

## **B. LAY EQUALIZATION**

*(Amended 1986)*

*(Amended 1990)*

*(Amended 1995)*

*(Amended 1996)*

### **(POLICY)**

Since the 1996 issue of *The Book of Discipline* of The United Methodist Church provides in paragraph 602. *Composition and Character*. 1. The clergy membership of an Annual Conference shall consist of deacons and elders in full connection, probationary members, associate members, and local pastors under full-time and part-time appointment to a pastoral charge, and

Since the *Constitution* of The United Methodist Church provides, in Section VI. Annual Conferences, paragraph 30, *Article I*. The Annual Conference shall be composed of ministerial members as defined by the General Conference, together with a lay member elected by each charge, the conference president of United Methodist Women, the conference president of United Methodist Men, the conference lay leader, the district lay leaders, the president or equivalent officer of the conference young adult organization, the president of the conference youth organization, and two young persons under twenty-five (25) years of age from each district to be selected in such manner as may be determined by the Annual Conference. Each charge served by more than one minister shall be entitled to as many lay members as there are ministerial members. The lay members shall have been for the two years next preceding their election members of The United Methodist Church and shall have been active participants in The United Methodist Church for at least four years next preceding their election.

If the lay membership should number less than the ministerial members of the Annual Conference, the Annual Conference shall, by its own formula, provide for the election of additional lay members to equalize lay and ministerial membership of the Annual Conference.

To implement *Article I*, the following provision is recommended: The two young persons under 25 years of age from each district shall be determined in the following manner: one young adult from each district shall be selected by the District Ministry Team or its equivalent; one youth from each district shall be selected by the District Council on Youth Ministries.

THEREFORE the equalization plan shall be implemented in sequential order until balanced membership shall obtain.

1. A second lay member from each pastoral charge consisting of four (4) or more churches shall be elected at the charge conference and reported by the district superintendent to the Conference Secretary, provided that no more than one person shall be elected from any one church.
2. A second lay member from each pastoral charge consisting of three (3) or fewer churches enrolling more than *four hundred (400)* members shall be elected at the charge conference and reported by the district superintendent to the Conference Secretary.
3. A third lay member from each pastoral charge enrolling more than *eleven hundred (1100)* members shall be elected at the charge conference and reported by the district superintendent to the Conference Secretary.
4. One lay member shall be determined by each district organization of United Methodist Women.
5. One lay member shall be determined by each district organization of United Methodist Men.
6. Immediate past president of the Conference United Methodist Women; immediate past president of the Conference United Methodist Men; immediate past president of the Conference Council on Youth Ministry.

7. Associate Conference Lay Leader and immediate past Conference Lay Leader.
8. Lay chairpersons of Conference boards and agencies.
9. Associate District Lay Leaders.
10. Sufficient additional lay members to provide equalized membership shall be appointed "lay member-at-large" by the resident bishop in consultation with the Lay Equalization Committee of the Committee on Conference Session, but not more than one "lay member-at-large" to be appointed from any one church. The target date for such appointments shall be by March 1 of each year.

The membership statistics reported as of December 31 of the preceding year shall be used for each year's election in computing eligibility for additional lay members. These persons shall be elected annually.

All requirements for lay membership required of basic members in *The Book of Discipline* (paragraph 602) will apply to additional lay members appointed, elected or serving ex-officio under this plan.

It shall be the responsibility of each organization to report the names and addresses of such additional lay members to the Conference Secretary prior to March 1 certifying lay membership for the annual conference of that year.