

2016 General Conference On The Horizon .. It's Not Too Early to Ponder - What Will Your Role Be?



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2016 GENERAL CONFERENCE ON THE HORIZON



GENERAL CONFERENCE ON THE HORIZON

It's not too early to ponder - What will my role be?

The General Conference is the supreme body of the African Methodist Episcopal Church. It is composed of the Bishops, as ex-officio presidents, according to the rank of election, and an equal number of ministerial and lay delegates, elected by each of the Annual Conferences and the lay Electoral Colleges of the Annual Conferences. Other ex-officio members are: the General Officers, College Presidents, Deans of Theological Seminaries; Chaplains in the Regular Armed Forces of the U.S.A. The General Conference meets quadrennially (every four years), but may have extra sessions in certain emergencies.

Disclaimer: GENERAL CONFERENCE ON THE HORIZON

- The final interpreter of the Book of Discipline is delegated to the assigned bishop of an Episcopal District.
- Any appeal the bishop's ruling, would follow the procedure outlined in the Discipline.
- This presentation is based on the presenter's interpretation, gleaned from study, research and consultation, and experience
- The listener is urged to do likewise! Enjoy...

DOCTRINE AND DISCIPLINE OF THE AFRICAN METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH

PART VIII

Conferences and Conventions

Section I	The General Conference.....	188
	A. Composition	
	Duties	
	Funding	
	Notification to Episcopal Districts	
	B. Qualifications of Delegates.....	188
	1. Ministerial	
	2. Lay	
	C. Election of Delegates	189
	1. Ministerial – a - k	
	2. Lay - a – e	
	3. Lay Electoral College	191
	a - j	

Part VIII – CONFERENCES AND CONVENTIONS

Section I THE GENERAL CONFERENCE

A. Composition

The composition of the General Conference shall be the bishops, general officers elected by the General Conference, the General Secretary (CIO) of the General Conference, the presidents of the universities and colleges, deans of seminaries which have been in operation for one or more years continuously previous to the General Conference, the president and treasurer of the Women's Missionary Society, editor of the Women's Missionary Magazine, director of the Young People's Division, the Connectional presidents of Women in Ministry (WIM), Richard Allen Young Adult Council (RAYAC), Young People's Division (YPD), and Lay Organization; Episcopal District Lay Presidents, and the president of the Connectional Council, Executive and Medical Directors of the Health Commission, active duty military and veterans administration chaplains who have been ordained at least four (4) years preceding the General Conference and who are retired with a minimum of twenty (20) years of service in the Armed Forces of the United States in their annual conference, the administrators of all Connectional institutions (i.e. Douglass Hospital, and the President of the Connectional Presiding Elders' Council, and elected clergy and lay delegates from each annual conference.

Notification to Episcopal Districts

Section 1 – Composition cont'd.

The Chief Financial Officer shall give notice to each Episcopal District one year prior to the election of delegates, of the number of ministerial and lay delegates to the General Conference to be elected in each annual conference used on the approved formula.

of lay delegates SCC? _____

B. Qualifications of Delegates

1. Ministerial page 188

2. Lay

Every lay member elected delegate by an Electoral College shall be a member of said college and a person of good, natural, or acquired ability who know and loves The Doctrine and Discipline of the African Methodist Episcopal Church and has maintained a full, good and regular membership in said church four consecutive years next preceding the General Conference, and has been a member of his or her local church for six month next preceding the meeting of the Electoral College. No lay member shall vote or be voted for more than once in a quadrennium as a delegate to the Electoral College.

C. Election of Delegates

2. LAY DELEGATES

- a. Every pastor shall publish a notice of the Church Conference that is to elect lay representatives or delegates from his/her local church to the Electoral College at least two weeks prior to the election.

C. Election of Delegates

2. LAY DELEGATES

- b. The election must be held at least three months prior to the meeting of the Electoral College. Only full members 18 years years of age and over of said local church shall be eligible to vote or to be elected a delegate. A majority of those present and voting shall determine the elected delegate and alternate delegate, and no proxy vote shall be counted either at the election of the local church or at the election held in and at the Electoral College.

C. Election of Delegates

2. LAY DELEGATES

c. The youth shall elect their delegates to the Electoral College at the same time, but in a separate place from the election of the adult delegates.

LAY DELEGATES (CONT.)

- d. Two member, one adult and one between the ages of 18 – 30, in good and regular standing, shall be elected to the Electoral College from each local church. At least one member of each Annual Conference lay delegation shall be a young adult between the ages of 18 – 30. The combined number of young adult and adult lay delegates shall be equal to the number of elected ministerial delegates

LAY DELEGATES (CONT.)

- e. Anyone 18 years of age who votes for delegates to the Electoral College from the local church and to the General Conference from one Electoral College may not vote where any other Electoral College is concerned.

LAY DELEGATES (CONT.)

- Youth – In regard to chronological age, the Richard Allen Youth Council is from 26 to 39 years of age. The Connectional Young People's and Children's Division of the Connectional Women's Missionary Society is: Children's Division age level 7 – 12; Youth Division age level 13 – 17; Young Adult Division age level 18 – 26. The Young Adult level for the Connectional Lay Organization is 18 – 30 years old. Generally when *The Book of Discipline of the African Methodist Episcopal Church* refers to Youth, *i.e.* election of delegates to the General Conference, the age level is between 18 – 30 years old.

From the Glossary – Good and Regular Standing

Good and Regular Standing - The terminology full, good, regular, standing, and full communion used specifically as well as generally, as a qualification or eligibility for holding any office or membership in the AME Church. Inclusive in this terminology is an acceptance that one is to be governed by *The Book of Discipline of the African Methodist Episcopal Church* to regularly attend worship and the other means of grace; to contribute regularly to the support of the gospel, the church, its benevolent enterprises, the poor; and to give of one's time and talents to the various ministries of the church.

C. Election of Delegates

3. Lay Electoral College

- a. The Electoral College shall be composed of one adult and one youth between the ages of 18 and 30, in good and regular standing, from each station, circuit, and mission in the Annual Conference, whose expenses to said College shall be paid by the station, circuit, or mission represented.

C. Election of Delegates

3. Lay Electoral College

- b. The Electoral College shall assemble at the place and hour designated by the Annual Conference and shall organize according to the custom of delegated bodies. The adult lay delegate from the local church hosting the meeting of the Electoral College shall take the chair for the purpose of presiding and processing the voting to elect a temporary chairperson and temporary secretary. After devotional service, the College shall effect a permanent organization, electing a chairperson secretary, two tellers and two clerks and then proceed to elect from its members by ballot, delegates, one of whom must be a youth between the ages of 18 and 30, and alternates, as provided by law under caption of Composition of General Conference. In cases where ballots are required and the election is uncontested, a voice vote may be held. The latest edition on *Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised* shall be the parliamentary authority for all elections.

C. Election of Delegates

3. Lay Electoral College

- c. The Electoral College shall elect the same number of alternates, with the same qualifications, and by the same method as delegates.

C. Election of Delegates

3. Lay Electoral College

- d. If, when the results of the balloting are announced, a member of the Electoral College shall desire to contest the results of the election, the chair shall permit the member who announces his/her desire to contest the election to count the ballots in the presence of the members of the College before the meeting in which the election is held either recesses or adjourns. If an error is discovered in the recount, the chairperson must declare the election void and the Electoral College shall elect delegates as provided by law. All ballots cast during the Electoral College shall be delivered to the Annual Conference when certification of the election is presented to the Annual Conference.

C. Election of Delegates

3. **Lay Electoral College**

- e. If, in composition or activity of the Electoral College, a law of the church is violated, a complaint may be made to and a hearing held at the next session of the Annual Conference which shall adjust the matter.

C. Election of Delegates

3. Lay Electoral College

- f. The secretary of the Electoral College shall prepare and certify over his/her signature a report of the proceedings of the electoral college, including an accurate list of the electoral and an accurate list of the elected lay delegates in order of their election, and forward the same to the presiding bishop of the district and to the secretary of the Annual Conference within 30 days after the election and to the Chief Information Officer (General Secretary) 120 days prior to the opening of the General Conference.

C. Election of Delegates

3. **Lay Electoral College**

- g. The Electoral College shall give each lay delegate and alternate a Certificate of Election, signed by the Chairperson and Secretary, to be presented to the Annual Conference for record.

C. Election of Delegates

3. Lay Electoral College

h. The Annual Conference shall give a Certificate of Election, signed by the bishop, and secretary, to every delegate.

C. Election of Delegates

3. **Lay Electoral College**

- i. It shall be unlawful for any minister to interfere in any way in the Electoral College.

C. Election of Delegates

3. Lay Electoral College

- j. Each Episcopal District Lay President shall be a member of the General Conference, by virtue of his/her position. (S)he shall automatically be included in the number of delegates certified at the Electoral College. The District Lay President must be a member in good and regular standing in his/her local church and his/her local Lay Organization.

D. Sessions of General Conference

1. The General Conference shall meet perpetually once in every four (4) years between June 15 and July 15 for a period not to exceed ten days.
2. All proceedings of the General Conference of the African Methodist Episcopal Church while in official session, shall be transcribed by the use of official electronic stenographic equipment under the care, custody, and control of a duly qualified, licensed, and bonded stenographic reporter, who shall be..

E. Organization

1. The Council of Bishops shall, on the day designated, open the conference at 10 A.M., and cause it to be opened with a religious service.
2. The presiding bishop of each episcopal district shall certify to the General Secretary of the AME Church (The certification of the presiding bishop shall conform with the delegate allocation made by the made by the Chief Financial Officer).

F. General Conference Committees

1. The Episcopal Committee
2. The Committee on the Report of the Chief Financial Officer
3. The Committee on Annual Conference Boundaries
4. The Credentials Committee
5. The Rules Committee
6. The Revisions Committee

7. Other Committees – At least 90 days prior to the General Conf, the bishops shall appoint the following committees, which shall consist of two representatives one minister and one layperson from each episcopal district.

- a. Worship and Liturgy
- b. General Secretary
- c. Dept of Annuity Investments and Insurance
- d. Dept of Church Growth and Development
- e. Dept of Christian Education
- f. Sunday School Union
- g. The Christian Recorder
- h. Historiographer, Dept. of Research and Scholarship, AME Review
- i. Dept of Global Witness and Ministry
- j. Women's Missionary Society
- k. Educational Institutions
- l. Theological Scholarships
- m. Episcopal District Projects
- n. Overseas Development
- o. Social Action
- p. Economic Development
- q. Lay Organization

7. Other Committees cont'd.

- r. Richard Allen Young Adult Council (RAYAC)
- s. Health Commission
- t. Public Relations
- u. Women in Ministry
- v. Christian Debutante – Maser Dedication
- w. Memoirs
- x. Reception of Fraternal Delegates
- y. State of the Church
- z. Women in Ministry

8. The Order of Committees Reports

pg. 198

LEARNING CORNER..... From ame-church.com (Official website of the AME Church

Required Credentials for 2016 Candidates:

- Letter of intent to identify office being sought
- Certified Birth Certificate from your state or County Department of Vital Statistics
- Seminary (clergy) and college diploma (copies)
- Ordination Certificate (Copy of Elder's Orders
- Letter from your Presiding Bishop stating that you are in good and regular standing with your Annual Conference
- A recent Black and White Photo of yourself

3. Submission Deadline Dates:

January 6, 2016

All Candidates' Registration must be submitted to the Office of the General Secretary

3. Submission Deadline Dates:

January 6, 2016

All Candidates' Registration must be submitted to the Office of the General Secretary

March 6, 2016

An accurate list of elected General Conference Delegates due from each Episcopal District Bishop to the Office of the General Secretary

March 15, 2016

All Districts must pay for Delegate and Alternate Hotel expenses

April 6, 2016

General Conference Committee Assignments due from each Episcopal District to the Office of the General Secretary

April 6, 2016

Receipt of Proposed Legislation due to the Office of the General Secretary

–Use the [Legislation Template](#) to submit legislation!

The Bicentennial Celebration

The Bicentennial Celebration

(Link to 1st Episcopal District–2016generalconference.com)

- | | |
|------------------|--|
| June 2016 | Bicentennial Torch Run
Unveiling of the Bishop Richard Allen Statue |
| July 2016 | First Episcopal District Banquet |

2016 GENERAL CONFERENCE from ame-church.com

1. Registration Fees

Observers:

\$115 – June 2015 – Dec. 31, 2015

\$120 – January 1, 2016 – March 31, 2016

\$125 – April 1, 2016 until start of Registration At 2016
General Conference

Student with Valid ID:

\$50 – Increases to \$60 at site of the General Conference

Youth – (Age 5-18):

\$25 – Increases to \$35 at site of the General Conference

Delegates and Alternates:

Register through their District Office

***Registration and housing questions should be emailed
to: 2016GCInfo@amecnational.org**

Transforming Legislation

CC-09 Uniform Election Process

Reference

Doctrine and Discipline of the African Methodist Episcopal Church, 2004, Part IV, Section II, Local Church Organization, 3, b, Trustees, Page 69; Part VII, Section 1. General Board - A, Page 156; Part VIII, Section C. Election of Delegates, 1.d, Ministerial Delegates, Page 207, 2. b. Lay Delegates, Page 209. Section F, General Conference Committees, 1. The Episcopal Committee, a. Election. Page 212

CC-09 Uniform Election Process

Intent

To mandate uniformity in all ballot elections at all levels in the church, i.e. The Local Church, District Conference, Annual Conference, Episcopal District, and in the General Conference.

CC-09 Uniform Election Process

Rationale

If different types of ballots are distributed or allowed in any election, voters may not enjoy the comfort of voting their own personal conviction, but may feel compelled to vote the intentions or desires of another, especially if the outcomes may possibly be controlled by ballots that are different colors, sizes or ones that do not include all names or all issues which are to be decided upon in said election.