

Associate Members vote on constitutional amendments:

Amend ¶ 602.1c

Associate clergy members shall have the right to vote in the annual conference on all matters except ~~constitutional amendments~~, and matters of ordination, character, and conference relations of clergy. When associate members are members of the conference Board of Ordained Ministry, they have the right to vote at clergy session on matters of ordination, character, and conference relations of clergy (¶ 635.1). Affiliate clergy members shall have the right to vote in the annual conference on all matters except the constitutional amendments, election of clergy delegates to the General jurisdictional or central conferences, and matters of ordination, character, and conference relations of clergy.

[The same change is necessary in ¶ 321.1. Another petition is being submitted for that change.]

RATIONALE

The change recognizes the years of service and experience of Associate Clergy Members and the right of all congregations to be equally represented on matters that affect the local church and the church at large.

Associate Members vote on constitutional amendments:

Amend ¶ 321.1

1. Associate members shall have a right to vote in the annual conference on all matters except the following: ~~(a) constitutional amendments; (b) all matters of ordination, character, and conference relations of clergy.~~

[The same change is necessary in ¶ 602.1(c). Another petition is being submitted for that change.]

RATIONALE

The change recognizes the years of service and experience of Associate Clergy Members and the right of all congregations to be equally represented on matters that affect the local church and the church at large.

Local Pastors vote on constitutional amendments:

Amend ¶ 602.1d

Full-time and part-time local pastors shall have the right to vote in the annual conference on all matters except constitutional amendments; election of delegates to the General and jurisdictional or central conferences and matters of ordination, character, and conference relations of clergy. When local pastors are members of the Conference Board of Ordained Ministry, they have the right to vote at clergy session on matters of ordination, character, and conference relations of clergy (¶ 635.1). Local pastors who have completed course of study or an M. Div. degree and have served a minimum of two consecutive years under appointment before the election may vote on constitutional amendments, and to elect delegates to General and jurisdictional or central conferences.

RATIONALE

The change recognizes the years of service and experience of local pastors and the right of all congregations to be equally represented on matters that affect the local church and the church at large.

Election of Fellowship Chair:

Amend ¶ 323.2

The bishop shall convene the fellowship and the Board of Ordained Ministry shall coordinate its life and work. Necessary financial support shall be provided by the annual conference through the budget of the board. Quadrennially ~~the board,~~ with guidance from the present Fellowship Chair, shall nominate for Chairperson of their Conference Fellowship at least one Local Pastor who has completed education requirements and/or Associate Member, not to exceed 3 nominees, to then be elected by the ~~from within the fellowship membership and the Fellowship shall elect quadrennially a chairperson of the Fellowship~~ members present during a gathered meeting of the annual session of the Fellowship. ~~conference who,~~ The elected chairperson, in cooperation with and under the guidance of the bishop, will provide continuing leadership for the Fellowship. The elected Fellowship chairperson, full-time or part-time, shall be a member of the Board of Ordained Ministry and its executive committee as specified in ¶ 635.1a.

Activity of the Fellowship will be reported regularly to the Board of Ordained Ministry.

RATIONALE

The Fellowship members and its leadership are the most knowledgeable of those persons who are eligible to be elected chairperson. This gives clarity to the work of electing the Fellowship Chair in order to bring consistency across conferences and confirms the right of the Fellowship to elect their own chairperson from among those qualified and equipped.

Ordination of Local Pastor:

New paragraph ¶ 319.6

Upon completion of course of study or an M.Div. degree and having served a minimum of two consecutive years under appointment full-time local pastors will be eligible to seek ordination as a local elder. Local elder status would be achieved by a process of application and examination to the district committee on ordained ministry. Examination by the district committee on ordained ministry would include the applicant (1) prepared and preached at least one written sermon on a biblical passage specified by the district committee on ordained ministry; (2) presented a detailed plan and outline for teaching a Bible study; (3) presented a project that demonstrates fruitfulness in carrying out the church's mission of "Making Disciples of Jesus Christ for the Transformation of the World". Upon $\frac{3}{4}$ vote approval of the district committee on ordained ministry recommendation will be made to the Board of Ordained Ministry to then be voted upon by clergy session. Upon approval of clergy session, the local elder may retire under the provisions of ¶ 357 of the Discipline. They shall retain their license for pastoral ministry for service in the local church and maintain their relationship as retired clergy members of the annual conference. The district committee on ordained ministry will not be required to interview the local elder annually and the local elder will be subject to all continuing education and evaluation requirements of ordained clergy.

RATIONALE

This addition recognizes the years of service and experience of local pastors and honors the same by recognizing the lifetime call to pastoral ministry of all persons called by God.