

Organization of the UMC



The UMC is an 'episcopal' church, which means that we are led by bishops elected from among the ordained elders of the denomination. We are organized as an interlocking series of conferences.

Church Conference

Meets annually, open to all members of a local church

Responsibilities: Elect officers, receive ministry and financial reports, approve pastor's salary, set direction for coming year

Annual Conference

Is both an annual meeting & a permanent organization, consists of an equal number of lay & clergy delegates, presided over by a bishop

Responsibilities: Elect officers and members to boards, receive ministry & financial reports, set conference policy/structure/budget, approve candidates for ministry (clergy session), make pastoral appointments (bishop, with cabinet input)

Jurisdictional (US) & Central Conference (International)

Meets every quadrennium (4 years), made up of equal numbers of laity & clergy elected by annual conferences

5 Jurisdictional Conferences in US: Northeast, Southeast, North Central, South Central, and West

Responsibilities: primarily to elect & assign bishops to support the annual conferences within their areas (Central Conferences outside the US have additional autonomy and responsibilities, including the ability to make local adaptations to the *Book of Discipline*)

General Conference

Is the highest lawmaking body and the only body authorized to speak in the name of the UMC, made up of equal numbers of laity and clergy elected by annual conferences, meets every quadrennium (4 years)

Responsibilities: overall responsibility for amending the *Book of Discipline*, set policy/structure/budget & provide oversight for all General Agencies, take official church stands on social issues, approve new hymnals & other worship resources



The organizations below are also part of our structure on the denominational level:

Judicial Council The UMC's "Supreme Court" – nine members elected by GC	Council of Bishops Made up of retired & active bishops – meets twice per year
General Boards and Agencies of the UMC	
Discipleship	Church & Society
Global Ministries	Christian Unity &
Finance & Administration	Interreligious Concerns
Higher Education & Ministry	Status & Role of Women
Archives & History	Religion & Race
Pensions & Health Benefits	United Methodist Men
Communications	UM Publishing House