



 **LUKE 9:12-17**

BLESSED AND BROKEN

**PACIFIC NORTHWEST
ANNUAL CONFERENCE**



Recommendations
PRE-CONFERENCE HANDBOOK

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Line

Petition #1

CONFERENCE ADVANCE SPECIALS

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- BE IT RESOLVED**, the following agencies and projects which are initiated, developed and/or supported within the Pacific Northwest Conference be designated as Conference Advance Specials and be given support through the second-mile giving by churches of the PNW AC 2025-2025 Conference Advance Special Applications.
1. Atlantic Street Center #301
 2. Tacoma Community House #302
 3. Alaska Conference Support #335
 4. Central Washington Justice for our Neighbors #339
 5. PNW Conference Camping & Retreat Ministries:
 - Camp Indianola #341
 - Twinlow Camp #343
 - Lazy F Camp #344
 - Ocean Park #345
 6. PNW Disaster Relief/Early Response #352
- SPONSORED BY**
Marilyn Reid
Conference Board of Global Ministries

Line

Petition #2

MINIMUM COMPENSATION

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- BE IT RESOLVED**, that the minimum compensation schedule for full-time service set by the Annual Conference for the Calendar year 2026 will be \$52,807.
- EXPLANATION:** In keeping with the custom of the Commission and the Annual Conference, the minimum compensation has been increased by 3.45%. This figure represents the average of the increase in the 2024 Seattle Area CPI (2.7%) and the increase in 2024 Pastor's Plan Compensation (4.2%) across the conference. This compensation does not include Accountable Reimbursement Plan professional expenses, including travel.
- SPONSORED BY**
Commission on Equitable Compensation

Line

Petition #3

MOVING ALLOWANCE

The Moving Allowance will be reimbursed through the local church, which will provide a W-2 to the pastor, as this allowance has been taxable since 2018.

BE IT RESOLVED, the recommended moving allowance schedule for the 2025-2026 appointment year is:

- A. Intra-conference up to \$2,400 (Rule XI, Sec. 2(a)).
- B. Retiring minister up to \$2,400 (Rule XI, Sec. 2(b)).
- C. Surviving spouse up to \$2,400 (Rule XI, Sec 2(b)).
- D. Minister on Disability Leave, up to \$2,400 (Rule XI, Sec. 2(b)).
- E. Seminary students returning for local church appointment will be reimbursed on the basis of receipts for moving expenses, including meals and lodging en route, as approved by the District Superintendent with the following dollar limits, based on the one-way mileage from the seminary to the appointment (Rule XI, Sec. 2(c)):
 - Over 2,500 miles – up to \$5,000
 - 1,501 to 2,500 miles – up to \$4,500
 - 1,001 to 1,500 miles – up to \$4,100
 - 801 to 1,000 miles – up to \$3,400
 - 501 to 800 miles – up to \$2,900
 - 500 miles or less – up to \$2,400
- F. Candidates for ministry or ministerial members (including paragraph 337.1) transferring in shall be reimbursed up to the seminary students' limits (E) with the provision that the Cabinet may authorize expenditures of up to 150% of the seminary student limit (Rule XI, Sec. 2(c)).

Line

Petition #4

CONFERENCE TREASURER AND ASSISTANT TREASURER

BE IT RESOLVED, in accordance with the *2020/24 Book of Discipline*, ¶619, the Conference Council on Finance and Administration nominates Brant Henshaw as Conference Treasurer and Sara Goetze as Assistant Treasurer for the remainder of the quadrennium.

SPONSORED BY

Pacific Northwest Council on Finance and Administration

RECOMMENDATIONS

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Petition #5

PAST SERVICE PENSION RATE

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- BE IT RESOLVED**, that effective January 1, 2026, the Ministerial Pension Rate and the Local Pastors Pension Rate shall be \$967 and that Supplement One to the Clergy Retirement Security Program be so amended.
- EXPLANATION:** Supplement One to CRSP is the name of Addendum A to MPP (ministerial pension plan) and CPP (comprehensive protection plan) that was originally adopted by the 1981 session of this Annual Conference (1981 Journal, page 178), and all other provisions of Supplement One/Addendum A continue as previously adopted. This new pension rate represents a one-time 10% increase in the past service rate. The conference board of pensions recognizes the disparity of pension benefits between more recent retirees and those who have been retired for many years. With a sufficient funding surplus, the 10% increase is recommended. In 2025, the past service rate is \$879. Eighty-six participants will be impacted, assuming the population remains the same.
- SPONSORED BY**
Pacific Northwest Board of Pensions

Line

Petition #6

DISABILITY BENEFITS

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- BE IT RESOLVED**, that the Pacific Northwest Annual Conference recommends that the Wespath Benefits and Investments provide Comprehensive Protection Plan Disability Benefits for the Conference year 2025-2026 only if approved for CPP disability benefits by Wespath for *Robert Henre, Gloria Kymn, Paula McCutcheon, Don Shipley, and Cheryl Wuensch*.
- SPONSORED BY**
Pacific Northwest Board of Pensions

RECOMMENDATIONS

Petition #7

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Name	Disc. ¶	Age	Appt. Years	Effective Date
Bradley Beeman	358.2(c)	70 and 1 months	33	7/1/2025
Pamela Brokaw	358.1	72 and 0 months	11.75	7/1/2025
Kathleen Hartgraves	358.2(c)	65 and 1 months	20.5	7/1/2025
Charles Lawson	358.2(c)	71 and 10 months	13	7/1/2025
Jeffrey Mullinix	358.2(c)(d)	65 and 10 months	16.79	3/15/2025
Thomas Peterson	358.2(b)	62 and 5 months	36	7/1/2025
Cynthia Roberts	358.2(c)	69 and 1 months	20	7/1/2025
Jo-Dene Romeijn-Stout	358.2(c)	67 and 10 months	38	7/1/2025
Linda Weistaner	358.2(b)	64 and 2 months	31	7/1/2025

Pacific Northwest Board of Pensions

Line

Petition #8

RETIREMENT GRANTS

RESOLVED, that the following persons receive grants in lieu of pension from the Pacific Northwest Conference:

PERSONS RECEIVING GRANTS IN

THE PACIFIC NORTHWEST ANNUAL CONFERENCE

THE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

2025 - 2026 Pension Grant Schedule

Name (age by end of year)	Service in Confer- ence	Year Eligible	Applicable Pension Rate	Grant \$	Payment Period
Wanda L. Butler (surviving spouse of Ralph Butler 70%) (100)	25.0	1983	188	3,290.04	7/1/25-6/30/26
Marilyn Calkins (surviving spouse of Robert Calkins 70%) (89)	12.0	1991	265.93	1,304.28	7/1/25-6/30/26
Richard L. Gossett (81)	7.0	2009	578.58	1,417.56	7/1/25-6/30/26
Marisol Harper (surviving spouse of Craig Harper 70%) (92)	6.75	1993	287.63	458.76	7/1/25-6/30/26
Donald L. Jeter (92)	11.5	1998	349.95	2,314.08	7/1/25-6/30/26
Dewey Knowles (95)	6.5	1996	323.55	683.52	7/1/25-6/30/26
John C. Shirk (93)	5.0	1998	349.95	437.40	7/1/25-6/30/26
				\$ 9,905.64	

EXPLANATION: These grants (§1506.11) are made to former clergy of this Conference who are not covered under the vesting provision of *The Book of Discipline* (§1506.15.a-c – 2008 *Discipline*) in lieu of pension. The grants are applicable to clergy who have either taken Honorable Location or Withdrawn from the Conference prior to 1973. Funds for the grants come from the Conference Board of Pensions endowment earnings.

The Conference Board of Pensions “Policy for Grants to Former Members” governs the amount of each grant. The grant is based on years of service in this Conference and the applicable pension rate in effect the year the applicant attained age 65 before July 1. The benefit is reduced for each year of service less than 20 by 5% per year. There will be no additions to this list. There have been six deaths in the last three years.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Line

Petition #9

1 **REQUEST FOR BUDGET AND SALARY TRANSPARENCY**

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3 **BE IT RESOLVED**, before a vote of the 2026 Pacific Northwest Annual

4 Conference budget and for every year beyond 2026, we require the details of

5 all conference staff and superintendent salaries.

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7 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that the Annual Conference is given clear

8 communication regarding the portion of those salaries for which the Pacific

9 Northwest Annual Conference is responsible in a shared ministry model.

10

11 **EXPLANATORY STATEMENT:** As petitioners, we care about engen-

12 dering trust between our congregations, their lay leaders, and our Annual

13 Conference staff and appointed leaders, especially given that the Annual

14 Conference budget is primarily funded by apportioned giving from local

15 churches.

16

17 We know that there is a high level of commitment, throughout the Pacific

18 Northwest Annual Conference, to deepening trust between our congregations,

19 their lay leaders, our pastors, our district and Annual Conference staff and

20 appointed leaders. We are all in this together. We are all on the same team!

21

22 We believe that the model for budget transparency and voting on salaries

23 used by our Pacific Northwest Conference churches is the best model for

24 the Annual Conference itself when it approves budgets and votes on salaries.

25 Especially given that the Pacific Northwest Annual Conference budget is

26 primarily funded by apportioned giving from local churches.

27

28 Making all the budget and salary information available to the Members of the Pa-

29 cific Northwest Annual Conference educates the decision-makers, communicates

30 the deep values of the Annual Conference to all who read it, and builds trust at

31 every level of United Methodism in the Pacific Northwest. If the members of the

32 Annual Conference are going to vote on the budget, interpret and promote the

33 budget in their ministry settings, and support the budget with their dollars, then

34 the members of the Annual Conference need to see the complete budget detail.

35

36 There is a place for simplified and narrative budgets in the ministries and

37 communication of our Annual Conference. However, a complete and de-

38 tailed budget, including all salaries, is an important tool for all those who are

39 trusted to vote on the Annual Conference budget.

40

41 **SPONSORED BY:** *Kelly Dahlman-Oeth, Heather Sparkman, Denise Roberts,*

42 *Alexa Eisenbarth, Kellen Corliss, Jim Head-Corliss, Megan Madsen, Rebecca*

43 *Lewis, Tumwater UMC*

RECOMMENDATIONS

Line

Petition #10

DIRECT CONFERENCE TRUSTEES TO OFFER CLOSED CHURCH PROPERTIES TO UNITED METHODIST CHURCHES

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Annual Conference of the PNW shall provide direction to the Annual Conference Board of Trustees regarding the disposition of property of a closed local church in accordance with ¶2549.2c of the *2020/2024 Book of Discipline*. This direction shall include the following:

1. The Annual Conference Board of Trustees shall not sell, lease or rent closed local church properties to a United Methodist Church or agency, but may transfer title of the property of a closed local church to an organized United Methodist Church or agency, or enter into a relationship of occupancy by a United Methodist Church or agency, that does not involve selling, leasing or renting of the property.
2. If no United Methodist church or agency requests the use of a closed United Methodist Church property, the Board of Trustees shall explore other options for the disposition of the property.
3. The Annual Conference Board of Trustees shall require a one-year trial period of occupancy of a closed church property by a United Methodist church or agency before acting on the transfer of the title of the property.
4. After the one-year trial period, the United Methodist Church or agency, in consultation with the district superintendent and the district Board of Church Location and Building, may submit to the Annual Conference Board of Trustees a request to transfer the title of the property to them. The United Methodist Church or agency shall also submit to the Annual Conference Board of Trustees a ministry plan and vision detailing how their use of the property would further the strategic goals of the Pacific Northwest Conference.
5. The Board of Trustees shall transfer the title of the property to the new United Methodist church or agency, or report to the Bishop and the Cabinet reasons for denying the transfer of title.
6. If the new United Methodist church or agency does not want to hold the title of the closed church property but desires to remain as occupants of the building, the Board of Trustees shall enter into a written agreement with the new United Methodist church or agency defining the responsibilities of each party for maintenance and repair of the building. The United Methodist Church or agency shall also submit to the An-

RECOMMENDATIONS

Line

Petition #10 *cont.*

nual Conference Board of Trustees a ministry plan and vision detailing how their use of the property would further the strategic goals of the Pacific Northwest Conference.

7. The transferred title of the closed church property to a United Methodist church or agency shall include the Trust Clause as stated in ¶2503 of the 2020/2024 *Book of Discipline*.

EXPLANATORY STATEMENT: When a local church closes, the Annual Conference loses the presence and witness of United Methodists in the area. However, in some instances another United Methodist congregation in need of an appropriate church building is available to continue the mission and ministry of The United Methodist Church in the location of the closed church property. The purpose of the Annual Conference is to equip its local churches for ministry and therefore should do all in its power to encourage the continued presence and witness of United Methodists in the area. One avenue to equip local congregations is by offering the use of closed church properties to these congregations. The support from the Annual Conference should not include burdening the new congregation with rent or lease payments, and in cases where the new congregation lacks the financial capacity to maintain and repair the old church, the Annual Conference should offer assistance within its means. During the initial one-year occupancy the new congregation and the Annual Conference Board of Trustees should enter into an agreement specifying responsibilities for payments of insurance, maintenance and repair costs. After an initial one-year period of occupancy, the new congregation should either apply to have the title of the property transferred to them or enter into a contract with the Annual Conference Board of Trustees for further occupancy and support. The old church properties should not be sold to the new United Methodist congregation as that would burden the new congregation and may prevent it from fulfilling its mission.

When the Annual Conference closes a local church, “title to all the real and personal, tangible and intangible property of the local church shall immediately vest in the annual conference board of trustees, who shall hold said property in trust for the benefit of the annual conference.” (§2549.2.b, *Book of Discipline*, 2020/2024). Furthermore, the Discipline states “The annual conference board of trustees may retain, sell, lease, or otherwise dispose of the property of a closed local church in accordance with the direction of the annual conference, if any.” (§2549.2.c). This petition directs the Annual Conference Board of Trustees to follow a procedure if a local United Methodist Church or agency requests the use of, and possible transfer of the title to, the closed church property.

Line

Petition #10 *cont.*

In rare circumstances a closing congregation will be able to arrange for the transfer of the title of their property before it closes to another United Methodist congregation or agency. The Book of Discipline states that in these rare circumstances a closing congregation, “if no longer to continue as an organized United Methodist Church, does not sell but may transfer title of its facilities to another United Methodist church or agency;” (§2541.3.c; *2020/2024 BOD*). The prohibition of selling a United Methodist church to another United Methodist congregation has two main rationales:

1. The new congregation's ministry would not benefit from taking on a new mortgage to buy the property.
2. The closing church and the Annual Conference would not be supporting a continued United Methodist presence in the area.

A local congregation wanting to use and possibly own a closed church property should develop a plan for the use of the property that explains how their ministry will make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world (§120, *Book of Discipline*, 2020/2024). This plan should be developed in collaboration with the district superintendent and the district Board of Church Location and Building. If after one year of occupancy of the closed church property, the congregation, the district superintendent, and the district Board of Church Location and Building believe that the ministry of The United Methodist Church will be strengthened by the continued presence of the congregation, the congregation may request transfer of title of the properties from the Annual Conference Board of Trustees.

If after one year of occupancy of the closed church property the congregation discovers it does not have the resources to maintain the properties but still wishes to continue its presence, the congregation and Annual Conference Board of Trustees should enter into a written agreement defining the responsibilities of each party for maintenance and repair of the building. This written agreement should be reviewed at least on a yearly basis.

SPONSORED BY

Kathryn Neary

Line

Petition #11

CREATION OF LGBTQIA+ MINISTRIES TEAM

- BE IT RESOLVED** that the Pacific Northwest Annual Conference calls on our Office of Connectional Ministries to create a conference-level LGBTQIA+ Ministries Team for the purpose of:
1. Actively supporting the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, Intersex, and Asexual (LGBTQIA+) laity, clergy, and candidates for licensed/ordained ministry in the Pacific Northwest Annual Conference with community-building, faith and leadership development, solidarity, and advocacy.
 2. Centering and amplifying the voices and experiences of the LGBTQIA+ community, especially those who have been marginalized by church and society, most notably, transgender and Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) persons.
 3. Monitoring Annual Conference committees and policies, as well as the status and needs of candidates and clergy under appointment to ensure justice and equity on the basis of sexual orientation, gender identity, and expression, and to report findings to the Annual Conference.
 4. Curating, creating, and sharing resources to equip local churches for:
 - a. relationship building and continuing education
 - b. meaningful ministry with and for LGBTQIA+ church and community members
 5. Collaborating with ministry-specific areas, particularly children's ministry, youth ministry, and campus ministry in the desire to safely and most effectively be in ministry with and for LGBTQIA+ people of all ages.
- Be it further resolved that the LGBTQIA+ Ministries Team will be established within 3 months of annual conference adjournment, hold its first meeting in 2025, and include:
1. LGBTQIA+ persons that make up more than half of the total membership
 2. Intentional diversity of age
 - a. At least 2 members under the age of 25
 - b. 1/3 membership under 35
 - c. 1/3 membership 36 to 55
 - d. 1/3 membership 56 and up

RECOMMENDATIONS

Line Petition #11 cont.

- 1 3. Intentional diversity throughout all genders
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- 3 4. Intentional diversity throughout all races and ethnicities
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- 5 5. Lay and clergy representatives from each district
- 6
- 7 6. Members with established leadership in the area of LGBTQIA+ justice
- 8 and inclusion
- 9

10 Be it further resolved that the LGBTQIA+ Ministries Team shall be fully
11 included in all future annual conference processes related to ensuring an
12 appropriate budget, representation on other committees, reporting to the
13 annual conference, and ongoing membershipbased on the above criteria."

14
15 **EXPLANATORY STATEMENT:** The 2020/2024 General Conference
16 of The United Methodist Church removed *Book of Discipline* policies target-
17 ing the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, Intersex, and Asexual
18 (LGBTQIA+) community and mandating discrimination throughout the
19 denomination.

20
21 The Western Jurisdiction created an LGBTQIA+ Ministries Team in 2022
22 which now seeks annual conference level teams to coordinate with in efforts
23 to undo injustices caused by previous Book of Discipline policies and catch
24 up on proactive ministry that was previously prohibited.

25
26 Dismantling discrimination and harm cannot be realized through legisla-
27 tion alone, but requires ongoing engagement in the context of relationship,
28 including but not limited to: policy change, story-sharing and dialogue,
29 education, support, leadership development, solidarity, advocacy, monitoring,
30 accountability.

31
32 In creating the LGBTQIA+ Ministries Team the Pacific Northwest Annual
33 Conference will take good steps to be proactive in building relationships,
34 learning, and living into all that is now possible for ministry with and for
35 LGBTQIA+ persons.

36
37 **SPONSORED BY:**
38 *Austin Adkinson*

RECOMMENDATIONS

Line

Petition #12

**CONDUCT ACCESSIBILITY AUDIT ANNUALLY
AT CHARGE CONFERENCE**

BE IT RESOLVED that all local churches conduct an accessibility audit annually during their charge conference process, noting both the good work and the existing barriers and setting at least one goal for improving accessibility over the coming year.

EXPLANATORY STATEMENT: Jesus’ ministry focused on healing by restoring people to relationship, respecting their personhood along the way as he helped marginalized people find their way back into community. The church is most faithful to the life and ministry of Jesus when we follow his example to love in concrete ways. Disabled people are marginalized by society and, too often, the church as these beloveds of God face discrimination, lack of access, negative stigma, and ableist theologies. When the Americans with Disabilities Act was passed in 1990, churches fought successfully to be exempt from its provisions. We must lament and repent of our ableism by working to systematically remove barriers.

One tool we have that assists in dismantling ableist barriers is the Annual Accessibility Audit which is required by ¶2533.6 of the *United Methodist Book of Discipline*. This accessibility audit is a list of items that congregations can use to evaluate architectural, attitudinal, and programmatic accessibility. It is meant to help churches take stock of where they are, celebrate successes, identify existing barriers, and set goals for improvement. The form is provided by the Disability Ministries Committee, in partnership with the General Commission on Religion and Race. This form is currently provided in the list of PNW charge conference documents, but only about 35% of churches in the PNW Conference actually complete the form annually. Completing the audit has no cost but offers local churches tremendous benefit in assessing for themselves what small, intentional, justice-driven actions can be taken in collaboration with disabled clergy and congregants to improve access.

Recognizing that improving accessibility in our churches is about more than architectural changes, the PNW Disability Ministries Committee urges the approval of this petition as a concrete way of loving our disabled siblings. Conducting an accessibility audit and setting goals annually—rather than viewing the form as an option to be completed only if there is time—centers the lived experience of people with disabilities and makes clear that we are committed to ensuring disabled people can access, feel included, lead, and not be harmed by our faith spaces.

SPONSORED BY: Angela Molloy, *Disability Ministries Committee, Chair*

RECOMMENDATIONS

Line

Petition #13

**AMEND MEMBERSHIP RULE FOR COMMITTEE ON THE
FULL PARTICIPATION OF PERSONS LIVING WITH DISABILITIES**

BE IT RESOLVED that the Pacific Northwest Conference amend Conference Rule VI Conference Agencies, Section 1 - Organization, Membership and Responsibilities, subsection (c) Other Conference Agencies, subsection (4) Standing Committees, subsection (d) Committee on the Full Participation of Persons Living with Disabilities (§653) by deleting “Four persons elected by the Conference” and amending “three persons” to “no less than seven persons, including one chair.” The section would read: “~~Four persons elected by the Conference; three persons~~ No less than seven persons, including one chair named by the Committee.”

EXPLANATORY STATEMENT: The Pacific Northwest Conference’s Disability Ministries Committee (DMC) exists as a resource for combating ableism within our conference and local church structures, practices, attitudes, behaviors, and theologies. This educational and activist arm of GCORR functions to help the church actively become more inclusive of disabled and not-yet-disabled beloveds.

Paragraph 653 in *The Book of Discipline* says that each annual conference shall have a committee, yet Oregon-Idaho and Alaska have not had their own Disability Ministries Committees for well over a decade. With no formal structure, folx doing this work in Oregon-Idaho and Alaska have been turning to the PNW DMC for assistance.

The BOD says: "There shall be in each annual conference a committee on disability concerns or other structure to provide for the functions of this ministry and maintain the connectional relationships." In the spirit of collaboration and connectionalism, the PNW Disability Ministries Committee hopes to begin meeting with members of the Oregon-Idaho and Alaska annual conferences as a GNW Disability Ministries Committee as of July 1, 2025. Amending the Conference Rule regarding membership will allow us to function as one Greater Northwest Episcopal Area committee—one of the “other structures” provided by the BOD—which will equip us to fruitfully share resources and balance the workload with 2-4 members slated from each of the three conferences working together with one chair.

SPONSORED BY:
Angela Molloy, *Disability Ministries Committee, Chair*

RECOMMENDATIONS

Line

Petition #14

**ENCOURAGING FOSSIL FUEL DIVESTMENT FOR
DENOMINATIONAL FUNDS**

BE IT RESOLVED that the Pacific Northwest Annual Conference of The United Methodist Church directs the Conference Treasurer’s Office to send a letter by August 1, 2025 to each member of Wespeth’s board of directors (as listed at <https://www.wespeth.org/leadership>), Andrew Hendren, the Executive Director of Wespeth, and cc Moses Kumar, the General Secretary of the General Council on Finance and Administration. This letter shall express gratitude for the exemplary performance of Wespeth’s fossil free funds in which our Annual Conference has been invested since 2017. In addition, the letter should point out that we are eagerly awaiting the lifestage investment option that includes funds without fossil fuels in their portfolios and that we would welcome earlier action than the 2026 release date for the lifestage managed fossil free fund that has been proposed. Further, the letter should make these requests:

- That any proposal for changes to Paragraph 717 should add fossil fuels as an excluded investment.
- That the Wespeth Board should prayerfully consider and vote on the divestment of Wespeth’s own unrestricted and restricted assets from fossil fuels.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that as soon as the Lifestage managed investment option that excludes fossil fuel investments becomes available, the Pacific Northwest Conference Board of Pensions will invite our Wespeth representative to present a workshop for investors in the PNW to inform them of the new option and how to make changes in investment portfolios to take advantage of the option.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that when the Lifestage managed investment option that excludes fossil fuel companies becomes available, the Pacific Northwest Conference of The United Methodist Church encourages all clergy and laity with retirement savings in Wespeth funds to move their investments to fossil fuel free options.

EXPLANATORY STATEMENT: The Pacific Northwest Annual Conference voted to divest its own long-term investments from fossil fuels in 2017.

Wespeth has announced that they will provide a managed retirement savings option of divested funds through Lifestage in 2026. Currently clergy

RECOMMENDATIONS

Line

Petition #14 *cont.*

1 and others with retirement investments at Wespath that want an option that
2 excludes fossil fuels must manage it themselves.

4 The fossil-free investment portfolios provided to the Conference by
5 Wespeth through Faith Foundation Northwest have outperformed their
6 non-fossil-free counterparts on every time horizon since the Conference's
7 decision to divest, creating increased earnings to support ministry in the
8 Northwest.

10 At General Conference 2020/24, fossil fuel divestment (Calendar item 455)
11 was referred to the General Council on Finance and Administration, who
12 later referred the legislation to Wespeth. Wespeth has shared that they are
13 gathering recommendations for a proposed change to Paragraph 717 to
14 bring to the next General Conference.

SPONSORED BY:

Commission on Environmental Stewardship
Conference Board of Church and Society

Line

Petition #15

**AFFIRMING GENERAL CONFERENCE DECISIONS
ABOUT CREATION CARE AND JUSTICE**

BE IT RESOLVED that the people of the Pacific Northwest Annual Conference affirm the positions taken by the General Conference relating to Creation Care and Justice and commit to living by them in our own ministries.

EXPLANATORY STATEMENT: The 2020/2024 General Conference of The United Methodist Church passed several petitions related to Creation Care and Justice to encourage action in local churches and annual conferences, and commitments to clean energy transitions. These are summarized below. Additional Creation Justice petitions were also passed that addressed intersectional issues related to Creation Justice, including immigration, racism, white privilege, rights of children, and more.

Part 1: General Conference Legislation

Action in the Local Church and Conference

Several of the approved Creation Care and Justice petitions encourage specific actions for local congregations and annual conferences, to assist them in their creation justice work. Topics include; Caretaker Coordinators for each Annual Conference, Church Land Use, Green Team Formation, Sustainable Practices for Annual Conference Sessions, and the Use of Plastics, among others, some of which are recapped below.

Establish Coordinators in Each Annual Conference

Each annual conference is tasked with naming “a conference Caretaker of God’s Creation Coordinator who will be responsible for helping the conference develop programs to help it become more ecologically sustainable and to address environmental injustices...” (§628.2 of *The Book of Discipline of The United Methodist Church, 2020/2024*). Volunteer co-coordinators have been named for the Pacific Northwest Annual Conference and will serve as liaisons between the Conference Board of Church and Society and the Conference Environmental Stewardship Commission, and are listed in your nominations report.

Church Land Use

Each local church, and other holders of church lands, hold responsibility to “implement actions in their settings that bring their land back in harmony with God’s intentions and systems.” (§1214 of *The Book of Resolutions of the United Methodist Church, 2020/2024*). Some actions may include; identifying native, non-native, and invasive vegetation, removing non-native

RECOMMENDATIONS

Line Petition #15 cont.

1 greenhouse gas emissions by 2050.” (§1215 of *The Book of Resolutions of The*
2 *United Methodist Church, 2020/2024*).

3

4 *Annual Carbon Footprint and Greenhouse Gas Emissions Audit for Local Church*
5 Within the local church, “the board of trustees is urged to conduct or cause
6 to be conducted an annual carbon footprint and/or greenhouse gas emis-
7 sions audit of their buildings, grounds, and facilities to discover and identify
8 what physical, architectural, and communication barriers exist that impede
9 the church from being at least carbon neutral and/or having at least net zero
10 greenhouse gas emissions and make plans and determine priorities for the
11 elimination of such barriers.” (§2533.8 of *The Book of Discipline of The United*
12 *Methodist Church, 2020/2024*).

13

14 *Reporting Local Church’s Carbon Neutral and/or Net Zero Greenhouse Gas*
15 *Emissions Progress*
16 Within the local church’s board of trustees’ annual report to the charge
17 conference, they shall also now include, “an evaluation of all church build-
18 ings, grounds, and facilities in relation to their impact on the church’s ability
19 to be carbon neutral and/or have net zero greenhouse gas emissions; and,
20 when applicable, a plan and timeline for the renovation and development of
21 church buildings, grounds, and facilities to bring the church closer to being
22 at least carbon neutral and/or having at least net zero greenhouse gas emis-
23 sions.” (§2550.11 of *The Book of Discipline of The United Methodist Church,*
24 *2020/2024*).

25

26 *Recognizing United Methodist Support for Global Green New Deal Initiatives*
27 A new Resolution was added to the Book of Resolutions “that the people of
28 The United Methodist Church wholeheartedly support legislative and pol-
29 icy efforts by governments around the world akin to the “Green New Deal”
30 in the United States of America, and call upon all world leaders to create
31 plans for the world to be carbon neutral...” (§1216 of *The Book of Resolutions*
32 *of The United Methodist Church, 2020/2024*)

33

34 **Part 2: Environmental Stewardship, Creation Care and Creation Justice**
35 **in the Pacific Northwest Annual Conference**

36

37 At the 2024 Pacific Northwest Annual Conference, a petition passed to create
38 a Conference Commission on Environmental Stewardship. This Commission
39 has been formed and will strive to partner with and support local congrega-
40 tions in their efforts to work towards the General Conference resolutions and
41 goals related to Creation Care and Justice passed at the 2020/2024 General
42 Conference. While the General Conference recommended specific reporting

RECOMMENDATIONS

Line	Petition #15 <i>cont.</i>
1	measures for local congregations related to energy uses, the Commission
2	is preparing a form that can be used at each congregation's annual charge
3	conference to report on all aspects of their environmental and creation/
4	climate justice work, not just carbon footprint and greenhouse gas emission
5	reductions.
6	
7	For further information and full language related to all Creation Justice
8	legislation that passed at the 2024 General Conference, refer to the following
9	United Methodist Creation Justice Movement website: https://umcreation-
10	justice.org/creation-care-and-justice-legislation-2024/
11	
12	Additional Study Guides that may be useful for local congregations:
13	
14	1. Creation Justice Legislation at General Conference 2024 Study
15	Guide (https://umcreationjustice.org/project/creation-justice-legisla-
16	tion-study-guide/)
17	
18	2. Net Zero Legislation General Conference 2024 Study Guide (https://
19	umcreationjustice.org/project/net-zero-study-guide/)
20	
21	SPONSORED BY:
22	Commission on Environmental Stewardship
23	Conference Board of Church and Society