

The New Quadrennium

A bulletin summarizing General Conference actions that affect the local church, the annual conference, and the financial program of the United Methodist Church.

Based upon the session of the General Conference, Atlanta, Ga., Apr. 16-28, 1972.

Conference Actions

Local Church—There were few structural changes affecting the local church. Provision was made for more youth members on the administrative board, council on ministries, and commissions. There is new flexibility for churches entering with other congregations into parishes.

Women's Society—The conference approved proposals from the women's organizations to merge the Women's Society of Christian Service and Wesleyan Service Guild into a single national unit known as United Methodist Women.

District—There are disciplinary guidelines for optional district programming through a District Council on Ministries.

Conference—Annual conference program is to be centered in the Conference Council on Ministries; program boards are optional. Boards and committees are amenable to the Conference Council on Ministries. There is authority for variations in structure when voted by the annual conference. A constitutional amendment was initiated to provide for additional lay members of the annual conference when needed to balance voting members between clergy and lay. The Conference Commission on World Service and Finance becomes the Conference Council on Finance and Administration.

Doctrine—The conference voted the first major doctrinal statement to come out of any of the antecedent denominations in 150 years. It was adopted by an overwhelming vote of 925 to 17 and will be printed in the front of the *Discipline*. It sets no rigid doctrinal tests, but establishes four guidelines: scripture, tradition, experience, and reason.

Social Principles—A four-year study commission brought in a new statement to replace the separate Methodist and EUB statements appearing in the 1968 *Discipline*. The new statement includes a "Social Creed" of a length and style suited to use in worship services.

Theological Education—The report of another study commission was accepted. It calls for new approaches to seminary training and continuing education and a more efficient deployment of theological seminaries.

Status of Women—In adopting a study report, the conference called for a larger role for women in decision-making in the church, in agency staffs, and in the ordained ministry. A new commission was ordered to do further study and implement the recommendations already adopted. Steps were taken to remove male-oriented language from the *Discipline* and the Constitution of the church.

Racial Integration—The conference heard reports on mergers of predominantly black and white conferences during the past four years and ordered that mergers not yet accomplished be completed by July 1, 1973. Provision was made for binding arbitration if agreement cannot be reached as to the terms of merger.

Financial Program—General Conference adopted for the general church a financial program along familiar lines, with some funds increased and others decreased. See other pages of this bulletin for details.

Apportionments—The basis for World Service apportionments was changed. Formerly it was

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Financial Program of the United Methodist Church 1973-76

as adopted by the General Conference of 1972

Annual apportionments and minimum needs
for benevolences and administrative funds for the next four fiscal years,
Jan. 1, 1973 through Dec. 31, 1976.

Benevolence Funds, Apportioned

World Service	\$23,500,000 ¹	
Black College Fund	6,000,000 ¹	
Ministerial Education Fund	10,000,000 ¹	
Temporary General Aid Fund	1,800,000 ¹	
Total apportioned benevolences		\$41,300,000

Benevolence Funds, Voluntary

Advance Specials	\$10,000,000 ²	
Human Relations Sunday	1,000,000 ³	
One Great Hour of Sharing	2,000,000 ²	
United Methodist Student Day	600,000 ²	
World Communion Offering	2,000,000 ²	
World Service Specials	175,000 ²	
Conscience Fund	4	
Youth Service Fund	4	
Total voluntary benevolences		\$15,775,000

Administrative Funds, Apportioned

Episcopal Fund	\$3,000,000 ¹	
General Administration Fund	1,500,000 ¹	
Interdenominational Cooperation Fund	1,000,000 ¹	
Total administrative funds		\$5,500,000
ANNUAL TOTAL		\$62,575,000

NOTES:

- 1—Apportionment set by General Conference.
- 2—Fund authorized and goal set by General Conference.
- 3—Fund authorized by General Conference; estimate based on need and giving in previous years.
- 4—Fund authorized by General Conference; no estimate made.

BENEVOLENCE FUNDS, APPORTIONED

World Service—The basic benevolence fund, used to support the missional work of United Methodist agencies. Some of the work provides resources to local churches; other work extends the local church in action on a national and world level.

Black College Fund—This is a new fund to supplement operational and capital needs of 11 colleges and one medical school serving the black community. This fund succeeds the Negro Colleges Advance, begun in 1970.

Ministerial Education Fund—The money goes to theological seminaries and continuing education programs, with 75% being administered by the general church and 25% by annual conferences.

Temporary General Aid Fund—As ethnic conferences merge, the church at large assumes an obligation to help with financial responsibility for pensions and minimum salaries. It gives comparable assistance to the continuing Hispanic and Indian conferences.

Purposes of the Funds

Total of benevolence apportionments, each year
1973-76: \$41,300,000

Total of comparable apportionments, each year
1971-72: \$38,000,000

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calculated from three factors: membership, previous World Service giving, and the total of non-building, non-benevolent giving. The new formula uses two factors: membership and non-building expenditures. The change will produce higher apportionments for some conferences, lower for others. The apportionment rate for the Episcopal Fund is lowered.

Church Structure—The General Conference adopted in modified form most of the recommendations of the Structure Study Commission. During a transition period this will bring about consolidations of agencies and re-assignment of responsibilities. It will have far-reaching effects on the style of program operation and on relationships between the general church and annual conferences. There will be a General Council on Ministries and four major program boards: Discipleship, Global Ministries, Church and Society, and Higher Education and Ministry. There will be a Joint Committee on Communications related to the COM. Continued (in some instances with changes in some of their responsibilities) are the Board of Pensions, Board of Publication, Council on Finance and Administration (formerly World Service and Finance), Commission on Religion and Race, and Commission on Archives and History.

Peace and Development—The conference took a strong stand for U.S. withdrawal from Vietnam and endorsed a Bishops' Call for Peace and the Self-Development of Peoples.

Planning for Ministries—In lieu of a quadrennial program, the conference adopted a program

process offered by the Program Council. It calls for churches and conferences to set their own priorities and build program in the style of "Planning for Ministries, 1973 and Beyond." Details will appear in the July-August and September issues of *The Interpreter*.

Investments—The conference called upon all church-related agencies that hold funds to invest them in ways that are socially constructive. It urged stockholders to speak and vote in the annual meetings of corporations and sent representatives to one such meeting while the conference was in session.

Position Statements—In the Social Principles paper and in a variety of resolutions, the conference took positions on a large number of current issues. Among the issues debated:

Abortion—Reluctantly approved under guarded circumstances and after counseling. The major recommendation is that abortion laws be removed from criminal statutes and placed in the civil code.

Homosexuality—Homosexuals are children of God and are entitled to the ministry of the church and respect for their rights. However, homosexuality is contrary to Christian teaching and practicing homosexuals are not recommended for the itinerant ministry.

Amnesty—The conference debated, but did not choose between, two contradictory resolutions on amnesty for war resisters.

These documents, along with all resolutions adopted by or received by the General Conference, will be published in the *Book of Resolutions*.

For More Information

News of the General Conference appears in current issues of *Together*, *Christian Advocate*, and other publications of the church.

The implications of the General Conference to the local church will be analyzed in the July-August issue of *The Interpreter*.

For answers to specific questions about World Service or other aspects of the financial program, write to the Council on World Service and Finance, 1200 Davis St., Evanston, Ill. 60201.

For resources to interpret and promote the general benevolences, write to the Division of Interpretation, 1200 Davis St., Evanston, Ill. 60201. A variety of printed and audio-visual resources will be issued during the summer and fall.

BENEVOLENCE FUNDS, VOLUNTARY

Advance Specials—Gifts made by “disciples in partnership” and designated for specific projects in world missions, national missions or overseas relief.

Human Relations Sunday—Slated for the fourth Sunday in January, this replaces Race Relations Sunday. The offering will continue programs begun under the 1968-72 Quadrennial Emphasis: \$375,000 for the Voluntary Service Program; \$340,000 for community developers (black, Hispanic, Indian and other); \$35,000 for the Police-Community Relations Program; and \$250,000 in training projects for American Indians, Hispanics and other minorities.

One Great Hour of Sharing—On the fourth Sunday of Lent, the offering goes to the United Methodist Committee on Relief (UMCOR) for emergency relief and human development.

United Methodist Student Day—Received in June, the offering goes for student loans and scholarship grants.

World Communion Offering—One-half finances Crusade Scholarships for overseas students and U.S. minorities; one-fourth benefits young adults in military service by aiding the work of chaplains and churches near military bases and undergirds institutional chaplaincies; one-fourth goes for scholarships for young people of ethnic minorities. Offering received the first Sunday of October.

World Service Specials—Gifts designated for specific projects of agencies other than those receiving Advance Specials are classified as World Service Specials.

Conscience Fund—Gifts to aid persons facing economic problems because of their Christian witness on social issues.

Youth Service Fund—Given by and administered by young people for youth work and missions.

Total goals of voluntary benevolences, each year 1973-76: \$15,775,000

Total goals of comparable funds, each year 1971-72: \$27,775,000

ADMINISTRATIVE FUNDS, APPORTIONED

Episcopal Fund—Provides salaries, expenses and pensions of the bishops.

General Administration Fund—Finances administrative work of the church at the general level, including the costs of holding General Conference.

Interdenominational Cooperation Fund—Supports general church activities that are ecumenical in nature. It includes contributions to the World Council of Churches, National Council of Churches and Consultation on Church Union and travel funds to get United Methodist spokesmen to meetings.

Total of administrative apportionments, each year 1973-76: \$5,500,000

Total of comparable apportionments, each year 1971-72: \$5,304,460

Annual total, goals and apportionments, 1973-76: \$62,575,000

Annual total, goals and apportionments, 1971-72: \$71,079,460

World Service Fund

Distribution of Receipts 1973-76

Annual total: \$23,500,000

Distribution below was voted by the 1972 General Conference on the basis of the old structure. By instruction of the conference, the Council on Ministries and the Council on Finance and Administration will adjust these allocations to the new structure, within the total. Distribution as applied to the new structure will be announced later in 1972. This budget takes effect Jan. 1973.

	1973	1974	1975	1976
PRIOR CLAIMS				
Council on World Service and Finance	\$ 347,000	\$ 362,000	\$ 377,000	\$ 392,000
Division of Interpretation	890,000	915,000	940,000	965,000
Deaconess Pensions	70,000	70,000	70,000	70,000
Program Council (administration)	300,000	315,000	325,000	340,000
Total prior claims	1,607,000	1,662,000	1,712,000	1,767,000
ON-RATIO DISTRIBUTION				
American Bible Society	100,000	100,000	100,000	100,000
American University	175,000	175,000	175,000	175,000
Board of Christian Social Concerns	625,000	650,000	675,000	700,000
Board of Education				
Division of Local Church	1,338,000	1,405,000	1,475,000	1,510,000
Division of Higher Ed.	1,338,000	1,405,000	1,475,000	1,510,000
Ministerial Education	1,200,000	900,000	600,000	300,000
Board of Evangelism	537,000	557,000	610,000	625,000
Former EUB Colleges	770,000	577,500	385,000	192,500
Board of Health and Welfare Ministries	491,000	554,500	584,500	635,000
Board of Laity	508,000	533,000	583,000	610,000
Board of Missions	11,700,000	11,700,000	11,719,500	11,894,500
Program Council				
Coordination, Research and Planning	300,000	310,000	320,000	335,000
TRAFCO	900,000	950,000	965,000	1,000,000
Commission on Religion and Race	1,250,000	1,250,000	1,250,000	1,250,000
Scarritt College	300,000	300,000	300,000	300,000
Commission on Worship	50,000	60,000	60,000	60,000
Commission on the Status of Women	50,000	75,000	75,000	75,000
Contingency Reserve	261,000	336,000	436,000	461,000
Total on ratio	21,893,000	21,838,000	21,788,000	21,733,000
Grand total	23,500,000	23,500,000	23,500,000	23,500,000