



**A LAY MEMBER'S GUIDE
TO ANNUAL CONFERENCE**

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All God's People in
All Places,
And in
All Times,
Are Called to Love
And to Serve.

Ministry of the Laity

Dear Lay Member of the New York Annual Conference,

Grace and peace to you in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord!

I hope you count it a high privilege and a great responsibility to serve as a Lay Member of the New York Annual Conference.

You will have a chance to experience inspiring worship. You will engage in the legislative process. You will renew old friendships and make new ones. You will give and receive radical hospitality.

Remember, your responsibility to prepare and present a report of the significant events of conference to your congregation on your return.

“The lay member(s) of the annual conference, along with the pastor, shall serve as the interpreter of the actions of the annual conference session. These persons shall report to the local church council on actions of the annual conference as soon as possible, but not later than three months after the close of the conference.” (Paragraph 251.2b, page 166 *The Book of Discipline, 2008*)

It is up to you and your pastor(s) to do a great job of keeping your congregation informed. To help prepare a good report, we have included an appendix with suggestions and examples. These are just suggestions. Use whatever format works for you.

This guide is intended to help you to better understand your role and to familiarize you with the workings of the Annual Conference. You are encouraged to attend the preconference sessions which your district will have. Please read the preconference material which will be posted on the conference website.

The following leaders from the Board of Laity are willing to answer any questions you may have:

Mary Breviglieri	Connecticut	860-307-4611
Ximena Varas	Connecticut	203-736-9281
Elaine Winward	New York/Connecticut	914-669- 5264
Peter O'Neill	Long Island East	631-750-4388
Seymour Thomas	Long Island West	718-451-2523
Mary Morton	Metropolitan	914-969-0936
Gene Knoth	Catskill Hudson	845-688-5901

Peace!

Renata

Conference Lay Leader

The purpose of this guide is to help you better understand the workings of the annual conference so you will be better able to interpret its mission and ministry when you return to your respective churches. Much of the information here is in *The Book of Discipline of The United Methodist Church*.

WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF ANNUAL CONFERENCE?

Paragraph 601, Section 1X, page 591 in the 2008 Book of Discipline states: “The purpose of annual conference is to make disciples for Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world by equipping its local churches for ministry and by providing a connection for ministry beyond the local church; all to the glory of God.”

HOW CAN A LAY MEMBER HELP TO FULFILL THIS PURPOSE?

PRAY that God's purpose for us as a conference will be fulfilled.

ATTEND your district's preconference briefings. If you are attending for the first time, ask the questions that are on your mind!

READ your preconference material. This year, they are on the internet, and will be presented to you in your packet when you get to conference. They will not be premailed to you as in former years.

ATTEND AND PARTICIPATE IN ALL SESSIONS OF THE ANNUAL CONFERENCE

“The lay members of the annual conference shall participate in all deliberations and vote upon all measures....” (Paragraph 602.6, page 369, *The Book of Discipline*, 2008)

LISTEN during the proceedings.

You are an important connection between your church and the annual conference, not only over the next few days, but all year long. Stay connected by reading the Vision, our conference newspaper, and by visiting the conference website on a regular basis.

HOLY CONFERENCING

A set of guidelines outlining how United Methodists should conduct themselves when they get together to discuss matters, some of which can be controversial, has been developed by our denomination. These guidelines have roots in our Wesleyan heritage, since our founder, John Wesley, is said to have considered 'holy conferencing' as much a means of grace as were Bible reading, prayer and prayer, for example. As you read these guidelines, based on Colossians 3:12-16a, 17, you will no doubt agree. Here are those guidelines.

- Every person is a child of God. Always speak respectfully. One can disagree without being disagreeable.
- As you patiently listen and observe the behavior of others, be open to the possibility that God can change the views of any or all parties in the discussion.
- Listen patiently before formulating responses.
- Strive to understand the experience out of which others have arrived at their views.
- Be careful in how you express personal offense at differing opinions. Otherwise dialogue may be inhibited.
- Accurately reflect the views of others when speaking. This is especially important when you disagree with that position.
- Avoid making generalizations about individuals and groups. Make your point with specific evidence and examples.
- Make use of facilitators and mediators.
- Remember that people are defined, ultimately, by their relationship with God – not by the flaws we discover, or think we discover, in their views and actions.

ANNUAL CONFERENCE PROCEEDINGS

1. The resident bishop presides over the annual conference. If unable to, the resident bishop arranges for another bishop to do so.
2. It is the Bishop's prerogative to have choice for visiting bishops and/or major speakers.

WHO IS A MEMBER OF ANNUAL CONFERENCE?

1. All clergy, whether active or retired are members of annual conference.
2. Deaconesses and diaconal ministers, whether active or retired are lay members of annual conference.

3. The following persons are also members of annual conference: The conference president of the United Methodist Women, the conference president of the United Methodist Men, the conference lay leader, the president of the Conference Council on Youth Ministries, the district lay leaders.
4. Lay members (who do not fall in the above category), are elected at charge conferences each year.

ORGANIZATION OF ANNUAL CONFERENCE

1. The 'bar of the Conference' is that section designated for members of annual conference. Members may vote, are recognized by the president of the conference and may participate in the conference proceedings only when seated in that designated area.
2. The conference is divided into legislative sections. (You chose one when you registered).
You will be advised as to where each section will meet at an appropriate time during the conference.

GENERAL and JURISDICTIONAL CONFERENCES

K. ELECTIONS OF GENERAL AND JURISDICTIONAL CONFERENCE DELEGATES

70. Clergy and lay delegates to the General and Jurisdictional Conferences shall be elected at the session of the Annual Conference in the calendar year proceeding the sessions of the General Conference (*BD 2008 ¶¶ 34 & 502.4*).
71. Clergy and lay delegates elected to the preceding General and Jurisdictional Conferences shall be the delegates to special sessions of respective conferences.
72. The number of clergy and lay delegates from the New York Conference to the General Conference shall be determined by the provisions of *BD 2008 ¶502.4*.
73. The number of clergy and lay delegates from the New York Conference to the Northeastern Jurisdictional Conference shall be determined by the provisions of *BD 2008 ¶514* provided that the duly elected clergy and lay delegates to General Conference shall be delegates to Jurisdictional Conference, and additional clergy and lay delegates shall be elected to complete the total number to which the New York Conference is entitled.
74. The additional Jurisdictional Conference delegates, in order of their election shall be reserve delegates to the General Conference.
75. Clergy and lay reserve delegates to the Jurisdictional Conference shall be elected in accordance with the direction provided by the Secretary of General Conference to the Conference Secretary.
76. Electronic balloting will be used for the election of clergy and lay delegates to General and Jurisdictional Conference.
77. Clergy and lay delegates to the General Conference shall be elected first by separate ballot, to be followed, after all the delegates to the General Conference have been elected, by balloting for the delegates to Jurisdictional Conference.
78. After all Jurisdictional Conference delegates have been elected, an additional ballot shall be cast, and the clergy and lay persons receiving the highest number of votes shall be elected as the reserve delegates to the Jurisdictional Conference in accordance with the number provided by the Conference Secretary.
82. Lay delegates to General and Jurisdictional Conferences shall be elected by the lay members of Annual Conference without regard to age.
83. To be eligible for election, prospective delegates shall have been a member of the United Methodist Church for at least two years preceding their election, and shall have been active participants in The United Methodist Church for at least four years prior to their election. In addition, lay members must be members of a church within the annual conference electing them at the time that the General and Jurisdictional Conferences to which they have been elected delegate are held. (*BD 2008 ¶ 6 Article V*)
84. The following voting process will be used for electing lay delegates:
 - a) An eligible lay person shall declare her/his candidacy to be a delegate by submitting a nomination statement upon which s/he has affixed her/his signature. The nomination statement is to be on one side of an 8 ½ x 11" sheet of paper, and submitted to the Conference Secretary by April 1 of the year elections are to be held. Each nomination statement shall be accompanied by a biographical sketch not to exceed one side of an 8 ½ x 11" sheet of paper. A photograph may be included. In addition, each nomination of a person not a lay member of Annual Conference shall be accompanied by a certification from the nominee's administrative board chairperson or church council chairperson, verifying that the nominee meets the membership and activity requirements set out in Paragraph 83 of the Conference Rules. The Annual

Conference shall copy the biographical sketches and collate them into packets. The Conference Secretary shall ensure that there is a packet available at the laity session preceding the Annual Conference for each lay member of Conference.

- b) The names of the lay persons placed in nomination according to the above procedure shall be read aloud in the laity session. At the option of the nominee, s/he may take the stage as her/his name is read. When the nominations are read, the reading shall be limited to the name of the nominee and the name of the church and district from which the nominee comes. Additional nominations may be made from the floor of the laity session at Annual Conference. Those who are nominated may provide sufficient copies of their biographies.
85. For electronic voting, numbers will be assigned to all lay nominees. A list of all nominees and their assigned numbers will be provided to all lay members with the first ballot. Nothing herein shall preclude the right of lay members to write in the names of eligible lay members throughout the entire election process. If these members receive more than 5 votes, their names shall be added to subsequent ballots.
86. Lay members shall be entitled to vote for lay delegates to General and Jurisdictional Conference. If a lay member is absent, the properly seated alternate lay member shall be entitled to vote.

CONFERENCE RULES OF ORDER AND RULING OF LAW

A. CONFERENCE OFFICERS

1. **President** - The presiding Bishop shall be the legal chairperson of the Annual Conference.
2. **Duties** - S/he shall decide all points of order raised by the members, as s/he deems necessary to conform to the Rules of Order, subject, in both cases, to an appeal to the Conference by any member without debate; except that the Chair and the Appellant, in the order named, shall each have three minutes for a statement in support of their respective positions. A tie vote in the case of an appeal shall sustain the chair. When a member raises a point of order, s/he shall cite, by number, the rule s/he adjudges to be violated.
3. **Conference Secretary** - A Secretary shall be elected at the first Session of each Quadrennium to serve for that period. S/he shall be nominated by the Conference Cabinet. S/he shall name his/her assistants at the opening of the Business Session.
4. **Duties** - The Secretary shall keep a written record of the daily proceedings of the Conference which shall be approved by a Committee on Examination of the Conference Journal and when so approved and signed by the President and the Secretary, shall become the Official Journal of the Conference.
5. **The Secretary of the Conference** is authorized to edit material to be included in the Journal as may be necessary to meet specifications for publication with special concern for brevity. There shall be no substantive change. The District Superintendents shall have responsibility with the Secretary of the Conference whenever this editorial license is exercised.
6. **Conference Treasurer** - The Annual Conference, on the nomination of the Council of Finance and Administration, shall at the first session of the Conference after the General Conference elect a Conference Treasurer/Business Administrator. S/he shall serve for the quadrennium or until his/her successor shall be elected. If a vacancy should occur during the quadrennium, the commission may fill the vacancy until the next session of the Annual Conference. An Assistant Treasurer may be elected with the power to serve in the event of the incapacity or inability of the Treasurer to fulfill his/her duties.
7. **The Conference Treasurer** shall be the treasurer of the Council on Finance and Administration. As an employee of the council, s/he shall not be a member of it, but may sit with the council and its executive committee at all sessions and have the privilege of the floor but without vote.
8. **Conference Statistician** - Upon nomination by the Conference Cabinet, a statistician shall be elected at the first session of each quadrennium to serve for that period. S/he shall name his/her assistants at the time of making his/her annual report.

B. ORGANIZATION OF THE CONFERENCE

9. The organization of the Conference shall not be complete until designation has been made of the section where members shall be seated for participation. This shall be referred to as the "bar of the Conference." Only those persons who are members of the Conference and who are seated within the bar of the conference, except as otherwise provided, may vote, be recognized by the president of the Conference and participate in the Conference proceedings. Others may be invited by the Conference to have the privilege of the floor without vote.

10. There shall be a roll call of lay and clergy members at the opening of the conference session. The method of calling the roll shall be determined by the president and shall be the responsibility of the Conference Secretary. Other roll calls of members shall be taken by having each member record attendance as prescribed by the Secretary.
11. The Conference may be divided into specified legislative groups with such membership, powers and responsibilities as the Conference shall determine. The Parliamentary procedures of such groups shall be guided by the Conference Rules of Order and the Rules for Legislative Sections.
12. The Commission on Conference Sessions shall consist of at least twenty members, under the direction of the Dean of the Cabinet, the Director of Connectional Ministries, and the Conference Lay Leader. The members of the commission shall be elected by the conference upon presentation by the Conference Committee on Nominations. The Conference Secretary, the Conference Coordinator of Legislative Sections and the Host Pastor shall be members of the commission. The Commission's responsibility shall include Program, Administration, Fellowship and Publicity. If necessary, ad interim additions to the committee shall be made by the Committee on Nominations in consultation with the Dean of the Cabinet, the Conference Director of Connectional Ministers, and the Conference Lay Leader

C. CONFERENCE RULES OF ORDER

13. The rules of order, unless otherwise provided, shall be those of the General Conference of The United Methodist Church as far as they may be applicable. Robert's Rules of order shall govern the conduct of business in all cases where these rules or those of the General Conference do not apply.
14. There shall be a Committee on Rules consisting of eight members, four of whom are to be clergy members and four lay members of the Conference. The following shall be ex-officio members: The Conference Secretary, a Cabinet representative, and any present or former members of the Judicial Council who are members of or who reside within the bounds of the Conference. To this committee shall be referred all proposed changes or additions to the rules of order. Such proposed changes or additions to the rules of order shall be presented to the committee, through its chairperson, by either electronic means or regular mail, no later than February 1 of each year. The committee shall report its recommendations upon all proposed changes to the Conference for decision. The Committee shall restudy periodically the Conference Rules of Order in light of changing General Conference and Annual Conference actions and procedures and shall recommend to the Annual Conference for its consideration and action such changes and adaptations as in its judgment are necessary.

D. RULES OF ORDER FOR LEGISLATIVE SECTIONS

15. The leaders of the section will evaluate and prioritize the items before the section and present an agenda to be adopted by the seated members of the respective sections. Top priority items will be those with budget implications and those which appear to be most controversial.
16. Parliamentary procedures in the section "shall be guided by the Conference Rules of Order." The section may vote to amend reports which are before it. Amendments shall be written out and submitted to the chair. The section may also vote to refer the matter to some particular person or group for further consideration, rather than recommending that the Conference itself take action. Amendments shall pass with a simple majority vote. Votes on amendments do not need to be counted. Votes on referrals shall be counted and if such a vote achieves concurrence of 90% or higher, the referral shall be placed on the Consent Calendar for adoption by the conference.
17. When items have been fully read, discussed, and prepared for action by the Conference, the chair shall call for the final vote. This vote must be counted. Section members may vote as follows:

Concurrence (agree) - Non-concurrence (disagree) - Abstain

18. If the final vote on any item in the section is 90% or better for or against concurrence, then that report will not be presented to the conference plenary session for debate. This does not apply to the Conference Budget. (See Section F Rule #36) Abstentions are not counted in determining the percentage of concurrence or non-concurrence. Reports that achieve 90% or better for or against concurrence shall be listed on the Consent Calendar, and presented to the conference for adoption as a group. Before the vote on the Consent calendar is taken, the Bishop shall entertain motions to remove items for debate or amendment. Any member making such a motion, after a second, will be given two minutes to present the rationale for removing the item. The chairperson or representative of the Legislative Section will then be given two minutes to explain the action of the section, after which the vote to remove the item will be taken. A simple majority vote of the conference is needed for removal and presentation to the body for debate and action at the end of the agenda for section reports.
19. Members of the section may prepare a minority report if fifteen (15) members are willing to sign the minority report. Minority reports must not be simply the reverse of the majority report, but must offer a substantial

revision of the majority report. A minority report which simply wishes to defeat the report may express itself in plenary debate, and vote "NO" on the report. The person organizing a minority report must inform the Legislative Section Leaders by the end of the Section meeting. A minority report shall be submitted in writing to the Section Leadership and will be printed in the Legislative Section report pages.

20. Only those persons assigned to the section may speak or vote in the section. By common consent or by vote, the section may grant the courtesy of the floor to another person, for the purpose of bringing additional information or expertise to the attention of the section. Section assignments will not be changed in order to permit persons to vote in more than one section. Visitors shall be seated in sections after and separate from, voting members as space allows. Visitors shall not interfere with the work of the section.

E. REPORTS, RESOLUTIONS, PETITIONS AND MOTIONS

21. All reports to be considered by the Annual Conference shall be in the hands of the Conference Secretary six weeks before the beginning date of the Annual Conference in order to be included in the Conference Program Booklet. Resolutions and petitions should also be submitted to the Conference Secretary six weeks before the beginning date of the Annual Conference deadline. Resolutions and petitions that miss the "six weeks prior" deadline shall be submitted to the Conference Secretary at least 5 business days before Annual Conference to be given an appropriate number. Sponsors of such documents shall make the number of copies specified by the Conference Secretary, and deliver them to the document table in the registration area prior to the opening of registration, so that they can be available to conference members before the opening of annual conference registration. In the case wherein a petition or resolution addresses an issue which has arisen after the "six weeks prior" deadline, then as to such emerging issues the deadline for submission shall be extended until five business days before the opening session of the Annual Conference, and the Conference shall be responsible for printing the resolution/petition. It would be helpful, however, if the makers of the petition or resolution could reproduce the document (1,100 copies) after receiving from the Conference Secretary a petition number (which should be set forth at the top of the petition prior to reproduction).
22. All resolutions for Conference consideration shall be signed by at least five members of the Conference, with the exception of petitions from local churches which shall have been adopted by majority vote of the respective church's Administrative Board, Church Council or Charge Conference. Such petitions shall be submitted to the Conference Secretary six weeks before the beginning date of the Annual Conference in order to be included in the Program Booklet.
23. Petitions to the General Conference desiring approval from the Annual Conference shall be in the hands of the Conference Secretary at least eight weeks before the convening of the Annual Conference.
24. All materials other than conference documents must be pre-approved by the Conference Secretary and shall be displayed or distributed only in areas designated by the Commission on Conference Sessions. All material to be distributed shall identify the source from which it comes.
25. Reports and resolutions printed in advance and distributed to the members shall not be read in full to the Conference. Reports, resolutions, amendments if enacted are not to be considered fully approved until the member offering the same shall have furnished a written text of the report to the Secretary. If acted upon unfavorably such actions shall not be printed in the Journal, but their substance shall be noted in the minutes.
26. Any approved petition which instructs the Conference Secretary and/or any other agent of the conference, regarding its communication to outside agents, shall be accompanied by all information adequate and necessary to implement said instruction. This information must include appropriate title(s), name, address, with ZIP or country code and telephone number.
27. Any material for the Journal not in the hands of the Conference Secretary within ten days after the adjournment of the Conference shall be held over for the Journal of the ensuing year at the discretion of the Conference Secretary.
28. Unless previously arranged and announced by the Commission on Conference Sessions or by majority of the Conference, reports are to be completed within the time allotted by the Commission on Conference Sessions as specified by the printed program. Otherwise action is to be postponed until the end of the daily agenda.
29. A motion made and seconded, or a report or resolution duly offered and seconded, shall be deemed in the possession of the Conference. Any motion, resolution or report may be withdrawn by the mover, with the consent of the Conference, at any time before amendment or decision. As soon as a motion is accepted by the conference body, it must be written legibly and submitted to the Conference Secretary
30. Persons representing other interests, not included as part of the regular Conference program, or presented as a part of a regular report, shall be heard only upon recognition by the president of the conference and approval by majority consent of annual conference.

31. When a report, resolution or motion is presented to the Conference, a motion to lay on the table shall not be in order until the member who presented it shall have had three minutes to explain the same.

F. THE CONFERENCE BUDGET

32. The proposed budget of the New York Annual Conference as prepared by the Conference Council on finance and Administration shall be included in the pre-conference mailing and/or posting on the Conference Web site.
33. The budget shall be presented to and reviewed with the entire conference in a plenary session prior to its discussion in legislative section.
34. Designated members of the Conference Council on Finance and Administration shall be present in the legislative section where the budget is discussed, to provide additional information as needed. These persons shall not take the place of the section leadership.
35. Any changes approved by the legislative section in which the budget is reviewed shall be included by the Conference Council on Finance and Administration in the final budget figures to be presented to the members of the annual conference.
36. If the budget achieves concurrence in the legislative section, it shall be included on the Consent Calendar, but presented with appropriate detail as a separate item for approval by the conference.

G. MEMBERSHIP

37. All clergy, both active and retired, shall be members of the New York Conference. This includes elders and deacons in full connection, provisional, associate and affiliate members, and local pastors under full or part-time appointment to a pastoral charge. (*BD 2008 ¶602*)
38. Deaconesses, home missionaries, and diaconal ministers, both active and retired shall be lay members of the annual conference.
39. Lay Members of the Annual Conference shall be elected at the Charge Conference annually. A lay member may be elected to succeed him/herself.
40. Lay members shall have been members of The United Methodist Church for the two years preceding their election and shall have been active in The United Methodist Church for at least four years prior to their election. (*BD 2008 ¶602.4*). This rule may be waived for young persons under twenty-five (25) years of age, however such persons must be active members at the time of election.
41. A charge having less than 200 members shall elect 1 lay member of the Annual Conference. A charge having 200 to 599 members shall elect 2 lay members. A charge having 600 to 999 members shall elect 3 lay members and a charge having 1,000-1,399 members shall elect 4 lay members. An additional lay member shall be elected for each additional 400 above 1,400. A church's entitlement shall be based upon the membership figure reported to the preceding session of the Annual Conference. Each charge served by more than one clergy member under appointment (including deacons in full connection for whom this is their primary appointment) shall be entitled to as many lay members as there are clergy members under appointment. (*BD 2008 ¶602.4*).
42. In accordance with Paragraph 602.4 of the *2008 Book of Discipline*, the following persons shall be members of the conference: the conference president of United Methodist Women, the conference president of United Methodist Men, the conference lay leader, the president of the Conference Council on Youth Ministries and the president of the conference college student organization, the district lay leaders, two young persons under twenty-five years of age. Up to two district lay leaders shall automatically be members of conference. Where there are more than two district lay leaders, the other persons may be included in the at-large category of members from the district.
43. To complete the number needed to equalize lay membership with clergy membership, each district conference shall elect members-at-large in equal numbers from their respective districts. The number each district may elect shall be determined by the Rules committee before September 1 of each year, based upon the statistics reported at the end of the previous reporting year. The conference secretary shall report to the district superintendents the necessary number to be elected. If the number to be thus elected is not evenly divisible by 6, the next higher multiple of 6 shall be used. The number thus reported will be effective for the next elections.
44. By virtue of their positions within the New York conference, the following persons, if lay and if they have not been elected by a local charge or district, shall be members of conference: the Conference Secretary, the Director of Connectional Ministries, the chairs of the Program and Administrative divisions of the Committee on Conference Sessions, the On-site Coordinator, the Housing Coordinator, the Registrar.

45. If not otherwise a voting member of the annual conference, the conference Chancellor shall be seated in the annual conference and shall be given the privilege of the floor without vote.

H. DUTIES AND RIGHTS OF MEMBERS

46. No person may participate in Conference proceedings, unless s/he is a member of the Conference, except by majority consent of the members of annual conference.
47. Reserve Lay Members shall be given the privilege of the floor only if and when the Reserve Lay Member has been duly seated as the official lay member for that session and the Secretary has been notified of the fact and has given the proper certification.
48. All matters of ordination, character and Conference relations of clergy shall be considered by the clergy members of the Conference in full connection, and the elected lay members of the Board of Ordained Ministry.
49. Provisional clergy members and local pastors may not vote on constitutional amendments, matters of ordination, character, and Conference relations of clergy.
50. In debate, no person shall speak more than once until every member desiring to speak shall have spoken.
51. A member shall not speak more than twice on the same question, and no more than three minutes at one time, without permission of the Conference. A committee making a report shall in all cases be entitled to three minutes to open the debate, to oppose a motion, to lay the report on the table and to close the debate on a motion to adopt.
52. When a motion is under consideration on the floor of the Conference, it shall be the duty of the presiding officer to ascertain, when s/he recognizes a member of the Conference on which side the member proposes to speak. The presiding officer shall not assign the floor to any member proposing to speak on the same side of the pending question as the speaker immediately preceding, if any other member desires to speak on the other side.
53. It shall be in order to "move the question" for any measure pending before the Conference, except in cases where character or conference relations are involved. If sustained by a two-thirds vote, the question shall be moved. It shall be in order under this rule to move to recommit, to divide, or to lay on the table after the previous question has been ordered.

I. NOMINATION AND ELECTION TO CONFERENCE AGENCIES

54. The Conference Committee on Nominations shall consist of the District Superintendents, the Conference Secretary, the Director of Connectional Ministries, one youth and one young adult under the age of twenty-five (25) from each district, nominated by the District Superintendent in consultation with the district youth and young adult organizations, and thirty-two members elected for terms of four years in two equal classes. Each class shall be composed of one clergy person and one layperson from each District, elected by each District Conference in even numbered years. In addition, there shall be two clergy or lay persons representing minority groups as at-large members in each class, nominated by the Conference Committee on Nominations. No elected member of the Nominating Committee shall be eligible to succeed him/herself. When a vacancy occurs on the Conference Committee on Nominations, the District Superintendent of the district in which the vacancy occurs, shall fill the vacancy until the next regular election.
55. All institutions requiring election or confirmation of their trustees, directors, or other officers by the Annual Conference, must submit the names of such persons to the chairperson of the Conference Committee on Nominations in time for inclusion in its report. Such nominations shall be included in the pre-conference mailing and/or posted on the Conference Web site.
56. In so far as practicable, members of the Conference shall be nominated by the Committee on Nominations to at least one committee, commission or board. No one with the exception of those who are members of committees by virtue of their office, shall be nominated for more than three committees or commissions, or to more than one board and two committees or commissions. Staff persons of the Conference Council on Ministries and District Superintendents shall be assigned as members of boards or agencies by their respective bodies.
57. The Committee on Nominations shall not nominate any person to serve more than two consecutive terms on any quadrennial or triennial board, commission, or committee; nor to serve more than six consecutive years on any board, commission, or committee elected biennially. After a lapse of one year a person shall again be eligible for re-nomination to the same board, commission or committee. Any person serving fifty percent or more of a term shall be considered as having served a full term. Nothing in this rule shall be construed as precluding nominations from the floor.

58. The chair of each board, commission and committee shall report annually to the chair of the Conference Committee on Nominations the names of those who have not attended meetings during the preceding year. Those who absent themselves from such meetings without valid reason will not be eligible for re-nomination, including nominations from the floor. In the case of quadrennial and triennial agencies, such absences may be considered to constitute vacancies to be filled by Disciplinary or Conference procedures at the discretion of the agency involved and the Committee on Nominations.
59. All boards, committees, and commissions shall elect their officers as part of their organizational process, at the first meeting of the body following the election of new members by the Annual Conference. This may be done at the site of Annual Conference, but should be done within thirty days after the conclusion of Annual Conference.
60. At least one year of active membership on a committee shall be prerequisite for a member to be elected as chair of that committee. The terms of presidents or chairpersons of those committees nominated by the Conference Committee on Nominations shall not be more than five consecutive years.
61. The Conference may elect members-at-large to any committee or board up to 10% of the established membership thereof, upon request of the committee or recommendation of the Conference Committee on Nominations. District representatives disqualified by transfer from their district may be continued as at-large members until the end of their term.
62. The Committee on Nominations shall fill all vacancies in committees, boards and commissions under its responsibility, including those whose membership is elected for the quadrennium. Vacancies shall be deemed to exist when caused by death, removal from the Conference or, in the case of district representatives, transfer from the district.
63. All nominations, unless otherwise provided by the Discipline, shall be made by the Committee on Nominations. In the case of corporate bodies, primary consideration shall be given to the recommendations of said bodies by the Committee on Nominations. Nothing herein shall be construed as precluding nominations from the floor.
64. The Conference may create such special committees as desired but no special committee shall be appointed to do the work of a regular standing committee.

J. NOMINATION AND ELECTION OF CONFERENCE LAY LEADER

65. Nominations for Conference Lay Leader shall be made from the conference floor by any member of the Annual Conference. Only lay persons may be nominated.
66. All lay and clergy members shall be entitled to vote for the Conference Lay Leader within the bar of the conference only.
67. A majority of the ballots cast (i.e. 50% + 1) shall be required to elect. A tie vote between the top two persons shall be disregarded and another ballot cast.
68. Balloting may be written or electronic as determined by the Conference Secretary.
69. The Conference Lay Leader shall be elected quadrennially and shall serve no more than two quadrennial terms.

WHILE AT ANNUAL CONFERENCE

Your report on the proceedings at annual conference should be factual, interesting and descriptive enough so that someone who did not attend can get a clear sense of what happened.

Visit the resource displays to collect information to take back to share with your local church. Be sure to stop by the Laity display.

Find some time to stop by the prayer tent to meditate, pray about the day's proceedings, offer prayers of thanksgiving and pray for the requests that will be left there.

Identify events and activities that make you feel like celebrating!

List ways in which annual conference met your expectations.

List ways in which it did not.

Note the things which you still do not understand about annual conference. Determine to find out.

Complete and hand in the evaluation which you will receive in your registration package. Your input really matters!

APPENDIX 1

Your report on the proceedings at annual conference should be factual, interesting and descriptive enough so that someone who did not attend can get a clear sense of what happened. Following is a suggested report outline, and two samples.

ANNUAL CONFERENCE REPORT

DAY 1

LAITY SESSION

Date:

Location:

Focus of Worship:

Participants:

Agenda:

Main Points:

OPENING SESSION

Theme:

Bishop:

Focus of Worship:

Decisions Made:

Personal Reflections:

DAYS 2, 3 & 4

Date:

Worship and Bible Study:

Other Highlights of the Day:

Decisions Made:

Personal Reflections:

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Budget:

Date and Place of Next Annual Conference:

Date and Place of General Conference:

Date and Place of Jurisdictional Conference:

Our pastor for the coming year will be:

I was most excited about:

I was disappointed when:

I want my congregation to:

APPENDIX 2

This is a report in which the entire worship service focused on annual conference. Both pastor and lay members collaborated.

A PowerPoint was used during the chronological presentation of Conference Proceedings. This helped to put faces to names and to give people more of a feel for what it was like at Conference.

Bulletin for the service: (See "Bulletin Annual Conference 2009")

- The components of the service, such as prayers and hymns, are all from Conference proceedings.
- There are 2 presentations on the Conference. One is designed to relate what happened and one is a more affective reflection.
- If the memorial service included anyone with a connection to our Church, We memorialize them during this service.
- An insert on [REDACTED] was included with the bulletin (See [REDACTED])

A Report from the 210th Session of the New York Conference.

Annual Conference was held on June 10-13 at Hofstra University in Hempstead, NY. The theme was: For Such a Time as This; A Beloved Community of Hope.

Wednesday's Laity session featured Dr. Kwasi Kena, Director of Evangelism Ministries GBOD who presented a dynamic and energizing presentation on "21st Century Evangelism" and "Discipleship a Journey with Many Stories" During the opening worship Wednesday evening the message was presented by Bishop Jeremiah Park whose theme reminded us that "In such a time as this... We are a beloved community of hope.

Thursday's activities included a memorial service for clergy, clergy spouses and children as well as lay members who have died since last Annual Conference. This year, the memorial service had special meaning when Reese Griffin (Our former pastor) was remembered. Mr. Ernest Swiggett presented the message in what was without a doubt one of the highlights of the Conference.

Later, the Corporate Session included reports from the Board of Trustees, Finance and Administration, and Board of Pensions. During the afternoon, all delegates were divided among 7 legislative sections (previously selected by each delegate) to discuss and vote on the many petitions submitted to Annual Conference by individual local churches or committees associated with New York Annual Conference

There were many proposals and all but a few were resolved in committee and therefore, did not require debate by the entire Conference.

During the evening, there was a Festival of Ministry, displaying the many ways and places that our church is in ministry throughout the world. Cokesbury, our Methodist Publishing house, had many books, study guides, etc. for sale. That same evening the Passing the Mantle of Ministry Service was held. The service honored those who are retiring from active ministry and commissioning those who are taking on new roles of active service. Following the recognition of retirees, new Licensed Local Pastors were recognized as they begin their journey toward ordination. The Thursday evening activities ended with the commissioning of new Probationary Elders. The message of the evening was presented by our retiring District Superintendent George [REDACTED]. He spoke on the Gospel story of the "Good Samaritan."

Friday morning's session included reports from many groups within the Annual Conference including: Lay Leaders, Bishops' Cabinet, Black College Fund, and Frontier Foundation. The rest of Friday morning and afternoon was taken up with various committees.

During Friday evening we heard more committee reports and voted on reports of the Legislative Committees. The evening session included the awarding of several scholarships. During the afternoon a presentation entitled "The Beloved Community Speaks" was offered. It was a presentation in which people talked about several aspects of homosexuality. Those in attendance were then asked to breakup into groups and consider several questions that dealt with the topic and the Church. Discussion followed. Lois and I were pleasantly surprised by the tone of the discussions. Much of the anger present in past discussions seemed to be absent. That gave us great hope.

Saturday was quite a day. Then like last year, there were two great high points: In the morning the arena floor was filled with United Methodist Lay Speakers. There was a presentation of Mission Celebration lead by Rev. Joseph Ewoodzie. Several checks were presented to various mission ministries. Following the "Mission Celebration" Rev. Dr. Kwasi Kena addressed the Lay Speakers. Dr. Kena and Bishop Park offered a challenge to the laity, challenging them to take an aggressive role in outreach programs throughout the Conference.

In the afternoon the ordination service began this year saw 9 Elders Ordained.

Your Lay Delegates in Christ, [REDACTED]

APPENDIX 3

Report from New Paltz UMC attendees to the
New York Annual Conference of
The United Methodist Church
June 11 to 14, 2008

"For Such a Time as This... The World Will Know Us By Our Love!"

Attendees:

<<DELETED – List of attendees from NPUMC>>

Highlights:

- [REDACTED] has again been appointed to NPUMC for the next year (this will be her 6th year with us – what a gift!)
- Bishop Park challenges us to become “connecting” churches in addition to “connectional” churches
- Conference Budget of \$9 million was approved (4.3% increase), with Apportionments slightly lower than last year
- Minimum salary for an Elder with 20+ years of service will increase from \$41,900 to \$42,550
- The New Millennium United Methodist Church in Queens, NY joined the conference as a new church
- Two churches were discontinued: Chelsea United Methodist Church of Chelsea, NY, and First United Methodist Church of Norwalk, CT
- 14 candidates were ordained as elders, 1 as deacon, 13 were commissioned, and 5 licensed.
- Legislative work focused mainly on acceptance of reports from various conference councils, commissions, and others. A few other items that were decided on:
 - PASSED: A resolution from the Cabinet for a proposed policy for pastoral moving expenses.
 - PASSED: A resolution from the NYAC Board of Church and Society and the Methodist Federation for Social Action in response to immigration and customs enforcement (ICE) raids and detention. The resolution calls upon the US government to stop raids on undocumented immigrants and to work for reform of immigration laws. The resolution will be sent to President Bush, Dept. of Homeland Security, and all US Representatives and Senators.
 - PASSED: A petition from the Methodist Federation for Social Action, MIND, and others to include a 90-minute session at the 2009 NY Annual Conference session to allow all members of the Conference to dialogue over the issues relating to sexual orientation and the church.
 - PASSED: A petition from the Methodist Federation for Social Action regarding the policy institute to be associated with the Bush Presidential Library. This lengthy (5-page) petition asked the NYAC to support the efforts of the South Central Jurisdictional Conference (where the Bush library and public policy institute would be located at Southern Methodist University) in their opposition to the library and institute.
- Contributions for over 14 Heifer Project International Arks were received (\$5000 per ark) during a special celebration with hundreds of children from across the Conference. An additional \$10,000 was received from the Bishop Partner's in Mission Fund to bring the total to 16 arks.
- 2505 Health Kits were collected for UMCOR (NPUMC contributed 37)
- A new mission area for Burundi (Africa) was introduced, with the first mission trip to travel in November, 2008
- Conference churches gave over \$325,000 to Advance missions in 2007
- Bishop's Partners in Mission Fund gave \$100,000 to support Conference missions (\$10,000 to each mission group).

Every representative to Conference received a large packet of information and materials, including copies of all reports, resolutions, petitions, the conference budget, nomination recommendations, appointment lists, and MANY other items. Please ask one of the attendees if you are interested in seeing any of these materials.

What happens at Annual Conference?

Attending the 4-day 2008 Session of the New York Annual Conference was informative, rewarding, uplifting, and exhausting. Ask any one of us that attended, and we will have countless personal experiences to share with you. For those of you who have never attended an Annual Conference session (or attended so long ago, you have no recollections of it anymore), here's a list of some of the things that happened:

- The Bishop (the person leading our Conference) addressed all the members of the Conference. This is like a “state of the Conference” address – thanking folks, summarizing what we've done, our goals, our hopes for the future, etc.
- Legislative work:
 - Reports, resolutions, petitions and motions were presented to Conference by local churches, Conference councils, commissions, and others.
 - These were divided into legislative sections, and each person was assigned to work in one section. Each section reviewed and voted on their items. If the vote on any item was less than 90% (for or against), it was sent to the plenary for a separate vote by all conference members.
 - The Plenary (i.e. everybody) voted once for the consent calendar (all those times that received 90%+ votes from the legislative sections), and on any individual items
 - (this year) A new Conference lay leader was elected (██████████)
 - The nomination of members to Conference boards, commissions, and committees was approved.
 - The 2008-2009 appointments were presented and accepted
- (this year) Personal reports from delegates to General Conference were given. Last year we had to elect all the delegates. Next year we get to vote on constitutional amendments that came out of the 2008 General Conference. And the following year we will elect delegates to the next General Conference. (General Conference meets once every 4 years).
- Presentations of reports from various committees, groups, and others were given, as well as presentations of awards and scholarships.
- There were performances by various choirs, music groups, etc.
- There were many opportunities to worship. It was incredibly powerful to sit in the arena with 1000 other lay members and clergy and experience as each person with his or her own unique spiritual connections came together to praise God, thank God, and seek God's guidance for the work ahead. Worship services included:
 - Daily morning communion worship services at 6:15am
 - Opening Worship Service (Wednesday, 8:00pm)
 - Remembering the Saints (Thursday, 9:30am)
 - Passing the Mantle (recognition of retirees, licensing and commissioning of new pastors; Thursday, 7:30pm)
 - Ordination of Elders (Saturday, 2pm)
- Bible Study was available each morning (8:30am) led by Rev. Gennifer Brooks.
- “Special” meals were available in smaller dining areas so various groups and organizations could meet to fellowship and discuss concerns of that group
- A Prayer Tent was set up in the arena, and volunteers throughout the entire session would act as prayer “warriors” for the conference, actively praying for the work of the conference that was occurring at that time.
- Many booths were set up in a large “Display Area” allowing various conference-level committees, organizations, groups, mission groups both within the Conference and internationally, and special-interest groups the opportunity to share information about their work.
- Cokesbury set up a bookstore area making books, bibles, hymnals, worship and teaching resources, etc., available for purchase.
- And finally, Annual Conference was a wonderful way to network, connect, and re-connect to others.

*Respectfully submitted,
NPUMC Attendees to NY Annual Conference*