

The General Board of Discipleship (GBOD)
Executive Summary ● Legislation to the 2008 General Conference
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GBOD is presenting 75 petitions to the 2008 General Conference of The United Methodist Church.

39 petitions offer minor revisions, amendments, and editorial changes to the Book of Discipline; most of these update language to reflect the new Division on Ministries with Young People, while others request continuance or deletion of selected resolutions.

23 petitions are a broad range of issues; some may have significant impact on the church:

- Commitment to work in a spirit of unity with all across the connection and with our ecumenical partners.
- Call for a Hymnal Revision Committee to be constituted and authorized to prepare and present to the 2012 General Conference a single-volume hymn and worship book, as the official hymnal of The United Methodist Church for use in the United States.
- Call for a study committee to be constituted and authorized to determine the need for an official United Methodist hymnal for North American Christians of African descent in the Wesleyan heritage.
- Guidelines for United Methodists in understanding pentecostal and charismatic Christians.
- Legislation that moves “Guaranteed Appointment” from a right of clergy to a privilege that requires evidence of growth in vocational competence.
- A call for laity to accept collegial responsibility with clergy for the growth and vitality of The United Methodist Church.
- Recommend ongoing study and conversation through the 2009-2012 quadrennium for the purpose of clarifying the vision and building consensus for the ordering of ministry in the United Methodist Church. The legislation asks the General Board of Higher Education, The General Board of Discipleship, and the General Commission on Christian Unity and Interreligious Concerns prepare a study guide for local church ongoing study and dialogue. In addition, move the work of the Study of Ministry Commission to be included as part of the ongoing work of the General Board of Higher Education and Ministry.
- Continue the support of the Native American Comprehensive Plan (NACP) and lodge it and the Task Force within the General Board of Discipleship (GBOD).
- Observe an annual Older Adult Recognition Day.
- Urge widespread study of the threat to pension benefits throughout the church.
- Support and expand “Strengthening the Black Church for the 21st Century.”

13 resolutions were submitted to the board from the Division on Ministries with Young People and those who attended the first Global Young People’s Convocation and Legislative Assembly held in Johannesburg, South Africa in December 2006.

- Support for Africa University.
- Request all boards, agencies, districts and annual conferences to choose meeting times that make young people’s participation as great as possible.
- Asking the United Methodist Church to raise awareness at all levels of the church of the continuing atrocities in Darfur.
- More fully incorporate justice building in framing of all resources and publications, especially those for young people.
- Support for the work and mission of the Global AIDS Fund.
- Recommend the production of a video that presents issues and Christian stances on immigration.
- Support for young people’s ministries in all local churches.
- Support for the Nothing But Nets Campaign.
- Support Filipinos as they deal with Extra-Judicial Killings.
- Declaration of stance against political unrest, especially in developing countries.

- Statement of concern on poverty and encourage local churches to study the issue.
- Call to be instruments of peace in all corners of the world, and support the denomination's stance on war and peace.
- Study effective models of ministry with and for youth and young adults.

The following 13 petitions are from the Global Young People's Convocation and Legislative Assembly sent INDEPENDENTLY from the General Board of Discipleship and Division on Ministries with Young People

- Ensuring that no less than 20% of general conference delegates are between the ages of 12 and 30.
- Encouraging general conference to be held in a location outside the U.S. after 2 consecutive general conferences held within the U.S.
- Change age of youth and young adults to reflect global circumstances.
- Community as a Function of the Local Church - Discipline ¶ 202 – amend function of the local church
- Defining Membership - Discipline ¶ 215 – including those regardless of sexual orientation.
- Encouraging the local church to receive statistics on poverty in their area as well as report statistics on their time spent on alleviating poverty.
- Equality in Ordination - Discipline ¶ 304.3 – encouraging the deletion of this paragraph
- Limiting general conference delegates from serving for no more than 4 general conference sessions.
- Naming the chair of the Youth Service Fund as a delegate to annual conference.
- Requiring general boards and agencies to have 20% of their membership be under the age of 30 years old (10% youth, 10% young adult).
- Ensuring that youth remain the age of youth for their term of service on general church boards and agencies.
- Book of Discipline 806.9 -- suggested removal of this paragraph