



Q&A for North Georgia United Methodists

The United Methodist General Conference

Those 'in the know' know that:

- The United Methodist General Conference is the top policy-making body of The United Methodist Church, which typically meets once every four years.
- General Conference will meet April 23-May 3, 2024, in Charlotte, NC.
- This is officially the "Postponed 2020 General Conference," but you'll also see it referred to as "General Conference 2024" and "GC Charlotte." The session was originally scheduled to be held in Minneapolis, so you may still see Minneapolis in some of the material.
- General Conference gathers to set policy, worship and fellowship together, conduct the business of the church, and adopt budgets for church-wide and U.S. programs.
- There are 862 delegates to this General Conference from around the world.
- The North Georgia Conference is allotted 22 delegates, however due to health reasons, status change, and departures from the denomination, 10 lay delegates and 11 clergy delegates will travel Charlotte.
- There are 1,099 total petitions before the delegates of General Conference.

Who is on North Georgia's delegation?

The North Georgia Conference delegation was elected by the members of the 2019 Annual Conference and reaffirmed in 2020. Our General Conference delegates are:

Clergy Members

Byron Thomas
Phil Schroeder
Alice Rogers
Jasmine Smothers
Shannon Karafanda
Beth Larocca-Pitts
Nora Colmenares
Dalton Rushing
Eric Lee
Terry Walton
Joya Abrams

Lay Members

Randy Brown
Odell Horne Jr
Tonya Murphy
Rachel Fullerton
Nathaniel Abrams
Lee Highsmith
Amy King
Jay Horton
Maxine Easom
Elizabeth Corrie

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Where do the petitions being considered come from?

Any United Methodist may submit a petition (also called legislation) to General Conference. Other petitions come from Annual Conferences and General Agencies. The upcoming General Conference has received 1,099 total valid petitions.

How does a petition get adopted (or not)?

The first stop for a General Conference petition is in one of the gathering's legislative committees. In 2024, General Conference will have 14 legislative committees. Every delegate to General Conference is assigned to one legislative committee.

The Book of Discipline requires that all petitions must receive a vote in their assigned committee and all legislation approved by a committee must receive a vote by the full General Conference plenary.

What is the major legislation being considered?

More than 1,000 pieces of legislation on all topics relevant to the church and our world are before the General Conference for consideration.

Likely the most significant legislation is regionalization. This movement is an effort to simplify and standardize our church structure while maintaining and affirming our connection. Regionalization has broad support and is the result of worldwide collaboration. The legislation seeks to eliminate the UMC's "Central Conference" language and instead establish Regional Conferences, of which the U.S. would be one. Notably, most of the legislation which would accomplish regionalization was written by delegates from Central Conferences.

Regionalization will be before the members of General Conference in the form of 8 petitions. If passed, parts of the legislation will then be before Annual Conferences for ratification.

Other important legislation includes the budget, revised social principles, Wespeth benefits plans, and a statement titled 'Sent in Love: A United Methodist Understanding of Church.'

Will there be a change in LGBTQ inclusion?

A range of legislative submissions that have the potential to alter the Book of Discipline on matters of human sexuality are before the 2024 General Conference. Some of these proposals seek to remove language that excludes LGBTQ members from ordination and marriage in the church.

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What is the schedule?

The General Conference meets for 10 long days. The agenda runs from 6:30 am to 6:30 pm or later with the exception of Sabbath on Sunday, April 28. The days include legislative committee meetings, reports, addresses, plenary sessions, celebrations, and worship.

Highlights include:

- Opening Worship - April 23, 2 pm
- Episcopal Address - April 24
(delivered by Bishop Holston)
- Young People's Address - April 24
- Laity Address - April 25
- Celebration of UMCOR - April 30
- Missionary Commissioning - May 2
- Closing Worship - May 3, 6 pm

How can I stay informed about General Conference?

There are a number of reliable, trustworthy resources:

North Georgia Conference General Conference Page | www.ngumc.org/GC2024
The North Georgia Conference communications office regularly updates this page with current information and resources for North Georgia United Methodists.

North Georgia Conference Daily GC eNewsletter | www.ngumc.org/subscribe
The North Georgia Conference will send a daily update from General Conference.

The General Conference Website | www.resourceumc.org/GC2020
The official website of General Conference Charlotte.

United Methodist News Service | www.umnews.org
News coverage of General Conference by United Methodist News Service.

The Advance Daily Christian Advocate | www.resourceumc.org/GC2020
The ADCA contains the agenda, rules, petitions, reports from the general agencies and study committees, information for delegates and codes of conduct for the General Conference.

Petition Tracking | resourceumc.org/en/churchwide/general-conference-2020/legislation
Follow the legislative actions of General Conference.

Welcome to GC Website | <https://welcometogc.org>
Offered by the host Annual Conferences, find hotel information and volunteer opportunities.