

THE PLAIN GRACE PLAN

FINAL VERSION DATED SEPTEMBER 13, 2019
COMPRISING 20 PETITIONS SUBMITTED TO THE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

I. PROVISION RELATED TO THE LOCAL CHURCH:

¶ 248A. *The Affiliation or Reaffiliation Church Conference - Plain Grace Plan*

1. Basis—Because of the current deep conflict within The United Methodist Church, the Plain Grace Plan is adopted. It is the intent of the Plain Grace Plan to multiply new Wesleyan expressions consistent with the Common Core of the United Methodist Church and to allow the diverse members of the United Methodist Church to be able to live into their preferred expression of Methodism while offering grace to all of God's children. It is the further intent of the Plain Grace Plan to create a Full Communion Relationship with such newly created Wesleyan expressions. The Plain Grace Plan consists of the following paragraphs in the Book of Discipline: ¶¶248A, 431A-F, 673-680, 725, 1510 and 2553-2555.

2. To encourage broader participation by members of the local church on the question of Affiliation or Reaffiliation, this paragraph shall apply during the following periods: (1) November 15, 2022 through March 15, 2023, (2) January 1 through March 31, 2026 and (3) January 1 through March 31, 2027. A charge conference may be convened as a church conference, extending the vote to all professing members of the local church present for considering the question of Affiliation or Reaffiliation. The church conference shall be authorized by the district superintendent within 10 working days of receiving a written request by one of the following: the pastor, the church council, or 15 percent of the professing membership of the local church. In any case, a copy of the request shall be given to the pastor. Notice may be given up to and including the last day of the above listed periods and church conferences may be conducted after such last day; however, all such conferences shall be conducted no later than thirty days following the last day of the period. Special attention shall be made to give broad notice to the full professing membership of the local church regarding the time and place of a church conference called for this purpose and to use all reasonable means necessary, including electronic communication where possible, to communicate the purpose, time, date and location of the church conference. If reasonably possible, the written notice shall include a copy of the Affiliation or Reaffiliation Agreement to be considered at the meeting. No conference may be held on less than 10 days written notice. A church conference conducted under this paragraph shall be presided over by the District Superintendent or his designee with preference given to the Chairman of the Church council; if the District Superintendent fails to designate a presiding officer, the presiding officer shall be elected by a majority of the professing members present at the meeting as the first order of business. A copy or copies of the proposed Affiliation or Reaffiliation Agreement shall be available for inspection at the church conference. The question of Affiliation or Reaffiliation shall be decided by a simple majority of the professing members present at the meeting. The vote shall be conducted by secret ballot with the vote being canvassed by three professing members present at the meeting, such members being designated by the presiding officer. The pastor may, but shall not be required to, participate in the canvassing of votes. The result of such vote shall be promptly communicated to the United Methodist Church District Superintendent and such person as may have been designated by the Full Communion Expression to receive notice. Thereafter, a standardized Gracious Affiliation Agreement or Gracious Reaffiliation Agreement, as authorized by ¶674 shall be executed by a duly Authorized representative of the local church and the

District Superintendent. Affiliation or Reaffiliation shall be effective upon execution of the Agreement by the local church and the authorized representative of the Full Communion Expression or the United Methodist Church. The provisions of this paragraph shall take precedence over, and shall not be limited by, any other provisions of the Discipline that are not in the Constitution. This paragraph shall take effect immediately upon adjournment of the General Conference for 2020 and shall expire at the adjournment of General Conference for 2028.

II. PROVISIONS RELATED TO ECUMENICAL RELATIONSHIPS:

¶ 431A *Full Communion Agreement For Full Communion Expressions - Plain Grace Plan*

1. Basis—Because of the current deep conflict within The United Methodist Church, the Plain Grace Plan is adopted. It is the intent of the Plain Grace Plan to multiply new Wesleyan expressions consistent with the Common Core of the United Methodist Church and to allow the diverse members of the United Methodist Church to be able to live into their preferred expression of Methodism while offering grace to all of God's children. It is the further intent of the Plain Grace Plan to create a Full Communion Relationship with such newly created Wesleyan expressions. The Plain Grace Plan consists of the following paragraphs in the Book of Discipline: ¶¶248A, 431A-F, 673-680, 725, 1510 and 2553-2555.

2. Effective upon adjournment of the 2020 General Conference, the Council of Bishops shall enter into a Full Communion Agreement with each Full Communion Expression recognized as such under the provisions of ¶431E. The Full Communion Agreement shall recognize that a relationship exists between the United Methodist Church and each Full Communion Expression and shall expressly include the following requirements: (1) recognize the United Methodist Church and the Full Communion Expression as constituent members of the one, holy, catholic and apostolic church, the body of Christ, as described in the Holy Scriptures and confessed in the church's historic creeds; (2) recognize the authenticity of each other's sacraments and welcome one another to partake in the Eucharist; (3) affirm the authenticity of each church's Christian ministry, and (4) recognize the validity of each other's offices of ministry. By recognizing the validity of each other's offices of ministry, neither the United Methodist Church nor the Full Communion Expression shall be required to automatically accept transfer of any clergy or Bishop; the United Methodist Church and Full Communion Expression shall maintain the absolute right to determine qualifications for transfer of clergy and Bishops. In addition, the Full Communion Agreement shall mutually bind the United Methodist Church and the Full Communion Expression to recognize and enforce the Gracious Affiliation Agreements and Gracious Reaffiliation Agreements entered into pursuant to ¶¶678, 679 and 680 of the Book of Discipline. No additional provisions may be provided for in the Full Communion Agreement. The Full Communion Agreement shall bind the United Methodist Church and the Full Communion Expression through December 31, 2028, at which time it shall expire unless extended by mutual agreement of the United Methodist Church and the Full Communion Expression. The provisions of this paragraph shall take precedence over, and shall not be limited by, any other provisions of the Discipline that are not in the Constitution. This paragraph shall take effect immediately upon adjournment of the General Conference for 2020 and shall expire at the adjournment of General Conference for 2028.

¶ 431B *Intent to Become a Full Communion Expression - Plain Grace Plan*

1. On or before Friday, May 29, 2021, an entity may submit a Petition of Intent seeking to become a Full Communion Expression by submitting a Petition of Intent to the Council of Bishops. The Petition of Intent shall be signed by at least 50 ordained clergy or one Bishop of the United Methodist Church. The Petition of Intent shall not be required to conform to any particular form but it shall establish that the proposed New Expression, if formed, shall meet the following minimum qualifications required of a Full Communion Expression:

a) Adopt a Common Core of Beliefs, set forth in the New Expression's Book of Discipline, that shall include the following: The Apostles' Creed, the Articles of Religion and Confession of Faith, the General Rules, the Wesley Hymns and a Connectional Way of Life that includes Superintendency, Itineracy, and Conferencing. However, Superintendency, Itineracy, and Conferencing shall not be required to comply with the standards set forth in the United Methodist Church Book of Discipline; a New Expression shall have the right to modify each of those Wesleyan systems by adoption of its own standards.

b) Enter into a Full Communion Agreement with the United Methodist Church that includes the requirements for full communion established by ¶ 431A, with such agreement to be in full force and effect until December 31, 2028.

c) Enter into a Gracious Affiliation Agreement that shall govern missional support, pension support and asset valuation and disposition by requiring the United Methodist Church and the Full Communion Expression to use the processes and procedures set forth in ¶¶ 431F, 1510, 2554 and 2555 with such agreement to be in full force and effect until December 31, 2030.

d) Enter into a Dispute Resolution Agreement that requires Mediation and Binding Arbitration concerning all disputes over the arbitrability, meaning or application of the Gracious Affiliation Agreement or any Gracious Reaffiliation Agreement with such agreement to be in full force and effect until December 31, 2030.

No additional requirements shall be required in any Petition of Intent.

2. The Petition of Intent shall be submitted to the Executive Secretary of the Council of Bishops either in person, by mail or by electronic means and shall be received no later than May 29, 2021 at 5:00 P.M. local time at the Executive Secretary's resident office. Unless within 30 days of receipt of the petition by the Executive Secretary, the Council of Bishops determines and states, in writing, based solely upon the face of the Petition of Intent, that the petition is deficient by its failure to meet one or more of the forgoing requirements then the petition shall be deemed approved. No Proposed New Expression shall be barred from filing additional timely Petitions of Intent based upon the fact that an earlier petition was denied as deficient. Any application timely submitted and not acted upon by the Council of Bishops by June 30, 2021 shall be deemed approved. An entity meeting the qualification requirements becomes a "Qualified New Expression."

3. No later than June 30, 2021 the Council of Bishops through its duly authorized representative shall execute, on behalf of the United Methodist Church, the standardized Full Communion Agreement, Gracious Affiliation Agreement and Dispute Resolution Agreement prepared pursuant to ¶431C and tender said agreements to each Qualified New Expression for the purpose of allowing the Qualified New Expression to enter into the agreements after authorization is received from its Organizing Conference. No such agreement shall be effective unless and until a Qualified New Expression is recognized as a Full Communion Expression pursuant to ¶431E.

4. All provisions of this paragraph shall take effect immediately upon adjournment of the General Conference for 2020 and shall expire December 31, 2028. The provisions of this paragraph shall take precedence over, and shall not be limited by, any other provisions of the Book of Discipline except the provisions of the Constitution.

¶ 431C *Agreements between the United Methodist Church and Full Communion Expressions - Plain Grace Plan*

1. Full Communion Agreement. The General Council on Finance and Administration is hereby authorized to prepare a standardized form Full Communion Agreement consistent with the terms of ¶431A for use by the United Methodist Church and New Expressions. The standardized form shall be completed and submitted to the Council of Bishops no later than May 1, 2021. A duly authorized representative of the Council of Bishops is hereby authorized to execute such form agreements on behalf of the United Methodist Church. The Full Communion Agreement shall be in effect until December 31, 2028.

2. Gracious Affiliation and Gracious Reaffiliation Agreements.

a) The General Council on Finance and Administration is hereby authorized and directed to prepare a standard form Gracious Affiliation Agreement incorporating the processes and procedures set forth in ¶¶431F, 1510, 2554 and 2555 for use by the United Methodist Church and a Full Communion Expression. The standardized form shall be completed and submitted to the Council of Bishops no later than May 1, 2021. A duly authorized representative of the Council of Bishops is hereby authorized to execute such form agreements on behalf of the United Methodist Church. The standardized form also shall be publicly available and disseminated to the Conference Board of Trustees for each annual conference. The Gracious Affiliation Agreement shall be in effect until December 31, 2030.

3. Dispute Resolution Agreement.

The General Council on Finance and Administration is hereby directed and authorized to prepare a standard form Dispute Resolution Agreement that incorporate the processes and procedures set forth in ¶¶431F, 1510, 2554 and 2555 for use by the United Methodist Church and Full Communion Expressions no later than May 30, 2021. The terms of the agreement shall require use of the processes established by the Dispute Resolution Agreement in any dispute involving the (a) United Methodist Church and one or more Full Communion Expressions and (b) any dispute between Full Communion Expressions. The terms of the Dispute Resolution Agreement shall require the entities involved in any dispute to share equally the costs and expenses of any mediator or arbitrator. A duly authorized representative of the Council of Bishops is hereby authorized to execute such form agreements on behalf of the United Methodist Church. The Dispute Resolution Agreement shall be in effect until December 31, 2032.

4. Unless noted otherwise, all provisions of this paragraph shall take effect immediately upon adjournment of the General Conference for 2020 and shall expire December 31, 2028. The provisions of this paragraph shall take precedence over, and shall not be limited by, any other provisions of the Book of Discipline except the provisions of the Constitution.

¶ 431D *Qualified New Expression Organizing Conference - Plain Grace Plan*

1. Between the period from May 1, 2022 through June 30, 2022 each Qualified New Expression may hold an Organizing Conference for the purpose of establishing a new expression of Methodism. Each representative elected by a Qualified New Expression's caucus at an annual conference shall be conclusively deemed qualified to serve as a representative at a New Expression's Organizing Conference and shall be seated as a voting representative of the Organizing Conference. A person elected to serve as annual conference representative may serve as a representative solely in the Organizing Conference for the Qualified New Expression for which that person was elected.

2. Each Qualified New Expression may seat additional at-large representatives with such Qualified New Expression being solely responsible for determining any qualifications for, and the number of, at-large representatives at the Organizing Conference. A Qualified New Expression may select at-large representatives that are greater in number than the representatives elected by annual conferences of the United Methodist Church. A Qualified New Expression may select as an at-large representative for the Organizing Conference a delegate to an annual conference who was not elected as a representative of the annual conference.

3. Qualified New Expressions shall make decisions using democratic processes but are free to establish their own internal rules of order for the Organizing Conference. In order to facilitate Organizing Conferences' use of democratic processes, such conferences may employ technological alternatives to in-person conferences, including, but not limited to, multiple geographic sites (including remote sites participating via simulcast). Organizing Conferences may employ electronic voting (including remote electronic voting). Such voting methods and procedures are solely the responsibility of the Qualified New Expressions.

4. Each Organizing Conference shall be free to establish its Book of Discipline by majority vote of the annual conference representatives and the at-large representatives voting as a single house. A Qualified New Expression shall have the right to choose whether to have a constitution and, if adopted, the provisions of such constitution. Each Qualified New Expression shall have the right to establish its doctrinal statements, set its own standards for church membership, ordination, superintendency and all other matters of polity and doctrine. Notwithstanding anything in this sub-paragraph, a Qualified New Expression that fails to adopt provisions sufficient to fulfill the intentions listed in ¶431B before June 30, 2022 shall cease to be a Qualified New Expression and shall not be entitled to the benefits of status as a Full Communion Expression nor to employ the procedures available to Full Communion Expressions. A Gracious Affiliation Agreement may not be employed by a local church seeking to join an expression of Methodism that is not a Full Communion Expression.

5. All provisions of this paragraph shall take effect immediately upon adjournment of the General Conference for 2020 and shall expire December 31, 2022. The provisions of this paragraph shall take precedence over, and shall not be limited by, any other provisions of the Book of Discipline except the provisions of the Constitution.

¶ 431E Full Communion Expressions - Plain Grace Plan

No later than August 1, 2022, each Qualified New Expression desiring to become a Full Communion Expression shall lodge its Book of Discipline establishing its adoption of the Common Core, an executed Full Communion Agreement, an executed Gracious Affiliation Agreement and an executed Dispute Resolution Agreement with the Executive Secretary of the Council of Bishops. The Book of Discipline so

lodged shall be in writing and in a PDF form that may be posted directly on the Internet. No later than August 15, 2022, the Council of Bishops shall verify that the New Expression's Book of Discipline adopts the Common Core and that the Full Communion Agreement, Gracious Affiliation Agreement and Dispute Resolution Agreement have been executed; the Council of Bishops is free to establish their own internal procedure to verify such compliance. After such verification, the Council of Bishops shall notify such Qualified New Expression that it is a Full Communion Expression not later than August 22, 2022. The Council of Bishops shall arrange to have a copy of each Full Communion Expression's Book of Discipline posted online and available to the general public for review and download no later than August 22, 2022. All provisions of this paragraph shall take effect immediately upon adjournment of the General Conference for 2020 and shall expire December 31, 2028. The provisions of this paragraph shall take precedence over, and shall not be limited by, any other provisions of the Book of Discipline except the provisions of the Constitution.

¶ 431F *Gross and Net Missional Shares and Missional Resource Allocation Formula - Plain Grace Plan*

1. Beginning on July 1, 2023, and continuing on each July 1 through 2027, each Full Communion Expression shall submit and certify its total professing membership as of May 1 to the General Council of Finance and Administration of the United Methodist Church. For each Full Communion Expression, the General Council of Finance and Administration shall calculate a Gross Missional Share by dividing the Full Communion Expression's total professing membership by the sum of United Methodist Church's total professing membership plus all Full Communion Expression's professing membership as of May 1 of the current calendar year. The Gross Missional Share shall be a percentage calculated to four decimal places. Each Full Communion Expression's Gross Missional Share shall be calculated separately for each year through 2028. The Gross Missional Shares calculated for 2027 shall be used for Fiscal Year 2028 and for calculations made under ¶2554. If a Full Communion Expression fails to provide its total professing membership as of May 1 of any calendar year on or before July 1 of that year, the General Council of Finance and Administration of the United Methodist Church shall make a good faith estimate of total professing membership for that Full Communion Expression and such estimate shall be used for all calculations for the applicable period.

2. Through the close of the United Methodist Church's fiscal year 2028, each Full Communion Expression shall commit to pay, each fiscal year, their Gross Missional Share of the following budgeted line items of the United Methodist Church: a) that portion of the World Service Fund used to support Central Conferences, said proportion being calculated by General Council on Finance and Administration but expressly excluding all budgeted amounts for those Boards, Commissions and Institutions identified in sub-paragraph 3 of this paragraph; b) that portion of the Episcopal Fund representing salaries, housing and office expenses to support Bishops in Central Conferences, said portion being calculated by General Council on Finance and Administration; c) the Black College Fund; d) the Africa University Fund; e) General Commission on Archives and History; and, f) the General Administrative Fund.

3. Through the close of the United Methodist Church's fiscal year 2024, each Full Communion Expression shall commit to pay, each fiscal year, their Gross Missional Share of the following budgeted line items of the United Methodist Church: a) the General Board of Church and Society; b) the General Board of Discipleship; c) the General Board of Global Ministries; d) the General Board of Higher Education and Ministry; e) the General Commission on Communication; f) the United Methodist Women; g) the General Commission on Religion and Race; h) the General Commission on the Status and Role of Women; and, i) the General Commission on United Methodist Men.

4. On July 15 of each calendar year through 2028, the General Council of Finance and Administration shall provide each Full Communion Expression with its Gross Missional Share percentage and an invoice for the total amount of each budgeted line item as required under this paragraph. Said invoice amount is referred to herein as the Missional Invoice Amount and shall be payable in full by the Full Communion Expression by close of the United Methodist Church's fiscal year. Beginning in Fiscal Year 2024 and for each Fiscal Year through 2028, each Full Communion Expression shall pay an amount equal to one half of its prior fiscal year's Missional Invoice Amount on or before July 1 of the fiscal year; such amount shall be credited as a payment on its current year Missional Invoice Amount.

5. The phrase "Net Missional Share" shall be an amount equal to an Full Communion's Expression's Missional Invoice Amount multiplied by the actual percentage of budgeted items paid by professing members of the United Methodist Church for a fiscal year. Each Full Communion Expression's Net Missional Share shall be calculated for each fiscal year through 2028.

6. All provisions of this paragraph shall take effect immediately upon adjournment of the General Conference for 2020 and shall expire December 31, 2028. The provisions of this paragraph shall take precedence over, and shall not be limited by, any other provisions of the Book of Discipline except the provisions of the Constitution.

III. PROVISIONS RELATED TO ANNUAL CONFERENCES:

¶ 673 *Creating New Expressions of Methodism through Gracious Affiliation – Plain Grace Plan*

1. Basis—Because of the current deep conflict within The United Methodist Church, the Plain Grace Plan is adopted. It is the intent of the Plain Grace Plan to multiply new Wesleyan expressions consistent with the Common Core of the United Methodist Church and to allow the diverse members of the United Methodist Church to be able to live into their preferred expression of Methodism while offering grace to all of God's children. It is the further intent of the Plain Grace Plan to create a Full Communion Relationship with such newly created Wesleyan expressions. The Plain Grace Plan consists of the following paragraphs in the Book of Discipline: ¶¶ 248A, 431A-F, 673-680, 725, 1510 and 2553-2555.

2. All provisions of Plain Grace Plan shall take effect immediately upon adjournment of the General Conference for 2020. Each provision of the Plain Grace Plan shall set forth its expiration date. The provisions of the Plain Grace Plan adopted as part of the Book of Discipline shall take precedence over, and shall not be limited by, any other provisions of the Book of Discipline except the provisions of the Constitution.

¶ 674 *Annual Conference Gracious Affiliation and Gracious Reaffiliation Agreements - Plain Grace Plan*

1. On or before January 1, 2022 the Conference Board of Trustees for each annual conference shall adopt a recommended standardized form Gracious Affiliation Agreement to be used in those circumstances where a local church joins a Full Communion Expression. The Conference Board of Trustees may use a standardized form prepared by the General Council on Finance and Administration but shall not be required to do so; however, any form adopted by the annual conference shall incorporate the processes and procedures set forth in ¶¶ 431F, 1510, 2554 and 2555 to the extent those processes and procedures apply to an annual conference or local church. The Gracious Affiliation Agreement shall establish the terms and conditions under which a local church may join a Full Communion Expression. In addition each standardized Gracious Affiliation Agreement shall include (a) a

provision binding the local church to agree to the arbitration agreement existing between the local church's Full Communion Expression and the United Methodist Church and (b) a provision releasing the Trust Clause pursuant to the terms established by ¶2555 . Such form agreements shall be submitted to the annual conference on or before December 31, 2022 for approval and adoption by a simple majority. The effect of an annual conference approving and adopting such agreement shall be to approve any local church joining a Full Communion Expression by executing such an approved standardized agreement without further vote or action by the annual conference; however, such affiliation or reaffiliation shall only be effective during the time periods set forth in ¶248A.

2. On or before January 1, 2022, the Conference Board of Trustees for each annual conference shall adopt a recommended standardized form Gracious Reaffiliation Agreement to be used in those circumstances where a local church has joined a Full Communion Expression. The Conference Board of Trustees may use a standardized form prepared by the General Council on Finance and Administration but shall not be required to do so; however, any form adopted by the annual conference shall incorporate the processes and procedures set forth in ¶¶ 431F, 1510, 2554 and 2555 to the extent those processes and procedures apply to an annual conference or local church. The Gracious Reaffiliation Agreement shall establish the terms and conditions under which a local church may join or rejoin the annual conference. In addition each standardized Gracious Reaffiliation Agreement shall include (a) a provision binding the local church to agree to the arbitration agreement existing between the local church's Full Communion Expression and the United Methodist Church. Such form agreements shall be submitted to the annual conference on or before December 31, 2022 for approval and adoption by a simple majority. The effect of an annual conference approving and adopting such agreement shall be to approve any local church that was previously a member of the United Methodist Church to join or rejoin the annual conference by executing such an approved agreement without further vote or action by the annual conference; however, such reaffiliation shall only be effective during the time periods set forth in ¶248A.

¶ 675 *First Called Special Conference for Gracious Affiliation - Plain Grace Plan*

1. Each annual conference shall hold a First Called Special Conference during the time period between August 15 and November 15, 2021 for the sole business purpose of electing representatives to the Organizing Conferences of entities which have become Qualified New Expressions under ¶431B. The delegates to the First Called Special Conference shall be those delegates serving as annual conference delegates for 2021. It is the duty of the annual conference to elect representatives eligible to attend Qualified New Expressions' Organizing Conferences. An annual conference may select representatives equal in number to the annual conference's delegates to General Conference to attend each Qualified New Expression's Organizing Conference. No representative may attend more than one Organizing Conference. The annual conference shall exercise autonomous control over the agenda, business, discussion, and vote on the question of considering Qualified New Expressions; however, such control shall be exercised in a procedure that is fair, equitable and consistent with the Constitution and the principle of legality. The procedures set forth in sub-paragraphs (a) through (d) may be employed by the annual conference and are hereby deemed procedures that are fair and equitable and consistent with the Constitution and the principle of legality.

a) The Called Special Conference shall identify all Qualified New Expressions and by a fair and equitable process, determined solely by the annual conference, provide to the delegates information concerning each Qualified New Expression. Written materials concerning a proposed Qualified New Expression may

be submitted to the delegates prior to the Called Special Conference by the annual conference or the Qualified New Expression.

b) After receiving information concerning each Qualified New Expression, each delegate shall self-select no more than one Qualified New Expression caucus in which to participate. Each delegate may participate in one, but only one, caucus. A delegate may choose not to participate in any caucus.

c) Each caucus shall elect persons to serve as qualified representatives at the Qualified New Expression's Organizing Conference. The total number of representatives elected by each caucus shall be equal to the number of General Conference delegates allocated to the annual conference. There shall be no requirement that the clergy/laity representative be equal in number and it is expressly understood that such result may not occur. Under no circumstances are the persons elected to be considered delegates as that term is used in the Constitution or Book of Discipline; such persons are representatives of the caucus and shall perform their duties as representatives of the New Expression, not delegates of the United Methodist Church.

d) If a caucus group has fewer persons participating in the caucus than the number of General Conference delegates allocated to the annual conference, each person participating in the caucus shall be deemed elected; however, no additional persons shall be eligible to serve as caucus representatives from the annual conference. If no delegate chooses to participate in a Qualified New Expression's caucus group, the annual conference shall not select a representative to attend that Qualified New Expression's Organizing Conference.

2. Persons elected as representatives shall be responsible for their own expenses to attend a Qualified New Expression Organizing Conference. No annual conference representative shall be required to attend a Qualified New Expression Organizing Conference; attendance shall be voluntary. No annual conference shall reimburse or pay the expenses for any representative to attend a Qualified New Expression Organizing Conference unless it pays or reimburses expenses for all representatives to each Qualified New Expression Organizing Conference. Nothing in this provision shall prohibit Qualified New Expressions, local churches or individuals from contributing to, or reimbursing, the actual travel, housing and per diem meal expenses on behalf of representatives to a Qualified New Expression Organizing Conference; such reimbursement shall be calculated and paid on the same basis that the annual conference reimburses such expenses in the normal course of its activities.

3. A presiding Bishop of an annual conference may attend any Qualified New Expression Organizing Conference and shall not be limited to attending a single Organizing Conference. The presiding Bishop's role will be limited to that of a non-voting observer. A Qualified New Expression Organizing Conference may, in its sole discretion, allow a Bishop attending an Organizing Conference to participate in any worship service and have a voice during the business sessions of the Organizing Conference. A Bishop attending an Organizing Conference may, in their sole discretion, decline to participate in any one or more worship or business activities of the Organizing Conference. An annual conference may reimburse a presiding Bishop's actual travel, housing and per diem meal expenses for attendance at a Qualified New Expression Organizing Conference; such reimbursement shall to be calculated and paid on the same basis that the annual conference reimburses such expenses in the normal course of its activities.

4. On or before December 31, 2021, the annual conference shall notify each Qualified New Expression of the identity of the persons selected by the annual conference to be representatives to its Organizing Conference.

5. All provisions of this paragraph shall take effect immediately upon adjournment of the General Conference for 2020 and shall expire December 31, 2022. The provisions of this paragraph shall take precedence over, and shall not be limited by, any other provisions of the Book of Discipline except the provisions of the Constitution.

¶ 676 Full Communion Expression's Invitation to Annual Conferences - Plain Grace Plan

Between August 15, 2022 and September 15, 2022, a Full Communion Expression may invite any annual conference of the United Methodist Church to join it. A Full Communion Expression's invitation may be in simple form, signed by an authorized representative of the Full Communion Expression with no additional formalities required. A Full Communion Expression shall not be required to issue an invitation for any annual conference to join; however, failure to invite an annual conference to join it before September 15, 2022 shall bar that Full Communion Expression from submitting an invitation to that annual conference before January 1, 2026. A Full Communion Expression may issue an invitation for a local church to join it even within the time frames outlined in ¶¶678-680 even if it has not invited the annual conference to join it. The invitation shall be delivered to the office of the presiding Bishop for the annual conference with a copy delivered to the office of the Executive Secretary for the Council of Bishops. The invitation may be delivered in person, by mail or by electronic means. All provisions of this paragraph shall take effect immediately upon adjournment of the General Conference for 2020 and shall expire December 31, 2023. The provisions of this paragraph shall take precedence over, and shall not be limited by, any other provisions of the Book of Discipline except the provisions of the Constitution.

¶ 677 Second Called Special Conference for Gracious Affiliation - Plain Grace Plan

1. An annual conference that has not received a timely invitation from any Full Communion Expression shall not hold a Second Called Special Conference.

2. If an annual conference has received an invitation from a Full Communion Expression, the annual conference shall hold a Second Called Special Conference during the time period between October 15 and November 15, 2022 for the sole business purpose of considering whether to affiliate with each Full Communion Expression that has issued a timely invitation to the annual conference in compliance with ¶676. The delegates to the Second Called Special Conference shall be those delegates serving as annual conference delegates for 2022. The annual conference may determine fair and equitable procedures for each inviting Full Communion Expression to present itself as a candidate for affiliation. The annual conference shall exercise autonomous control over the agenda, business, discussion, and vote on the question of joining a Full Communion Expressions but such control shall be exercised in a procedure that is fair, equitable and consistent with the Constitution and the principle of legality. The procedures set forth in sub-paragraphs a) and b) may be employed by the annual conference and are deemed procedures that are fair and equitable and consistent with the Constitution and the principle of legality.

a) An annual conference's Called Special Conference will determine, as an initial matter, whether one-third of the delegates desire to consider the question of affiliating with one or more Full Communion Expressions. If a one-third favorable vote is not received, the annual conference shall take no further action on the question of joining a Full Communion Expression before 2026. If one third of the delegates vote to consider the question of affiliating with one or more Full Communion Expressions, the annual conference shall vote to determine its Preferred Full Communion Expression. All Full Communion Expressions which have issued a timely invitation to the annual conference shall be

included on the initial preference ballot. Any Full Communion Expression receiving a simple majority of the delegate voting on the preference ballot shall be considered the annual conference's Preferred Full Communion Expression. In the event no Full Communion Expression receives a simple majority in the first preference ballot, the Full Communion Expression receiving the fewest votes shall be eliminated and an additional ballot shall be taken that includes the remaining Full Communion Expressions. Additional preference ballots shall be taken following this procedure until one Full Communion Expression receives a simple majority of the delegates voting on the preference ballot.

b) After selecting a Preferred Full Communion Expression, the annual conference shall vote on whether to join the Preferred Full Communion Expression. An annual conference may choose to join a Full Communion Expression by a simple majority.

3. An annual conference shall notify the president of its College of Bishops of its decision within 30 days of adjournment of its Called Special Conference. If an annual conference votes to join a Full Communion Expression, the jurisdictional or central conference shall reallocate the territory of the former annual conference among the remaining annual conferences or create a new annual conference.

4. After November 15, 2022, no annual conference may conduct an additional vote to join a Full Communion Expression on or before December 31, 2025.

5. All provisions of this paragraph shall take effect immediately upon adjournment of the General Conference for 2020 and shall expire December 31, 2028. The provisions of this paragraph shall take precedence over, and shall not be limited by, any other provisions of the Book of Discipline except the provisions of the Constitution.

¶ 678 Procedure where Annual Conference Remains in Connection with the United Methodist Church - Plain Grace Plan

1. If a Second Called Special Conference is not held or if an annual conference declines to join a Full Communion Expression during the period from November 15, 2022 through March 31, 2023 local churches, clergy and Bishops may join a Full Communion Expression by following the procedures set forth in this paragraph.

2. After a church conference vote taken in compliance with ¶248A, a local church may join any Full Communion Expression by executing the Gracious Affiliation Agreement and Dispute Resolution Agreement approved by the annual conference. An Affiliation Agreement will authorize a Local Church to affiliate with any Full Communion Expression in those circumstances where the Local Church's annual conference did not vote, as an annual conference, to join the Full Communion Expression selected by the local church.

3. Clergy of an annual conference may transfer to a Full Communion Expression on terms and conditions established by the Full Communion Expression by executing an Affiliation Agreement in a form provided by the Full Communion Expression after an invitation to join has been issued by the Full Communion Expression. Promptly upon executing such agreement the clergy person shall provide a copy of the agreement to the clergy person's United Methodist Church District Superintendent. Such notice shall transfer the clergy person's membership from the United Methodist Church to the Full

Communion Expression. A Full Communion Expression is under no obligation to issue an invitation to join to any clergy person. The General Board of Pension and Health Benefits is directed by the General Conference to amend the Clergy Retirement Security Program such that an active clergy participant who transfers to a Full Communion Expression under ¶678 or 680 of the Book of Discipline will be treated as a terminated vested participant under the Clergy Retirement Security Program. The transferring clergy's accrued pension benefits shall be secured and protected from future disruptions by converting such benefits to an actuarially equivalent account balance, using factors corresponding to those used when determining annual conference plan sponsor contributions to the Clergy Retirement Security Program. Such converted benefits, along with all other retirement account balances, shall be transferred to the United Methodist Personal Investment Plan, a voluntary defined contribution plan maintained by the General Board of Pension and Health Benefits under ¶ 1504.2. The General Board of Pension and Health Benefits is directed, authorized, and empowered to amend the Clergy Retirement Security Program, effective as of the close of the 2020 General Conference and in the manner described above. The transfer shall not otherwise affect the clergy person's vested pension rights under any plan of the Clergy Retirement Security Program.

4. A presiding Bishop of an annual conference may transfer to a Full Communion Expression on terms and conditions established by the Full Communion Expression by executing an Affiliation Agreement in a form provided by the Full Communion Expression after an invitation to join has been issued by the Full Communion Expression. Promptly upon executing such agreement the Bishop shall provide a copy of the agreement to the Council of Bishops. Such notice shall transfer the Bishop's membership from the United Methodist Church to the Full Communion Expression. A Full Communion Expression is under no obligation to issue an invitation to join to any Bishop. The General Board of Pension and Health Benefits is directed by the General Conference to amend the Clergy Retirement Security Program such that an active Bishop who transfers to a Full Communion Expression under ¶678 or 680 of the Book of Discipline will be treated as a terminated vested participant under the Clergy Retirement Security Program. The transferring Bishop's accrued pension benefits shall be secured and protected from future disruptions by converting such benefits to an actuarially equivalent account balance, using factors corresponding to those used when determining annual conference plan sponsor contributions to the Clergy Retirement Security Program. Such converted benefits, along with all other retirement account balances, shall be transferred to the United Methodist Personal Investment Plan, a voluntary defined contribution plan maintained by the General Board of Pension and Health Benefits under ¶ 1504.2. The General Board of Pension and Health Benefits is directed, authorized, and empowered to amend the Clergy Retirement Security Program, effective as of the close of the 2020 General Conference and in the manner described above. The transfer shall not otherwise affect the clergy person's vested pension rights under any plan of the Clergy Retirement Security Program. The transfer shall not otherwise affect the Bishop's vested pension rights under any plan of the Clergy Retirement Security Program or other pension plan sponsored by the United Methodist Church.

5. All provisions of this paragraph shall take effect immediately upon adjournment of the General Conference for 2020 and shall expire December 31, 2028. The provisions of this paragraph shall take precedence over, and shall not be limited by, any other provisions of the Book of Discipline except the provisions of the Constitution.

¶ 679 Procedure where an Annual Conference joins a Full Communion Expression - Plain Grace Plan

1. The decision by an annual conference to join a Full Communion Expression shall not transfer clergy or a presiding Bishop to the Full Communion Expression. The presiding Bishop, District Superintendents

and clergy shall continue to serve until such time as replacements are appointed by the Full Communion Expression. The Full Communion Expression shall be responsible for reimbursing the United Methodist Church for actual salary, benefits and reasonable and necessary expenses paid to Bishops by the United Methodist Church until a replacement is appointed. Reimbursement payments shall be made within sixty days of the United Methodist Church invoicing the Full Communion Expression. Salary, Pension and Insurance Payments to clergy made by local churches of Full Communion Expressions or the annual conference shall be treated as payments by the Full Communion Expression and shall not be invoiced to, nor reimbursed by, the Full Communion Expression.

2. In those circumstances where an annual conference joins a Full Communion Expression, all property, except cash and cash equivalent property, owned by the annual conference shall continue to be held in trust for the United Methodist Church pursuant to ¶2501 until the property is released by operation of ¶¶ 2554 and 2555. All cash and cash equivalent property shall be retained by the annual conference for use as a Full Communion Expression; however, such cash or cash equivalents shall be used to satisfy the annual conference's per diem apportionment liability for 2022. Such cash or cash equivalents may be used to reimburse the United Methodist Church for actual salary, benefits and reasonable and necessary expenses paid to Bishops and Clergy until a replacement is appointed.

3. In this circumstances where an annual conference joins a Full Communion Expression, and cash and cash equivalents are transferred to the Full Communion Expression annual conference, the Full Communion Expression annual conference shall pay to the United Methodist Church a per diem amount to satisfy its unpaid apportionment obligations for 2022 based on a per diem calculation; the total amount of this liability is referred to as the "unpaid per diem apportionment liability." The unpaid per diem apportionment liability shall equal the conference's actual total of 2022 apportionments paid before joining the Full Communion Expression, divided by the number of days in 2022 before the annual conference joined the Full Communion Expression. The unpaid apportionment liability shall equal three hundred sixty five minus the number of days in 2022 before the annual conference joined the Full Communion Expression, multiplied by the per diem amount, with such unpaid apportionment liability being capped at the annual conference's total apportionment amount for 2022. If the the total apportionments paid by the annual conference to the United Methodist Church for fiscal year 2022 (calculated by adding the annual conference's apportionments paid plus the unpaid per diem apportionment liability) are less than the apportionments paid in the prior fiscal year, then the difference shall be added to the unpaid per diem apportionment liability and become a 2022 apportionment liability of the annual conference. All fiscal year 2022 apportionment liabilities of an annual conference owing to the United Methodist Church shall be paid no later than January 31, 2023.

4. In those circumstances where an annual conference joins a Full Communion Expression as a result of action taken at the Second Special Called Conference, during the period from November 15, 2022 through March 31, 2023 a local church may reaffiliate with the United Methodist Church or join a Full Communion Expression other that the Full Communion Expression joined by its annual conference by following the procedures set forth in this paragraph.

5. In those circumstances where an annual conference joins a Full Communion Expression, after a church conference vote taken in compliance with ¶248A, a local church may reaffiliate with the United Methodist Church by notifying the College of Bishops for its Jurisdiction or Central Conference. If such reaffiliation occurs in the time period between November 15, 2022 and March 31, 2023 the reaffiliation shall relate back to the date of the annual conference vote at the Second Special Called Conference and the local church shall be deemed to have been a member of the United Methodist Church continuously

and shall not be considered to have joined a Full Communion Expression. If such reaffiliation occurs after March 31, 2023 the local church will be treated as having been a member of the Full Communion Expression until the date of such reaffiliation and the local church's professing membership shall be included in the calculation of the Missional Resource Allocation Formula during the time it was a member of the Full Communion Expression.

6. In those circumstances where an annual conference joins a Full Communion Expression, during the period from November 15, 2022 through March 31, 2023, after a church conference vote taken in compliance with ¶1248A, a local church may join any Full Communion Expression other than the one joined by its annual conference by executing the Gracious Affiliation Agreement and Dispute Resolution Agreement approved by the annual conference.

7. In those circumstances where an annual conference joins a Full Communion Expression, Clergy of an annual conference may transfer to a Full Communion Expression on terms and conditions established by the Full Communion Expression by executing an Affiliation Agreement in a form provided by the Full Communion Expression after an invitation to join has been issued by the Full Communion Expression. Promptly upon executing such agreement the clergy person shall provide a copy of the agreement to the clergy person's United Methodist Church District Superintendent. Such notice shall transfer the clergy person's membership from the United Methodist Church to the Full Communion Expression. A Full Communion Expression is under no obligation to issue an invitation to join to any clergy person. The General Board of Pension and Health Benefits is directed by the General Conference to amend the Clergy Retirement Security Program such that an active clergy participant who transfers to a Full Communion Expression under ¶1679 or 680 of the Book of Discipline will be treated as a terminated vested participant under the Clergy Retirement Security Program. The transferring clergy's accrued pension benefits shall be secured and protected from future disruptions by converting such benefits to an actuarially equivalent account balance, using factors corresponding to those used when determining annual conference plan sponsor contributions to the Clergy Retirement Security Program. Such converted benefits, along with all other retirement account balances, shall be transferred to the United Methodist Personal Investment Plan, a voluntary defined contribution plan maintained by the General Board of Pension and Health Benefits under ¶ 1504.2. The General Board of Pension and Health Benefits is directed, authorized, and empowered to amend the Clergy Retirement Security Program, effective as of the close of the 2020 General Conference and in the manner described above. The transfer shall not otherwise affect the clergy persons vested pension rights under any plan of the Clergy Retirement Security Program.

8. In those circumstances where an annual conference joins a Full Communion Expression, a presiding Bishop of an annual conference may transfer to a Full Communion Expression on terms and conditions established by the Full Communion Expression by executing an Affiliation Agreement in a form provided by the Full Communion Expression after an invitation to join has been issued by the Full Communion Expression. Promptly upon executing such agreement the Bishop shall provide a copy of the agreement to the Council of Bishops. Such notice shall transfer the Bishop's membership from the United Methodist Church to the Full Communion Expression. A Full Communion Expression is under no obligation to issue an invitation to join to any Bishop. The General Board of Pension and Health Benefits is directed by the General Conference to amend the Clergy Retirement Security Program such that an active Bishop who transfers to a Full Communion Expression under ¶1679 or 680 of the Book of Discipline will be treated as a terminated vested participant under the Clergy Retirement Security Program. The transferring Bishop's accrued pension benefits shall be secured and protected from future disruptions by converting such benefits to an actuarially equivalent account balance, using factors corresponding to

those used when determining annual conference plan sponsor contributions to the Clergy Retirement Security Program. Such converted benefits, along with all other retirement account balances, shall be transferred to the United Methodist Personal Investment Plan, a voluntary defined contribution plan maintained by the General Board of Pension and Health Benefits under ¶ 1504.2. The General Board of Pension and Health Benefits is directed, authorized, and empowered to amend the Clergy Retirement Security Program, effective as of the close of the 2020 General Conference and in the manner described above. The transfer shall not otherwise affect the clergy persons vested pension rights under any plan of the Clergy Retirement Security Program. The transfer shall not otherwise affect the Bishop's vested pension rights under any plan of the Clergy Retirement Security Program or other pension plan sponsored by the United Methodist Church.

9. All provisions of this paragraph shall take effect immediately upon adjournment of the General Conference for 2020 and shall expire December 31, 2028. The provisions of this paragraph shall take precedence over, and shall not be limited by, any other provisions of the Book of Discipline except the provisions of the Constitution.

¶ 680 *Additional Time Periods for Joining a Full Communion Expression or Reaffiliating with the United Methodist Church - Plain Grace Plan*

1. The following procedures for joining a Full Communion Expression or Reaffiliating with the United Methodist Church shall be available for local churches during the periods from (a) January 1, 2026 to March 31, 2026 and (b) January 1, 2027 through March 31, 2027.

2. A Full Communion Expression may invite any annual conference of the United Methodist Church or another Full Communion Expression wholly or partially within its geographic boundaries to join it. An invitation to join may be issued during the periods from (a) January 1, 2026 to March 31, 2026 and (b) January 1, 2027 through March 31, 2027. A Full Communion Expression's invitation may be in simple form, signed by an authorized representative of the Full Communion Expression with no additional formalities required. A Full Communion Expression shall not be required to issue an invitation for any annual conference to join. The invitation shall be delivered to the office of the presiding Bishop for the annual conference with a copy delivered to the office of the Executive Secretary for the Council of Bishops. If an invitation is issued during either of the time periods set forth in this sub-paragraph, the question of joining a Full Communion Expression shall be taken up as a regular item of business at the annual conference's next regularly scheduled Annual Conference. If an invitation is issued, the processes set forth in ¶677 may be used to vote upon joining a Full Communion Expression.

3. An annual conference of the United Methodist Church may invite any annual conference of any Full Communion Expression to reaffiliate with it. An invitation to join may be issued during the periods from (a) January 1, 2026 to March 31, 2026 and (b) January 1, 2027 through March 31, 2027. An annual conference's invitation may be in simple form, signed by an authorized representative of the annual conference with no additional formalities required. An annual conference shall not be required to issue an invitation for annual conference of a Full Communion Expression to reaffiliate. The invitation shall be delivered to the office of Bishop, or its equivalent, for the annual conference for the Full Communion Expression with a copy delivered to the office of the Executive Secretary for the Council of Bishops. If an invitation is issued during the time periods set forth in this sub-paragraph, the question of an annual conference reaffiliating with the United Methodist Church shall be taken up as a regular item of business at the Full Communion Expression's annual conference's next regularly scheduled annual conference. If

an invitation is issued, the processes set forth in ¶677 shall be used by the Full Communion Expression's annual conference to decide upon Reaffiliation.

4. During the periods from (a) January 1, 2026 to March 31, 2026 and (b) January 1, 2027 through March 31, 2027, after a church conference vote taken in compliance with ¶248A, a local church of an annual conference of the United Methodist Church may join any Full Communion Expression by executing the Gracious Affiliation Agreement and Dispute Resolution Agreement approved by its annual conference.

5. During the periods from (a) January 1, 2026 to March 31, 2026 and (b) January 1, 2027 through March 31, 2027, after a church conference vote taken in compliance with ¶248A, a local church of a Full Communion Expression may reaffiliate with an annual conference of the United Methodist Church by executing the Gracious Reaffiliation Agreement prepared by the annual conference Board of Trustees and previously approved by the annual conference. A local church reaffiliating with the United Methodist Church shall remain bound by its previously executed Dispute Resolution Agreement.

6. Clergy of a Full Communion Expression who were previously clergy in the United Methodist Church may transfer to an annual conference of the United Methodist Church on terms and conditions established by an annual conference of the United Methodist Church by executing an Affiliation Agreement in a form provided by the annual conference after an invitation to join has been issued by the annual conference. Any such invitation, including the terms and conditions of such invitation, shall be approved in advance by a three fourths majority of the annual conference Board of Ordained Ministry. Promptly upon executing such agreement the clergy person shall provide a copy of the agreement to the presiding Bishop of the annual conference. Such notice shall transfer the clergy person's membership from the Full Communion Expression to the United Methodist Church, subject to the terms and conditions established by the annual conference. The terms and conditions established by the annual conference shall be consistent with the terms of the Book of Discipline. No annual conference of the United Methodist Church is under any obligation to issue such an invitation to any clergy person.

7. Clergy of an annual conference may transfer to a Full Communion Expression on terms and conditions established by the Full Communion Expression by executing an Affiliation Agreement in a form provided by the Full Communion Expression after an invitation to join has been issued by the Full Communion Expression. Promptly upon executing such agreement the clergy person shall provide a copy of the agreement to the clergy person's United Methodist Church District Superintendent. Such notice shall transfer the clergy person's membership from the United Methodist Church to the Full Communion Expression. A Full Communion Expression is under no obligation to issue an invitation to join to any clergy person.

8. A Bishop of an annual conference may transfer to a Full Communion Expression on terms and conditions established by the Full Communion Expression by executing an Affiliation Agreement in a form provided by the Full Communion Expression after an invitation to join has been issued by the Full Communion Expression. Promptly upon executing such agreement the Bishop shall provide a copy of the agreement to the Council of Bishops. Such notice shall transfer the Bishop's membership from the United Methodist Church to the Full Communion Expression. A Full Communion Expression is under no obligation to issue an invitation to join to any Bishop. The transfer shall not affect the Bishop's vested pension rights under any plan of the Clergy Retirement Security Program or other pension plan sponsored by the United Methodist Church; however, if provided in the benefit plan, transfer may

terminate the Bishop's rights to continued contributions under the plan. In the event of any conflict between an applicable plan of the Clergy Retirement Security Program or other pension plan sponsored by the United Methodist Church and this paragraph, the terms of the plan shall govern.

9. All provisions of this paragraph shall take effect immediately upon adjournment of the General Conference for 2020 and shall expire December 31, 2028. The provisions of this paragraph shall take precedence over, and shall not be limited by, any other provisions of the Book of Discipline except the provisions of the Constitution.

IV. PROVISION RELATED TO THE GENERAL PROVISIONS FOR ADMINISTRATIVE ORDER:

¶ 725 *Proposed Operational Plans for Agencies and Institutions - Plain Grace Plan*

1. No later than May 1, 2023 the General Board of Church and Society, General Board of Discipleship, General Board of Global Ministries, General Board of Higher Education and Ministry, General Commission on Communication, United Methodist Women, General Commission on Religion and Race, General Commission on the Status and Role of Women, General Commission on United Methodist Men shall prepare and publicly disseminate a proposed operational plan to be submitted for review and action by the General Conference in 2024. Each operational plan shall evaluate any and all structural and financial changes necessary for effective ministry and service through December 31, 2028. Such plans may include proposed structural or governance changes. Such plans may include a proposal for the Board or Commission to transfer to a Full Communion Expression and establish the proposed financial terms for such transfer. Such plans may include proposed methods to provide services to Full Communion Expressions and to denominations in the Wesleyan Tradition. Such operational plans may include proposed disposition of assets, merger or cessation as an ongoing entity. Such proposed operational plan shall identify any contemplated disposition of assets reasonably anticipated to occur before December 31, 2028. Such operational plan shall also identify any assets that the entity proposes to accept from the United Methodist Church by means of purchase or other transfer and the estimated fair market value of such assets. Any petitions required to implement the proposed operational plan shall be submitted on behalf of the agency in time for consideration by General Conference in 2024.

2. No later than May 1, 2023 those agencies and institutions of the United Methodist Church other than those listed in sub-paragraph 1 may prepare and publicly disseminate a proposed operational plan to be submitted for review and action by the General Conference in 2024. Each operational plan shall evaluate any and all structural and financial changes necessary for effective ministry and service through December 31, 2028. Such plans may include proposed structural or governance changes. Such plans may include a proposal for the institution to transfer to a Full Communion Expression and establish the proposed financial terms for such transfer. Any petitions required to implement the proposed operational plan shall be submitted on behalf of the institution in time for consideration by General Conference in 2024. For purposes of this sub-paragraph, the phrase "agencies and institutions" shall refer to those agencies and institutions identified in Paragraph 2501 of the Book of Discipline.

3. All provisions of this paragraph shall take effect immediately upon adjournment of the General Conference for 2020 and shall expire December 31, 2024. The provisions of this paragraph shall take precedence over, and shall not be limited by, any other provisions of the Book of Discipline except the provisions of the Constitution.

V. PROVISION RELATED TO GENERAL BOARD OF PENSION AND HEALTH BENEFITS:

¶ 1510 *Pension Resource Allocation Formula - Plain Grace Plan*

1. Basis—Because of the current deep conflict within The United Methodist Church, the Plain Grace Plan is adopted. It is the intent of the Plain Grace Plan to multiply new Wesleyan expressions consistent with the Common Core of the United Methodist Church and to allow the diverse members of the United Methodist Church to be able to live into their preferred expression of Methodism while offering grace to all of God's children. It is the further intent of the Plain Grace Plan to create a Full Communion Relationship with such newly created Wesleyan expressions. The Plain Grace Plan consists of the following paragraphs in the Book of Discipline: ¶¶248A, 431A-F, 673-680, 725, 1510 and 2553-2555.

2. If a U.S. annual conference joins a Full Communion Expression, it shall contribute to the General Board of Pension and Health Benefits the amount necessary to fully fund its obligations, as calculated herein, under the Clergy Retirement Security Program. The former annual conference's sponsorship of and legal responsibilities under the Clergy Retirement Security Program shall continue as a self-governing Methodist church or affiliated autonomous Methodist church. However, accruals and benefit improvements under the Clergy Retirement Security Program shall cease upon the former annual conference joining a Full Communion Expression. The sponsorship and administration of the Clergy Retirement Security Program for the former annual conference will be sequestered and treated separately from all other annual conferences that remain part of The United Methodist Church. For purposes of administering the Clergy Retirement Security Program in this manner, the General Board of Pension and Health Benefits is authorized and empowered to:

a) Identify which of the former annual conference's plan participants have chosen to remain with The United Methodist Church, and those who joined a Full Communion Expression based on records of service and membership of the annual conferences; non-clergy participants, e.g., surviving spouses, contingent annuitants, and alternate payees, will be deemed to remain associated with The United Methodist Church;

b) Calculate and sequester the assets of the former annual conference using the Gross Asset Percentage into two or more accounts. The total assets so sequestered shall equal the former annual conference's total assets. A sequestered account shall be established for each Full Communion Expression having members within the geographic boundary of the former annual conference and one account for the local churches choosing to remain as a local United Methodist Church under the provisions of ¶680. The total amount of the assets in each account shall be calculated by multiplying the total assets by the Gross Asset Percentage of each Full Communion Expression. For Fiscal Years 2026 and 2027, additional assets may be added to or transferred between such segregated accounts by taking into account any additional local churches that affiliate with a new expression or reaffiliate with the United Methodist Church. Such transfer shall be equal to the amount contributed by or on behalf of the local churches to the sequestered fund adjusted for any gains or losses suffered by the fund. After fiscal year 2027 the assets shall remain fixed;

c) Calculate the amount of any plan contributions required to be made by the Full Communion Expression's annual conference and the annual conference of the United Methodist Church to satisfy

liability for any defined benefit plan by using the Gross Asset Percentage formula to determine the Full Communion Expression's annual conference plan sponsor contributions to the Clergy Retirement Security Program and the United Methodist Church's annual conference plan sponsor contributions. The Full Communion Expression's annual conference and the United Methodist Church's annual conference plan contribution shall equal the annual conference's total required contribution multiplied by the Gross Asset Percentage. The initial amount of plan contribution shall remain in effect through December 31, 2025. For Fiscal Years 2026 and 2027, the contributions shall be recalculated taking into account any additional annual conferences or local churches that affiliate with a new expression or reaffiliate with the United Methodist Church under the provisions of ¶1680. As of fiscal year 2027 the percentage calculation shall remain fixed; however, it is recognized that although the percentage shall remain fixed the total amount of contribution may vary. If a Full Communion Expression does not satisfy any required ongoing contributions within a reasonable time under this paragraph or the terms of the Clergy Retirement Security Program, as determined by the General Board of Pension and Health Benefits, or the Full Communion Expression elects not to or fails to satisfy its legal sponsorship of the Clergy Retirement Security Program, the General Board of Pension and Health Benefits shall convert all accrued pension benefits of the Full Communion Expression's assigned participants to an actuarially equivalent account balance, adjusted, as necessary, to take into account the former annual conference's funding level of the Clergy Retirement Security Program. Such account balances, and all other retirement account balances, will be transferred to the United Methodist Personal Investment Plan. The General Board of Pension and Health Benefits may also take such actions if the Clergy Retirement Security Program is amended to require an account balance conversion for similar classes of participants, or if continuing administration for the former annual conference is no longer administratively reasonable.

d) Collaborate with the former annual conference or the Full Communion Expressions to determine how plan design changes may be requested by the former annual conference or Full Communion Expressions, and the scope and administrative reasonableness of amendments that may be made to the separate frozen part of the Clergy Retirement Security Program; and

e) Amend the Clergy Retirement Security Program effective as of the close of the 2020 General Conference to conform with this paragraph of The Book of Discipline.

3. Each Full Communion Expression annual conference shall be responsible for their pro rata share of administrative costs incurred by the General Board of Pension and Health Benefits by virtue of this paragraph. Such pro rata share shall be calculated using the Gross Asset Percentage for the applicable period.

4. Pursuant to ¶1504 sub-paragraph 17 of the Book of Discipline, the General Board of Pension and Health Benefits is hereby authorized and empowered to collaborate with any Full Communion Expression to establish retirement security programs to be sponsored by a Full Communion Expression or its annual conferences, agencies and institutions. Such plans may be designed to be in place effective August 15, 2022.

VI. PROVISIONS RELATED TO CHURCH PROPERTY

¶ 2553 *Disaffiliation of a Local Church - Gracious Exit - Plain Grace Plan*

1. Basis—Because of the current deep conflict within The United Methodist Church, the Plain Grace Plan is adopted. It is the intent of the Plain Grace Plan to multiply new Wesleyan expressions consistent with the Common Core of the United Methodist Church and to allow the diverse members of the United Methodist Church to be able to live into their preferred expression of Methodism while offering grace to all of God’s children. It is the further intent of the Plain Grace Plan to create a Full Communion Relationship with such newly created Wesleyan expressions. The Plain Grace Plan consists of the following paragraphs in the Book of Discipline: ¶¶248A, 431A-F, 673-680, 725, 1510 and 2553-2555. The provisions of this paragraph shall be used in those instances where a local church disaffiliates instead of using the provisions Gracious Affiliation provisions of the Plain Grace Plan.

2. Time Limits—The choice by a local church to disaffiliate with The United Methodist Church under this paragraph shall be made in sufficient time for the process for exiting the denomination to be completed prior to October 15, 2022. The provisions of ¶2553 expire on October 15, 2022 and shall not be used after that date.

3. Decision Making Process—The church conference shall be conducted in accordance with ¶ 248 and shall be held within sixty (60) days after the district superintendent calls for the church conference. In addition to the provisions of ¶ 246.8, special attention shall be made to give broad notice to the full professing membership of the local church regarding the time and place of a church conference called for this purpose and to use all means necessary, including electronic communication where possible, to communicate. The decision to disaffiliate from The United Methodist Church must be approved by a two-thirds (2/3) majority vote of the professing members of the local church present at the church conference.

4. Process Following Decision to Disaffiliate from The United Methodist Church—If the church conference votes to disaffiliate from The United Methodist Church, the terms and conditions for that disaffiliation shall be established by the board of trustees of the applicable annual conference, with the advice of the cabinet, the annual conference treasurer, the annual conference benefits officer, the director of connectional ministries, and the annual conference chancellor. The terms and conditions, including the effective date of disaffiliation, shall be memorialized in a binding Disaffiliation Agreement between the annual conference and the trustees of the local church, acting on behalf of the members. That agreement must be consistent with the following provisions:

- a) Standard Terms of the Disaffiliation Agreement. The General Council on Finance and Administration shall develop a standard form for Disaffiliation Agreements under this paragraph to protect The United Methodist Church as set forth in ¶ 807.9. The agreement shall include a recognition of the validity and applicability of ¶ 2501, notwithstanding the release of property therefrom. Annual conferences may develop additional standard terms that are not inconsistent with the standard form of this paragraph.
- b) Apportionments. The local church shall pay any unpaid apportionments for the 12 months prior to disaffiliation, as well as an additional 12 months of apportionments.
- c) Property. A disaffiliating local church shall have the right to retain its real and personal, tangible and intangible property. All transfers of property shall be made prior to disaffiliation. All costs for transfer of title or other legal work shall be borne by the disaffiliating local church.
- d) Pension Liabilities. The local church shall contribute withdrawal liability in an amount equal to its pro rata share of any aggregate unfunded pension obligations to the annual conference. The General Board of Pension and Health Benefits shall determine the aggregate funding obligations of the annual conference using market factors similar to a commercial annuity provider, from which the annual conference will determine the local church's share.

e) Other Liabilities. The local church shall satisfy all other debts, loans, and liabilities, or assign and transfer them to its new entity, prior to disaffiliation.

f) Payment Terms. Payment shall occur prior to the effective date of departure.

g) Disaffiliating Churches Continuing as Plan Sponsors of the General Board of Pension and Health Benefits Plans. The United Methodist Church believes that a local church disaffiliating under ¶ 2553 shall continue to share common religious bonds and convictions with The United Methodist Church based on shared Wesleyan theology and tradition and Methodist roots, unless the local church expressly resolves to the contrary. As such, a local church disaffiliating under ¶ 2553 shall continue to be eligible to sponsor voluntary employee benefit plans through the General Board of Pension and Health Benefits under ¶ 1504.2, subject to the applicable terms and conditions of the plans.

h) Once the disaffiliating local church has reimbursed the applicable annual conference for all funds due under the agreement, and provided that there are no other outstanding liabilities or claims against The United Methodist Church as a result of the disaffiliation, in consideration of the provisions of this paragraph, the applicable annual conference shall release any claims that it may have under ¶ 2501 and other paragraphs of The Book of Discipline of The United Methodist Church commonly referred to as the trust clause, or under the agreement.

5. All provisions of this paragraph shall take effect immediately upon adjournment of the General Conference for 2020 and shall expire October 15, 2022.

¶ 2554 Asset Resources Valuation and Asset Distribution Plans - Plain Grace Plan

1. *Agency and Institution Asset Resources and Distribution Plan* Effective as of December 31, 2028 except for those assets consisting of Annual Conference Property as defined by Section IV of Chapter 6 of the Book of Discipline, District Property as defined by Section V of Chapter 6 of the Book of Discipline and Local Church Property as defined by Section VI of Chapter 6 of the Book of Discipline, all assets held in trust by any agency or institution for the United Methodist Church pursuant to ¶ 2501 shall be identified and assigned a fair market value by one representative of the United Methodist Church and each Full Communion Expression acting as a valuation committee. Any existing lease on an asset shall either be cancelled prior to transfer under a plan of distribution or used as a factor in computing the fair market value of the property. The United Methodist Church and each Full Communion Expression shall be entitled to have one voting member who will have one equal vote on all matters before the valuation committee. The valuation committee may create working groups to assist it in its work. As to any asset whose value cannot be agreed upon by the valuation committee, such asset's fair market value shall be established by an independent third party unanimously agreed to by the valuation committee. All sums prepaid on behalf of an agency or institution shall be treated as Agency and Institution Asset Resources. The total amount of all such assets shall be defined as the Agency and Institution Asset Resources. The United Methodist Church and each Full Communion Expression shall be entitled to a proportionate share of the Agency and Institution Resources based upon their Gross Missional Share as that phrase is used in ¶ 431F sub-paragraph 1 as of May 1, 2027. Between January 1, 2029 and no later than December 31, 2030 the valuation committee shall arrive at an Agency and Institution Asset Distribution Plan for all such assets; such plan shall be agreed to unanimously by all members of the valuation committee. The plan may allocate administrative costs associated with the distribution of assets. The plan shall distribute assets in kind and without shared ownership, either equitable or legal. If the United Methodist Church or any Full Communion Expression fails to receive the total proportionate value of the property to which it is entitled, such entity shall be entitled to a cash payment to satisfy the difference between the value received in kind and the total value of all assets. Under the plan, the United Methodist Church or any Full Communion Expression may agree to accept a cash equivalent in lieu of

cash on terms acceptable to the entity. To qualify to participate in Agency and Institution Asset Valuation and formulation of the Agency and Institution Asset Distribution Plan, a Full Communion Expression shall have paid at least two thirds of its Missional Invoice Amount for each fiscal year through December 31, 2028; nonetheless, a Full Communion Expression that fails to make such payments shall be allocated its share of Agency and Institution assets in the Agency and Institution Asset Distribution Plan. Any amounts owing due to a Full Communion Expression's failure to pay its Net Missional Share shall be treated under the plan as a cash payment made to the Full Communion Expression. If the Agency and Institution Asset Distribution Plan is not agreed to by December 31, 2030, the matter shall be submitted to mediation and arbitration as required by the Dispute Resolution Agreement. This paragraph hereby authorizes all agencies and institutions of the United Methodist Church to execute such documents as may be necessary to affect all transfers required under the distribution plan and to take such actions as may be necessary to legally authorize such transfers. Nothing herein shall be construed as prohibiting any agency or institution of the United Methodist Church or a Full Communion Expression from entering into a lease or other agreement with the United Methodist Church or a Full Communion Expression after the distribution plan is finalized. This paragraph shall not expire on December 31, 2028.

2. Annual Conference Gross Missional Share No later than December 31, 2027, each Full Communion Expression shall submit and certify to the General Council of Finance and Administration of the United Methodist Church its total professing membership for each annual conferences as of May 1, 2027. In determining the conference-by-conference professing membership, each Full Communion Expression shall use the geographic boundaries of the United Methodist Church's annual conferences. In determining professing membership for a geographic area only those professing members of a local church located within the annual conference may be included. For each annual conference, the General Council of Finance and Administration shall calculate an Annual Conference Gross Missional Share by dividing the annual conference's total professing membership by the sum of the United Methodist Church annual conference's total professing membership plus all Full Communion Expression annual conferences' professing membership as of May 1, 2027. The Annual Conference Gross Missional Share shall be a percentage calculated to four decimal places. To qualify to participate in an Annual Conference Asset valuation and plan formulation, each annual conference must belong to a Full Communion Expression that has paid at least two thirds of its Missional Invoice Amount for each fiscal year through December 31, 2028; nonetheless, a Full Communion Expression annual conference belonging to such a Full Communion Expression shall be allocated its share of Agency and Institution assets in the plan. An annual conference belonging to a Full Communion Expression that fails to provide its total professing membership for an annual conference by December 31, 2027 shall not be entitled to participate in formulating the annual conference distribution plan nor any share of the assets distributed in the annual conference distribution plan.

3. Annual Conference Asset Resources and Distribution Plan Effective as of December 31, 2028 all assets consisting of Annual Conference Property as defined by Section IV of Chapter 6 of the Book of Discipline and District Property as defined by Section V of Chapter 6 of the Book of Discipline, belonging to an annual conference of the United Methodist Church or Full Communion Expression Annual Conference shall be identified and assigned a fair market value by one representative for the annual conference of the United Methodist Church and one representative for each Full Communion Expression acting as a valuation committee. Any existing lease on an asset shall either be cancelled prior to transfer under a plan of distribution or used as a factor in computing the fair market value of the property. All sums prepaid on behalf of the annual conference shall be treated as Annual Conference Asset Resources. The United Methodist Church and each Full Communion Expression shall be entitled to have one voting

member who will have one equal vote on all matters before the valuation committee. The valuation committee may create working groups to assist it in its work. As to any asset whose value cannot be agreed upon by the valuation committee, such asset's fair market value shall be established by an independent third party unanimously agreed to by the valuation committee. The total amount of all such assets shall be defined as the Annual Conference Asset Resources. The United Methodist Church annual conference and each Full Communion Expression annual conference shall be entitled to a proportionate share of the Annual Conference Asset Resources based upon their Annual Conference Missional Resource Percentage. Between January 1, 2029 and no later than December 31, 2030 the United Methodist Church's annual conference and the Full Communion Expressions' annual conferences shall arrive at an Annual Conference Asset Distribution Plan; such plan shall be agreed to unanimously by all members of the valuation committee. The plan shall distribute assets in kind and without shared ownership, either equitable or legal. If the United Methodist Church or any Full Communion Expression annual conference fails to receive the total proportionate value of the property to which it is entitled, such entity shall be entitled to a cash payment to satisfy the difference between the value received in kind and the total value of all assets. An entity may agree to accept a cash equivalent in lieu of cash on terms acceptable to the entity. For purposes of the plan, property may be released from the trust, transferred free of trust or subordinated to the interests of creditors and other third parties. The annual conference distribution plan shall give preference to maintaining existing ministries either as a ministry of the United Methodist Church or as a ministry of a Full Communion Expression. Property of closed local churches held by an annual conference may be transferred among participants as part of the plan. Any sums owing by Full Communion Expression annual conference to the United Methodist Church based on obligations incurred under ¶677.3 or ¶1510 may be set off as part of the plan. Recognizing the unique relationships between the United Methodist Church and related health and welfare institutions, where practicable, Full Communion Expression annual conferences shall be included as parties to relationship statements for related health and welfare institutions under ¶2517 and such relationships should be encouraged to be ongoing after December 31, 2028. If the Annual Conference Asset Distribution Plan is not agreed to by December 31, 2030, the matter shall be submitted to mediation and arbitration as required by the Dispute Resolution Agreement. This paragraph hereby authorizes all annual conferences of the United Methodist Church to execute such documents as may be necessary to affect all transfers required under the distribution plan and to take such actions as may be necessary to legally authorize such transfers. Nothing herein shall be construed as prohibiting any agency or institution of the United Methodist Church or a Full Communion Expression from entering into a lease or other agreement with the United Methodist Church or a Full Communion Expression after the distribution plan is finalized. This paragraph shall not expire on December 31, 2028.

¶ 2555 – Compliance with Gracious Affiliation Agreement - Release of Trust Clause as to Local Church Property - Plain Grace Plan

As used in this paragraph Local Church Property is that property defined by Section VI of Chapter 6 of the Book of Discipline of the United Methodist Church as it is currently in effect. A Full Communion Expression that pays a sum equal to the Net Missional Share for each fiscal year through 2028 or which has its Net Missional Share satisfied as a cash payment under ¶2554.1 shall be entitled to have the Trust Clause released and assigned to it for all Local Churches belonging to the Full Communion Expression. This paragraph hereby authorizes annual conferences, districts and all agencies and institutions of the United Methodist Church to execute such documents as may be necessary to affect such transfer. This paragraph shall not expire on December 31, 2028.