

2.1 ANNUAL PRESBYTERS CONVOCATION

Conference resolves to implement as from 2018, the mandatory gathering of annual Presbyters Convocations in Districts and directs EMMU in conjunction with Human Resources Unit & Revisions Committee to develop a standardized procedure. (For the full motivation see EMMU Report)

The Convocation is to be attended by all Probationer and Ordained Presbyters (active and Supernumeraries). This is to offer a safe platform for open, loving but rigorous engagement of clergy with each other and with ministerial issues. The agenda shall include:

1. Conversation on the vocation of clergy (strengthening understanding of the call as well as the order of presbyters).
2. Engagement with contemporary theological/ doctrinal/ ethical issues as referred to the Convocation.
3. Accounting in terms of the provisions in 5.4 Order of Business for Synods – (BOOK OF ORDER page 189) This takes place at the Convocation. (Remembering that any Member of the MCSA may raise objections to any Minister in terms of L&D Ed 12 Revised, para 11.3.)
Discipline questions are to be dealt with at Convocation and not at Synod. A report is to be given to Synod.
4. Oral Examination of the Ordinands. - (2.7.2 Order of Business for Synods.)
This allows for an in-depth theological questioning and debate- not humiliation. A report be given from the Convocation to Synod.
5. Presbyters' Undertaking (Book Of Order 4.17)
All Presbyters shall make a renewal of Ordination vows and repeat annually at the Convocation, the undertakings made at Candidature and Ordination as per L&D 4.17.

2.2 CROSS CULTURAL STATIONING

Noting the resolution on cross cultural stations (Yearbook 2013 pg 80 No 7) Conference directs EMMU & CE to be intentional in stationing Ministers leaving Seminary in cross cultural contexts. Furthermore, Conference directs the General Secretary to include a progress report on cross cultural stationing at every Conference.

2.3 STRATEGY FOR YOUTH

Noting the challenge of sustaining and or maintaining the membership of our Church and the youth in particular who are migrating to other churches, Conference directs DEWCOM in consultation with the Youth Unit to develop liturgies that are conducive and relevant to all ages. Furthermore, Bishops and Superintendents are directed to consult with Youth groups in developing relevant strategies which will attract, retain and grow the Youth.

2.4 DRUG DEPENDENCY

In the light of the recent tragic death in Port ST Johns where an uncle killed and ate his nephew and the brutal killing of a final year medical student at WSU who was killed by a group of students; also noting with concern that perpetrators in all these events were under the influence of liquor and substances; the Conference directs MASA to be very active and visible to especially those living in hostels so as to speak against the misuse of drugs and consequences thereof rather than preaching to the converted. Conference

directs that the MASA desk establishes a drug rehabilitation centre by making use of the unused church properties as prospective venues for this project.

MASA is to have a clear program of action and system of reporting so as to be proactive that being reactional.

Conference refers this resolution to the Mission Unit and directs the Unit to report back to Conference 2018.

2.5 LITURGICAL COLOURS

Conference directs Bishops to lead the instruction on theological and liturgical meaning of stoles and other liturgical symbols.

2.6 CONTINUING MINISTERIAL FORMATION

As directed by 2015 Conference in Yearbook 2016, Resolution 2.42: Page 105, Conference endorses Continuing Ministerial Formation program and directs EMMU to facilitate implementation.

1. All ordained presbyters in active ministry shall participate in mandatory Continuing Ministerial formation. Each presbyter is required to do at least 100 hours of learning/ study a year (about 12 days) in the areas of choice.
2. Accountability groups consisting of the Superintendent, a Society Steward and 2 Lay persons, be established for each minister. For Superintendents the group will consist of the Bishop, a Circuit Steward and 2 Lay persons.

The task of the accountability group will be:

- To carry out a Review of Ministry process (L&D 4.79.1) (HR Unit to provide a standard review format) The aim of the review is to help a minister identify her/his strengths, passion, gifts and how these contribute to the wellbeing of the circuit/ society / community or the church at large as well as areas of weakness in which s/he needs development/ empowerment. This process will assist ministers in choosing areas of study to focus on each year.
 - To provide mentorship and supervision by meeting with the minister bi-annually to discuss progress.
 - To give a mentorship report on the minister at the Presbyter Convocation.
3. EMMU in consultation with DEWCOM to identify and propose preferred institutions and programmes for Continuing Ministerial Formation and report to Conference 2018.
 4. The Finance Unit in consultation with EMMU and the Mission Unit to identify financial resources and /or propose the way of funding CMF and report to Conference 2018.

2.7 SEMONGKONG

Conference resolves that the Semongkong Centre be resuscitated and the Mission Unit to report progress at Conference 2018.

2.8 MINISTRY TO THE ELDERLY

Conference resolves to establish a task team to coordinate the work of Ministry to the Elderly including inter alia, the Methodist Homes for the Aged and home-base care of the elderly.

2.9 CONFERENCE RESOLUTION 2016

Conference amends the Title of Resolution 2.25 (yearbook pg. 99) TO: "Protests in Southern Africa" and include the Ecumenical Affairs Unit and EMMU in the implementation of the resolution.

2.10 ORDER OF EVANGELISM

Noting the following 2016 Resolutions (2.9 & 2.14, 2.21,2,34 pg 96 to 102 -Yearbook 2017) Conference directs the General Secretary & Human Resource Director to include the content of these resolutions in the ensuing Indaba that will deal with all matters affecting Orders of Deacons, Evangelism & Bible Women, planned for the first quarter of 2018, and report to be tabled at Conference 2018.

2.11 CHARGING FOR BAPTISM (from DEWCOM)

In light of the Methodist understanding of baptism, namely:

- that it is an outward sign of the new life God offers to all people through Jesus Christ;
- that it is a sacrament given freely to the church by Jesus Christ;

Conference notes with concern that there are some Circuits where children of the poor are being excluded from baptism because of various financial barriers, such as, the amounts charged for baptism certificates; the levying of a "baptism fee" by some ministers; and the practice of requiring parents, significant care-givers or guardians to be fully "paid-up" in terms of tithes and pledges before their children can be baptised. This creates an erroneous perception that is contrary to the MCSA's doctrine that baptism costs money and therefore is a privilege only for those who can afford it.

Conference therefore re-affirms that in the MCSA, baptism is freely administered at no financial cost, and calls on all Ministers and Circuit/Society leaders to guard against administrative systems and practices that either exclude or put unnecessary burdens on the poor among us.

2.12 DISTRICT ECUMENICAL AFFAIRS SECRETARIES (DEAS) BECOMING PART OF DISTRICT MISSION COMMITTEE

Conference resolves that the District Ecumenical Affairs Secretaries become members of District Mission Committees, thus enabling this cooperation to filter down our structures throughout the Connexion.

2.13 ACCEPTANCE OF THE DUTCH REFORMED CHURCH AS A MEMBER OF THE CHURCH UNITY COMMISSION.

Conference supports the application of the Nederduitse Gereformeerde Kerk or Dutch Reformed Church; and the United Reformed Church of South Africa as Member Churches in the Church Unity Commission.

2.14 METHODIST CONNEXIONAL GIFTS POLICY

Conference adopts the Methodist Connexional Gift Policy. The policy shall be reviewed annually as an appendix to the Connexional Finance Policy. (For the full Policy see Appendix 4 – Finance Unit Report, Yearbook 2018)

2.15 RATIONALE FOR MCSA' s FINANCING AND ASSESSMENT CALCULATION MODEL

Considering the MCSA's growing costs and the global tendency toward reducing large centralised cost structures, the current economic situation within the Connexion, and the need for and desirability of efficiency and efficacy in a financing and assessment calculation model, Conference directs that the General Secretary to set up a commission looking into the MCSA financing model and in particular the Connexional assessment calculation and the report to be presented to Conference 2018.

2.16 INSURANCE OF HERITAGE or UNINSURABLE PROPERTY

Noting The MCSA's historic buildings are often built with now obsolete materials, and are sometimes subject to major structural damages and may well be uninsurable, Conference instructs the Finance Unit to:

- Consult Insurers as to whether such buildings need to be insured at all or how such property needs to be valued if the assets cannot be replaced.
- Consult Insurers as to whether such buildings can be insured against such events or alternatively, whether such buildings need to be insured at all.
- Explore the possibility of redirecting monies that would have been paid to insurance premiums for uninsurable or irreplaceable buildings to be placed in trust for use when required.

2.17 FINANCIAL POLICIES

Conference reaffirms the existence of the Connexional Finance Policy and further instructs all Organisations / Units / Institutions to adhere to the policy. Conference also requests District Management Committees to monitor and ensure compliance.

2.18 GENERAL TREASURERS

Conference resolves that there be one (1) General Treasurer in the MCSA. Par 9.7 of the L&D, be amended that the role / position be a General Treasurer and the word 'Lay' be removed from the position.

2.19 CHURCH RESERVE FUND

Conference resolves that the Church Reserve Fund:

1. Serves as a reserve to guarantee that in a financial eventuality of calamitous proportions the church reserve may be used to safeguard the finances of the church and guarantee its obligations towards stipend, pension, medical and assessments.
2. Is further used for the purpose of church development (incorporating Mission), and clergy care.
3. When used for purposes other than points 1 & 2 above, a clear motivation to use funds must be made and accepted by the Connexional Executive, a maximum of 35% on the income in interest to the fund may be used in any one year until the fund

reaches a capital value of R 200 000 000, at which time the percentage shall be reconsidered.

4. Be managed by a committee consisting members of the finance unit and mission unit as well as the general treasurer, and reported at the finance unit executive and in the annual financial statements.

2.20 ECUMENICAL LAND DISTRIBUTION INDABA

Noting:

- the urgent need to prioritize land reform and redistribution in the post-apartheid state, and the persistence of neoliberal market forces in shaping socio-economic development and tackling poverty and inequality;
- the seeming weak bureaucracy and a policy fixation on the neoliberal willing-buyer-willing-seller policy framework militates against the promotion of thorough-going land redistribution, especially for the poor and dispossessed;
- the use of this matter for political expediency

Conference directs the Mission Unit in consultation with the Ecumenical Affairs Unit to hold a reflective session to include issues in all member countries, to address this issue of land reform, compensation and redistribution in Southern Africa.

Conference affirms the SACC's convention on the land issue in Southern Africa, and refer this resolution for their consideration.

2.21 SAFER TRANSPORT FOR CHILDREN TO AND FROM SCHOOL

Noting the broad focus of the 2015 Conference Resolution 2.18 (Yearbook 2016, pg 100), and the concern that a full report to Conference is still outstanding. Conference directs the Mission Unit to action the 2015 Resolution, and to report to Conference 2018

2.22 RESOLUTION ON WOMEN'S ORGANISATIONS

Conference refers the following proposal to the Joint Women's Consultation that there be one Constitution for all namely; Women's Manyano, Young Women's Manyano, Women's Auxiliary and Women's Association.

Women's Organisations are part of the church universal and profess belonging to the Body of Christ. Our Oneness in Christ is to be made known. In practical terms, we are required to work together, negotiate and build on a meaningful relationship.

Relating to the for the four Women's Organizations namely: Women's Manyano, Young Women's Manyano, Women's Auxiliary and Women's Association within the Methodist Church of Southern Africa, it would be beneficial for the said Women's Organizations to maintain and adhere to ONE Constitution for the Organisations and to be forwarded to Synod for consideration.

NB: We are not stipulating structure or identity to be changed e.g. Uniforms or Portfolio conveners, as this is to be respected, but only adhering to the rules of the Church and to initiate Oneness for all Women's Organisations as above.

2.23 POLITICAL EDUCATION AND OUR DUTY TO THE STATE

In light of the current political and economic instability and its devastating effects on the poor and the education and skilling of our youth, there is a need for equipping both clergy and lay leadership with tools to help navigate the connection between faith and public policy. The complex and intertwining nature of these issues as exemplified by the alleged corruption in government and the #FeesMustFall movement highlight the need to improve the tone of national discourse by fostering a new ethic of civil discourse and active citizenry. We recall Mr Wesley words in 1775, “...people share in the political sins of their country...and God frequently punishes a people for the sins of their rulers, because they are generally partakers of their sins, of one kind or other.”

These words are central to the Methodist emphasis on social holiness and commitments concerning the dignity, freedom and rights of the human person, the embeddedness of the person in a fabric of social obligations, relations and communities, and the purpose of the state to promote justice and the common good.

We also believe that the people of God who are called in every time and every place to the task of continuing the essential ministry of Christ for the healing of all people, institutions and creation.

Therefore, the Conference calls on EMMU in consultation with the Mission Unit, DEWCOM and Ecumenical partners to generate resources that will to help equip societies and Circuits to actively engage prophetic ministry including:

- Citizen education and sensitivity on public issues of justice, governance and collaboration.
- Advocacy and training workshops on the role of the church in the public space
- Promote greater vibrant active citizenry.

2.24 THE STATE OF THE NATION (SOUTH AFRICA)

Preamble

Noting that the governing of a nation with wisdom and integrity is a fundamental biblical value, Conference expresses its deep concern at apparent cronyism in the appointment of public officers and ministers of government, such as the recent replacement of the Finance Minister, Pravin Gordhan and the Deputy Finance Minister, Mcebisi Jonas.

Also observing the current political and economic challenges facing the nation, such as:

- The moral decay of the nation manifested and integrated into the political fibre and decay as seen in the chaos and disorder in the parliament of the RSA;
- Corruption has become rampant
- The corroded values in upholding the rule of law, the constitution and the degenerating confidence in the Executive Arm of the State, RSA and Private Sector;
- The economic slump as an indication of how skewed the economy that has been sighted to favour the Gupta family and no longer advancing the livelihood of the people of South Africa, especially the poor and the marginalised;

- The disdainful manner in which state resources are being used to pay out irregular pensions and / or golden handshakes;
- The unabated misuse of Executive Powers to make a decision that affect the country's economy adversely and leads to junk status.

Further noting the courage and growing outrage that is shown by many people across the length and breadth in numbers standing up against the perversion of the RSA democracy; The prophetic stance taken by the Presiding Bishop of the MCSA in calling for the President to do the right thing to resign;

The startling, scary and unsettling report of the SACC unburdening panel which warns us that what we face is more than corruption, but a perversion of the nature and purpose of the state to the service of personal and family enrichment which is now degenerating to what the report calls a mafia state;

The report of the inter-university research entitled, *"Betrayal of the Promise: How South Africa is Being Stolen"* showing outrageous, systematic endeavor of what it calls the shadow state which usurps the power of our constitutionally mandated institutions to the very end of personal interests and gains; as well as the growing call for South Africans to come together in a form of a dialogue/*Imbizo* to converse around the recapturing our moral center and igniting our dream as a nation.

Conference welcomes and endorses the prophetic leadership of our Presiding Bishop and the call for the President of South Africa to resign acknowledges the work of *Unburdening Panel* of the SACC and all initiatives that foster public accountability and ethical governance.

Conference resolves to:

- convey its disapproval of and concern about all decisions taken on the basis of political expediency and partisan interests
- encourage all Methodists who might have participated in corruption to approach the *Unburdening Panel*.
- support ecumenical and public efforts and join in the mobilisation of the Christian community toward initiatives for restoring morality and increasing accountability in our public institutions.
- direct the Communications Unit to popularise the unburdening processes facilitated by the SACC and to circulate all other initiatives to District Offices and other suitable avenues.

2.25 SUBSTANCE ABUSE

Conference notes with concern the ruling handed down by the High Court as it pertains to the recreational use of Cannabis in private residences. Furthermore the Conference that, in light of the MCSA stance on the negative impact of substance abuse on our communities, an Early Intervention and Prevention Substance Abuse Program is established at Heatherdale Children's Home.

Notwithstanding the varying professional and alternate medical opinions offered as to the positive effects of the usage of Cannabis as a potential remedy for certain medical conditions, the 2017 Conference resolves to:

1. publicly state its opposition to the High Court Ruling due to the potential negative impact of the ruling and
2. publicly state its opinion and instructs the Mission Unit to interrogate the potential negative impact of the High Court ruling and to send a clear message to the people called Methodists to refrain from using cannabis or any other addictive substances.

2.26 SEX-ABUSE IN THE MCSA

In 2016, the MCSA celebrated the 40th year of the ordination of women in the MCSA, and we celebrate the many gifts that female clergy bring to our church. It is with deep sadness, however, that we note the continuing abuse – including sexual abuse – of our female clergy and ministers in training.

For the church to play its prophetic role in speaking to injustice, we have to ensure that our integrity in this matter is without fault, **lest** we open ourselves to the kind of scandals that have rocked other denominations to their core.

The Conference resolves that the Methodist Church of Southern Africa establish a confidential mechanism where female clergy can share their stories of abuse without fear of jeopardizing their ministry. This process does not preclude the disciplinary procedures or appropriate remedial action for those accused of the offence and extends to the Seminary. Conference refers this Resolution to the General Secretary in consultation with the Human Resource Unit, noting the existing harassment & wellness policies.

2.27 MCSA WELLNESS POLICY

Conference refers this proposed policy found in the HR Report (Yearbook 2018) to Districts for further discussion and report back to Conference in 2018.

2.28 SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY

Conference endorses the SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY as found in the 2018 Yearbook, Communications Report.

2.29 ELECTION OF PRESIDING BISHOP & BISHOPS

Persuaded by L&D 5.6.2 & 5.6.5, Conference refers the matter of election of Presiding Bishop & Bishops back to the Structures Committee for further work, considering the relevant resolutions that were tabled at Conference 2017.

2.30 RECOGNISING THE WOMENS FELLOWSHIP AS A CONSTITUTIONAL FORMATION WITHIN THE MCSA

Conference resolves that the work on the possibility of the Women's Fellowship becoming a Constitutional formation be dealt with by the Limpopo District and the Joint Methodist Forum as per the 2014 Resolution (2.20, pg 87 YB 2015).

2.31 THE ADMINISTERING OF CEREMONIES OF BLESSING FOR SAME SEX CIVIL UNION COUPLES

Conference receives the resolution below and refers this work to the Committee on Marriage & Family Life in consultation with DEWCOM for further work and referral to Circuit Quarterly Meetings & Synods 2018.

Given the adoption of the profession of faith around the same sex dialogue in the MCSA (*par. 17 pg. 227 Book of Order Miscellaneous Conference Resolutions*) and recognizing that the while MCSA is a community of love and acceptance and that the expression of divergent convictions within the MCSA is scripturally and theologically justified (*pg. 227 par 17 Book of Order*):

Conference refers the consideration of allowing clergy to conduct ceremonies of blessing for same-sex civil union couples as part of their pastoral oversight of such couples subject to their conscience.

2.32 HATE CRIMES AGAINST LGBTIQ PERSONS

The MCSA laments the tragedy that within the countries of our Connexion, LGBTIQ persons continue to be victimised, abused, sexually assaulted and even murdered because of their sexual orientation and identity; and condemns unequivocally any and all discriminatory actions and attitudes towards these sisters and brothers of priceless worth. The MCSA calls on all of its members to stand up and speak out against such hate crimes; to desist from any demeaning, derogatory and inflammatory speech and behaviour against LGBTIQ persons; and where it has failed to do so, asks for forgiveness. Pg 99 of Resolutions to Conference & CE, 2003 – 2015.

Conference reaffirms the Resolution as taken in 2013,(YB 2014, 2.20 pg 91) against hate crimes and refers it to District Justice Desks to ensure implementation.

2.33 FREEDOM OF CONSCIENCE FOR MINISTERS TO CONDUCT SAME-SEX UNIONS

Conference receives the resolution below and refers this work to the Committee on Marriage & Family Life in consultation with DEWCOM for further work and referral to Circuit Quarterly Meetings & Synods 2018.

Noting:

- that within the covenantal relationship between a minister and the MCSA, the church undertakes to "...provide ministers with the opportunity to practice their calling" (The Methodist Book of Order (12th ed.), para.4.3, p.30);
- that the exercise of pastoral care is an integral part of a minister's calling;
- that ministers are further expected and required to offer pastoral care to LGBTIQ persons (2008 Yearbook, para.2.5.1.(vi), p.82; 2011 Yearbook, para.2.27, p.105);
- that for some ministers, their theological convictions and conscience dictate that such pastoral care must include the active blessing and support of same-sex couples within

their care, and particularly when such couples choose to enter into a civil union / marriage;

- that Conference has already affirmed that such convictions are legitimately represented among us and have theological integrity (The Methodist Book of Order, p.217; 2011 Yearbook, para.2.27, p.106);
- that preventing a minister who wishes to do so from officiating at the civil union / marriage of a same-sex couple within his/her pastoral care, has the consequence of forcing that minister to act against his/her conscience, and compromises the church's covenantal responsibility to provide ministers with the opportunity to practice their calling;

Therefore, it is before Quarterly Meetings and Synods 2018 to consider:

- i. Methodist ministers are free to follow their conscience in the kind of pastoral care they offer to LGBTIQ persons;
- ii. Methodist ministers stationed in South Africa who wish to apply to be licensed marriage officers under the Civil Unions Act of 2006 are free to do so; and directs the General Secretary to make the necessary representations to the South African Department of Home Affairs that would authorise such applications.

In providing this space for ministers to follow their conscience in the kind of pastoral care they offer to LGBTIQ persons, and in recognition of the diversity of conviction represented within the fellowship of the ministry, this proposal further encourages ministers who choose to officiate at the civil union / marriage of a same-sex couple to include the following, or similar, form of words, preferably at the start of the ceremony:

"I am officiating here today in my capacity as a Methodist minister. But I need to acknowledge that within the Methodist Church of Southern Africa there are widely differing convictions when it comes to the issue of same-sex relationships. The Methodist Church has acknowledged, honestly and courageously, that we are not all of one mind on this matter. There are colleagues of mine who do not agree with my participation here today, but who allow me the freedom to act according to my conscience to exercise the kind of pastoral care that I feel called to offer to [A.B.] and [C.D.]. For this I am grateful."

2.34 CREATING A SAFER SPACE FOR LGBTIQ VOICES TO BE HEARD WITHIN THE MCSA

In spite of the 2005 Conference resolution calling for "A church structure to be created that seeks to create a safe place for people of same sex orientation to tell their stories," (2006 Yearbook, para.8.5.3, p.76), the testimony of many LGBTIQ clergy and laity within the MCSA is that they still do not feel safe to express their voices fully and openly.

In seeking to redress this problem that greatly impoverishes the church and undermines its witness, Conference draws the attention of everyone within the MCSA to the following paragraph within the Profession of Faith endorsed by the 2014 Conference:

All of us believe that the church is called to be a community of love and not rejection with a responsibility to extend pastoral care to all people irrespective of their sexual orientation, and that no-one should be excluded from any aspect of the church's life and ministry solely on the basis of their sexual orientation.

Conference resolves that LGBTIQ voices within the church be afforded opportunities at CQM's, District Synods, Conventions and Conference to lead Bible studies, facilitate workshops and share their stories.

2.35 WOMEN IN LEADERSHIP

Conference receives & refers this resolutions to the Structures Committee in consultation with the Women in Ministry Task Team for report back at Conference 2018.

In 1972 the MCSA voted for the inclusion of women as presbyters and the first woman was ordained in 1976. In 1988 MCSA Conference endorsed the Decade of Churches in Solidarity with Women and later noted that Churches and Society continue to treat gender concerns lightly and women's issues are treated as peripheral. The Conference of the Methodist Church of Southern Africa has previously resolved that all structures within the Church should include at least 40% women as part of The Methodist Book of Order, Laws and Discipline" (Revised Book of Order, pg 237, Statement 36).

Conference notes with concern that Synods continue to propose male candidates as Bishop nominees to Conference. Such practice contradicts the policy of representivity.

Therefore Conference affirms:

- i) That the Presiding Bishop should continue to act in line with clause 5.7.1.5 pg. 56 in the revised edition of the Laws and Discipline which states that "...the Presiding Bishop shall ensure the observance of the resolutions and directions of the Conference and of the Connexional Executive, having authority to permit exceptions or departures."
- ii) In addition, the CQMs and Synod are to take its 'policy and intention' with respect to the quorate statement on balanced representation of women, men and youth, pg. 55, of the Book of Order interpreted as 40-40-20 seriously and comply hereto.
- iii) Conference directs Societies, Circuits and Districts, to comply with stipulated Laws and Discipline with respect to representation.
- iv) Conference refers the resolutions 2.46, 2.47 & 2.48 to the Structures Committee in consultation with the Women's in Ministry Task Team for report back at Conference 2018.

2.36 APPOINTMENT OF BISHOPS

Conference receives & refers this resolutions to the Structures Committee in consultation with the Women in Ministry Task Team for report back at Conference 2018.

Conference affirms the 40/40/20 policy in our church, as well as the statement on women (Book of Order 2016:237) and requests that Conference makes this policy applicable to the appointment of Bishops.

2.37 WOMEN BISHOPS

Conference receives & refers this resolutions to the Structures Committee in consultation with the Women in Ministry Task Team for report back at Conference 2018.

Noting:

- the recent resolutions at the 2016 Conference on the place of women in ministry and the inclusion of women in positions of senior leadership within the MCSA (2017 Yearbook, resolutions 2.4 and 2.12, pp.95, 97); as well as,

- the long-standing requirement that “...all structures within the Church should include at least 40% women” (*The Methodist Book of Order*, resolution 36, p.227);

The Resolution proposes that Conference receives that at any given time there should be at least five women Bishops within the MCSA.

As a way of enacting this, when districts are due to elect a bishop, where such an appointment needs to be a woman in order to meet the representation requirements referred to above, the Presiding Bishop shall inform the districts concerned prior to the nomination process that they need to elect a woman. Accordingly, the General Secretary will only be able to entertain the names of woman nominees in ascertaining their availability for election (*The Methodist Book of Order*, Appendix 11, para.4, p.201.)

2.38 THEOLOGY OF MARRIAGE

Conference receives the report in the DEWCOM appendix and commends DEWCOM on the work to date. Conference instructs DEWCOM to continue its work.