



GLOBAL METHODIST CHURCH

THE GENERAL CONFERENCE COMMUNITY: PLAN OF ORGANIZATION AND COVENANT FOR OUR LIFE TOGETHER EXECUTIVE SUMMARY OF CHANGES FROM SEPTEMBER 2024 - JANUARY 2026

JANUARY 28, 2026

PURPOSE

This memo summarizes the major structural, procedural, and governance changes made to the *Plan of Organization and Covenant for Our Life Together* between September 2024 and January 2026. Most extensive changes resulted from the shift to a 100% in-person gathering rather than the hybrid model initially adopted at the 2024 General Conference.

SIGNIFICANT CHANGES

I. LEGISLATIVE PROCESS SHIFT

The original 2024 model relied on extensive pre-conference virtual legislative work, with committees completing most petition processing before General Conference convened.

The 2026 version abandons this model and returns legislative deliberation primarily to the on-site General Conference floor, limiting pre-conference work to officer elections and parliamentary training.

II. TIMELINE COMPRESSION

ITEM	2024	2026
Delegate Certification	10 months prior	April 1, 2026 (150 Days)
Petition Deadline	270 days prior	May 1, 2026 (120 Days)
Committee Preferences	270 days prior	May 1, 2026 (120 Days)
Committee Assignments	240 days prior	June 1, 2026 (90 Days)

III. EMERGING AREA REPRESENTATION (NEW)

The 2026 document introduces Emerging Area Representatives for developing regions. These representatives will have observer status in plenary sessions, a voice with no vote in legislative committees, and full expenses paid by the General Conference budget.

*The Global Methodist Church exists to make disciples of Jesus Christ
and spread scriptural holiness across the globe.*

IV. SOCIAL WITNESS VOTING THRESHOLD

The 2026 revision reflects the terms of the current Book of Doctrines & Discipline, which states it takes a 75% affirmative vote (not 60%) to approve Social Witness Statements.

V. NOMINATIONS PROCESS STANDARDIZED

Each annual conference may now submit up to 20 nominees, with at least 50% lay representation, for specific commissions.

VI. FINANCIAL RESPONSIBILITY CLARIFIED

U.S. delegates' expenses are now encouraged to be covered by their annual conferences, while international delegates may still receive general church support.

VII. PROCEDURAL FLEXIBILITY ADDED

Committees may now temporarily suspend *Robert's Rules* for extended discussion by majority vote.

BOTTOM-LINE SUMMARY

The revisions of the Plan of Organization from September 2024 to January 2026:

- ◆ Moves to a 100% on-site General Conference model
- ◆ Compress preparation timelines
- ◆ Expand participation for Emerging Areas
- ◆ Raise Social Witness approval thresholds per the *Book of Doctrines & Discipline*
- ◆ Restrict committee leadership to experienced delegates per the *BDD*
- ◆ Standardize nominations
- ◆ Clarify funding responsibilities

CHRONOLOGY

With the change to a 100% in-person model for the 2026 General Conference, affirmed by a poll of delegates to the 2024 General Conference in early 2025, the General Conference Commission revised the Plan of Organization in **January 2025** to enable work under this new construct. This revision is what guided the work of the GCC for 2025.

In **December 2025**, the General Conference Commission approved further changes that clarified and tightened existing procedures rather than introducing major structural changes.

The **January 2026** revision added a provision to allow representatives of emerging areas of the GMC to be present at General Conference and participate with voice but not vote in legislative committees. Additionally, this revision provides legislative committee chairs with the discretion to allow their committees to engage in informal discussion outside *Robert's Rules*. The Connectional Council approved the revised document on January 26, 2026.

Throughout the year, various editorial and proofreading clarifications that had no effect on the policies or procedures of the Plan were made as needed.