORAL SERVICE YEAR

Pastoral changes shall take place on Monday following the second Sunday of July. Any exceptions shall be by written permission of the District Superintendent. A pastor will begin his/her service when his/her appointment is approved by the District Board of Administration (1233:9), with final approval by the District Conference (1180:26).

27. PASTOR'S VACATION

- A. District pastors shall be given a minimum of three weeks' vacation with pay (18 days plus three Sundays). Vacations shall range from a minimum of three weeks to a maximum of five with consideration being given to years of full-time service to The Wesleyan Church (guidelines for vacation time are: 1-9 years = 3 weeks; 10-19 years = 4 weeks; and 20 or more years = 5 weeks).
- B. Vacation time accrued during any church year must be taken by the end of the calendar year. All unused vacation at the end of the calendar year will be forfeited. and no cash would be paid in lieu of vacation except in special situations where the District Board of Administration should determine otherwise.
- C. The church shall pay for the pulpit supply.

28. PASTOR'S SABBATICAL

Every Wesleyan church is encouraged to provide a sabbatical leave for its pastor(s) every seven years of service. A sabbatical shall be for a minimum of four weeks in excess of vacation time with financial provisions as approved by the Local Board of Administration (724).

29. PASTOR'S MOVING EXPENSE

The church calling a pastor to serve them shall make moving arrangements and be responsible for moving expenses, and if it necessitates the pastor moving across state lines, the cost of car registration and license shall be paid, not applying to salary.

30. PASTOR'S RESPONSIBILITY TO THE DISTRICT

Every District pastor is expected to serve in at least one district ministry (LDJ, camps, auxiliaries, boards & committees). Lead/Solo Pastor's attendance for monthly LDJ (Leadership Development Journey) is a requirement, while Assistant Pastors are encouraged to attend. All pastors are required to attend District Conference, and the Ordination Service, unless otherwise excused by the District Superintendent. Attendance at Refresh Retreat & Family Camp is encouraged and it is strongly suggested that the Local Board of Administration encourage and support pastoral attendance and involvement. Furthermore, pastors will not be required to use their personal vacation time when assisting at or attending District camps.

31. PASTOR APPRECIATION MONTH

The Western New York District shall observe October as Pastor Appreciation Month. The Vice-chair or a person appointed by the Local Board of Administration shall have the responsibility to see that plans be made for proper observances throughout the month. The District Superintendent shall be responsible for sending appropriate notification to the Vice-chair of the Local Board of Administration.

32. MEMBERSHIP IN THE WESLEYAN PENSION FUND

Every pastor receiving full-time work through the district or one of its churches shall be a member of the Wesleyan Pension Fund, in accordance with the *Discipline*, paragraphs 4400-4425. The money for this shall be sent to the pension fund of The Wesleyan Church. It shall not be used to purchase individual retirement benefits or be given to the pastor to purchase his/her own retirement insurance or for his/her own use.

33. HEALTH INSURANCE

The District shall facilitate an optional group health insurance plan for district and church employees who choose to participate.

34. LIFE INSURANCE

The District shall facilitate a group life insurance policy, the premiums for which shall be the financial responsibility of each church. To provide an affordable group rate, the participation of the Senior or Solo Pastor of each church shall be compulsory. A church may opt out of the district life insurance policy for Assistant and Associate Pastors if the church provides equivalent benefits and has the approval of the District Board of Administration. Churches may also opt to cover other church employees.

35. CONTINUING EDUCATION

Local churches should encourage their pastors to pursue continuing education credits by providing for the expense, or as much of the expense as possible, to a seminar or convention annually.

LOCAL CHURCH

36. LOCAL CHURCH GOALS

Each local church in the Western New York District shall develop goals and implement a strategy for outreach and discipleship and be prepared to share them with the district leadership.

37. DISTRICT MISSIONARY SUPPORT

The churches of the District are urged to prayerfully consider giving priority support to the Global Partners missionaries from our region so that these workers would be fully funded and backed with a solid prayer team.

38. ELECTION OF LOCAL CHURCH OFFICERS

- A. Each local church shall elect its officers near the close of the fiscal year and the beginning of the term of office shall be left to the discretion of the local church. Each local church, upon the election of their local trustees and Local Board of Administration members shall update their church leaders in the Wesleyan Pastor Portal.
- B. The District strongly discourages the election of multiple members of the same family to the Local Board of Administration.
- C. The spouse and family members (immediate and extended) of any pastor should not serve on the Local Board of Administration or should recuse themselves during pastoral evaluations, recommendations of renewal of call, or discussion of pastoral compensation.

39. BUILDING AND REMODELING PLANS

The District Board of Administration, in carrying out the work of the board in church and parsonage building and location, shall annually appoint a District Building committee, to which it shall refer new building projects and remodeling projects exceeding ten percent of the value of the building.

40. CHURCH INDEBTEDNESS

Local churches shall not procure notes or loans to exceed 10% of their last year's total receipts without approval of the District Board of Administration. ALL LOANS shall be reported to the District Superintendent, no matter what the amount.

41. DEEDS AND PROPERTY INSURANCE

It is required that each chairperson or acting chairperson of the Local Board of Administration furnish the District Superintendent a copy of the deed of all church properties and a certification of insurance of all church-owned properties, and that this be brought up to date each insurance renewal. The Western New York District provides

a group property insurance policy. Each church will be direct billed by the insurance provider. The District highly recommends that each church participate in the District Group Property Insurance program. Any church which does not participate must be insured for full replacement cost and with liability coverage comparable with the District coverage.

42. GROUP WORKERS COMPENSATION INSURANCE

The Western New York District provides a group workers compensation insurance in which all District churches in New York State are required to participate, unless proof of comparable insurance can be shown to the District Board of Administration. Churches shall pay the worker's compensation premium within 60 days of the billing date unless special consideration has been granted.

43. NON-PAYMENT OF UNITED STEWARDSHIP FUND AND DISTRICT BUDGETS

The pastor, vice-chair, and treasurer (or the chairperson of the finance committee if the church has such an office) of a church which does not meet its USF and District Budget obligations shall be required to submit a letter to the DBA outlining reasons why they are in default before convening of District Conference. For a local church that has not met its budget requirements for two consecutive years, the District Board of Administration may categorize them as a developing church.

44. BUDGET ASSESSMENTS FOR NEWLY ORGANIZED CHURCHES

Newly organized churches shall be assessed on an escalating scale as follows: First year at 25%, second year at 50%, third year at 75%, and thereafter at 100%.

45. BUDGET ASSESSMENT CAPS

The District Budget shall be computed on only the first \$606,000 of assessable income. This budget cap shall be reviewed annually by the District Board of Administration and any changes be recommended to the Annual Conference.