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**Organization and Session Rules  
to Consider  
Ratification of Disaffiliation Agreements from the Board of Trustees  
at the  
October 15, 2023, Special Online Session of the Arkansas Conference**

**I. Information About Today's Special Session of the Arkansas Conference**

- A. This Special Session of the Arkansas Conference has been called in accordance with ¶603.5 of *The 2016 Book of Discipline of the United Methodist Church* to address only the following non-amendable issue:
- The consideration of ratification of disaffiliation agreements from the Conference Board of Trustees with various congregations of the Arkansas Conference of the United Methodist Church, in accordance with ¶12553 of The 2016 Book of Discipline of the United Methodist Church, the Principles adopted at the 2021 Arkansas Annual Conference Session and Judicial Council Decision 1379.*
- B. Members will participate by logging in through an online Zoom platform consistent with Arkansas Act 253 of 2021 allowing for remote meetings. For all purposes, this online meeting is deemed to be the equivalent of an in-person meeting.
- C. Members of the Arkansas Conference, with the right to vote, include all:
1. clergy members in full connection;
  2. provisional, associate, and affiliate clergy members;
  3. full and part-time local pastors under appointment;
  4. elders or ordained clergy from other denominations serving under appointment within the Arkansas Conference;
  5. those lay members or alternates who were last seated at the June 2023 Annual Conference Session, or laity duly elected by their charge conference if needed to replace a lay member or alternate who is unable to attend because of death, serious illness, or cessation of membership, as provided by ¶602.5 of *The 2016 Book of Discipline of the United Methodist Church*;
  6. laity who are members of the Annual Conference by virtue of The 2016 Book of Discipline or Conference Standing Rules, youth members, and those elected at the 2023 District Conferences as lay-clergy equalization at-large members.
- D. Arkansas Conference staff who are providing technical support for members attending online may be present during the meeting. The names of those providing such support will be recorded in the minutes of the Special Session of the Annual Conference.
- E. Members of the Annual Conference attending online are responsible for ensuring that all necessary technology on the member's side of the meeting is in proper working order prior to the meeting. Those

present virtually will be counted by electronic log-in and are deemed to be present for the meeting for purposes of meeting a quorum.

- F. The meeting will be conducted in a manner such that all members are afforded a reasonable opportunity to simultaneously hear the discussion. All members will have the right and be afforded the opportunity to speak and address those in attendance. All those who have the right to vote will be able to vote on all matters submitted during the meeting.
- G. To facilitate virtual participation, the Q&A feature of Zoom will serve as the equivalent of being in line at a floor mic.
- H. To maintain an open meeting, the Annual Conference meeting will be live-streamed but will not be available for playback.

## **II. Session Rules of Order - Vote Required**

- A. The Session Rules of the Special Session of the Arkansas Conference will be those adopted at the opening of the October 15, 2023, Special Session of the Arkansas Annual Conference.
- B. The Bar of the Conference shall be all eligible lay and clergy members of the Arkansas Annual Conference who log in through the Zoom login information provided by the Arkansas Conference office.
- C. The agenda as adopted will be used.
- D. Persons seeking to offer motions or amendments must first indicate such in the Q&A and then be recognized by the Bishop. All motions made virtually must be placed in the Q&A before a vote occurs.
- E. *Robert's Rules of Order 12th Edition*, will be the procedural authority for all business conducted by the Special Session of the Arkansas Conference when not in conflict with Arkansas Conference Session Rules, Arkansas Conference Standing Rules, or *The 2016 Book of Discipline of the United Methodist Church*.
- F. The Conference Board of Trustees will present the completed disaffiliation agreements to the annual conference for its consideration of ratification. The annual conference will then vote on whether to ratify the disaffiliation agreements by a simple majority vote, which may not include any amendments (JCD 1420).
- G. The process for the consideration of ratification of the Disaffiliation Agreements presented by the Conference Board of Trustees will be as follows:
  - 1. All completed Disaffiliation Agreements will be presented by the Conference Board of Trustees for consideration as a whole.
  - 2. All debates will be limited to three (3) two-minute speeches in favor of a motion and three (3) two-minute speeches against. This excludes persons inquiring about points of order or asking questions of clarification.
  - 3. The presentation of the recommendation will not be considered a speech in favor. The presenter of the motion may offer a one-minute concluding remark at the end of the debate before the matter is put to a vote.

4. At the conclusion of the debate, the annual conference will then vote on whether to ratify the disaffiliation agreements by a simple majority vote, which may not include any amendments (JCD 1420).
5. Poll logs will be maintained for all online votes.