

RESOLUTIONS OF THE 2022 CONFERENCE

1. **DIVERSITY MANAGEMENT IN SCHOOLS AND INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER LEARNING**

Conference notes with great concern how different forms of prejudices and biases have brought much strife and divisions within our schools and Institutions of Higher learning, this in turn impacts negatively on social cohesion and the unity of Society in general.

Conference therefore instructs the Child Care and Justice and Service Desk within the Mission Unit to develop guidelines on Diversity Management for use within Children and Youth Ministries in the Church

2. **UNACCREDITED & MATURE AGE LOCAL PREACHERS**

Noting the current requirement that all Local Preachers who not have not fulfilled the required Connexional Training and Certification standards, be identified, and to either register through EMMU and SMMS to fulfil the academic requirements or be discontinued as Local Preachers.

Conference Resolves that the said requirements be suspended whilst an extension of amnesty for unaccredited Local Preachers be granted for a further 8 quarters, effective January 2023 to December 2024 upon which time the current requirements will be reinstated.

Conference further resolves to refer to EMMU the proposal that all unaccredited Local Preachers who are 60 years and over, be exempt from formal training requirements and explore the possibility of a Mature Age Category for whom exemptions of the Training Requirements may be granted effective January 2023 to December 2024 following which the normal requirements will be applicable.

3. **ESTABLISHMENT OF AN ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS DESK**

Conference notes with grave concern the escalating pollution of the environment, in amongst others the dumping of used diapers in grazing fields, plastic waste and paper as well as the burning of fossil fuels, vehicle exhaust fumes and emissions from agriculture and industry which significantly contributes to climate change, exacerbates poverty, and inequality, in both urban and rural areas.

Conference therefore reaffirms the Miscellaneous Conference Resolution 26 (Laws and Discipline 12th Ed Revised) on the Ecological Crisis and applauds the work done by SMMS and the Mission Unit in respect of the Care for Creation. Conference further urges District Mission Committees to seriously consider the formation of Environmental Affairs Desks to mitigate against this uncaring attitude towards God's Creation through awareness creation, training and lobbying support for the integrity of Creation in Circuits and Societies.

4. **POSSIBLE RELOCATION OF THE EDUCATION for MINISTRY AND MISSION UNIT TO THE SETH MOKITIMI METHODIST SEMINARY**

Recognising the role, responsibility, close links and interconnectedness of the Seth Mokitimi Methodist Seminary and the Education for Ministry and Mission Unit in the formation, education and training of both Ordained and Lay Ministries, Conference notes the concern that the *distance* (administratively

and physically) between these two entities often creates confusion, power blocks, financial strain and disconnect, which in turn leads to the stagnation of the implementation of their work.

In the light of the above Conference directs the Education for Ministry and Mission Unit and the Seth Mokitimi Methodist Seminary to explore the feasibility of the relocation of EMMU to SMMS in order to create more synergy in its communal missional, educational and formational mandate, and report its findings to the ensuing Conference.

5. TRAINING OF PRESBYTERS FOR MINISTRY TO CHILDREN AND YOUTH

Conference requests the Education for Ministry and Mission Unit to develop and introduce a curriculum focused on children and youth ministries as a compulsory requirement for all Presbyters and Deacons during their Ministerial Training and Formation.

6. EQUIPPING FOR CHILDRENS' SPIRITUAL DEVELOPMENT

Conference directs the Children and Youth Theology and Spirituality Desk within the Children and Youth Unit to develop the framework, practical material and relevant training to equip Local Preachers, Children's Ministry Practitioners, Parents and Guardians, on the conducting of child friendly worship services. This material once developed is to be approved and disseminated by the Education for Ministry and Mission Unit to the relevant structures.

Upon receipt of the material all Districts are instructed to conduct training workshops through their District EMMU (Local Preachers Department) and MCYU for all Local Preachers, Children's Ministry Practitioners and interested Parents / Guardians based on the material provided and ensure the implementation of material in all Circuits and Societies

7. AFFIRMATION AND ENCOURAGEMENT OF ENTREPRENEURIAL SUPPORT BY THE CHILDREN AND YOUTH UNIT.

Noting the negative effects of our economy and the high unemployment rate in Southern Africa, calls for self-employment and entrepreneurship has been raised prominently.

Conference affirms and encourages the continuation of the work done by the Children and Youth Unit in working with various entrepreneurs in the Church to capacitate those who are starting up businesses, as well as creating networks for businesses with different stakeholders.

8. REVIEW OF THE PROCUREMENT PROCESSES OF THE METHODIST JOINT REMOVAL SCHEME SERVICE PROVIDER

Conference noting, the costing, importance, value and centrality of the Methodist Joint Removal Scheme in facilitating the moving of Ministers and their families, within Southern Africa, instructs the Finance Unit to:

1. Review the contractual terms and conditions of the current MJR Service Provider at the earliest *contractual gap* or within 12months, whichever comes first.

2. Develop and establish open and transparent processes of procurement of service providers within the Connexion.
3. Ensure that any Service agreement contract be limited to a maximum period of Sixty (60) months, subject to a performance and mid-contract review.
4. Develop and integrate performance agreements for any new service providers.
5. Consider the inclusion of an *escape clause* for underperformance.
6. Ensure that the new Procurement Processes consider Connexionality as central to its policies, as operational in the Sovereign States of our Connexion
7. Investigate Sub-contracting opportunities especially as needed within the countries of our Connexion.

9. COST EFFECTIVE AND SIMPLIFIED HOSTING OF EVENTS

Conference noting the global economic meltdown post Covid-19, the continued rise in unemployment, its consequential extreme increase in poverty levels of households as well as its subsequent negative impact on our church economy, resolves:

1. That all Connexional Units, Organisations, Districts, Circuits and Societies are to desist from using Commercial Hotels as a *sole service provider* for the hosting of and *holding of conferences, conventions, meetings, retreats or church events. Instead, they are instructed to consider and exhaust as a first option the use of church owned properties (Halls and Sanctuaries), Retreat Centres linked to the Church or properties owned by Methodist people.*
2. To recommend in the light of the above a further cost containment measure in the mandatory use of two to three star graded affordable accommodation facilities for all MCSA events inclusive of Units and Organisations. The Presiding Bishop, District Bishops, Circuit Superintendent Ministers, Unit Leaders and Presidents of Organisations are to ensure compliance.
3. To instruct the Finance Unit to compile, and make available through all communication platforms a data base of Accommodation, Conferencing and Catering companies owned by Methodists.

10. CHANGE OF SIGNATORIES

Conference noting with concern the difficulty experienced by Societies, Circuits, Districts, Organisations and Connexional Offices in getting banks to change signatories based on the appointment of new Officers, instructs the Finance Unit in consultation with the Revisions Committee to review, amend and include additional provisions in the *MCSA Finance Policy and relevant Standing Orders on the change of signatories in the Laws and Discipline* including that:

- All signatories on church accounts should be changed within 30 Days of *assuming office, in the event of a change of leadership in any office of the MCSA.*
- A letter provided by a Circuit Superintendent/Bishop/Presiding Bishop, shall be sufficient in stating and confirming the identity of the new leadership,

portfolios held, the date of the election as well as the term of office to be served as sufficient evidence to change account signatories.

- The said letter removes the requirement to have ALL the outgoing signatures physically present at the bank except the provision that at least one (1) former signatory shall be present.

11. THE PUBLICATION OF PERSONAL CONTACT INFORMATION IN THE YEAR BOOK/DIRECTORY

Conference, noting the absence of the personal and contact information of Ministers and Church officials normally captured as a Directory in the current year book, and its subsequent difficulty in effective communication within the church, directs the General Secretary in consultation with the Communications and Human Relations Units to investigate the Protection of Personal Information Act Compliance requirements paying specific attention to the provisions for obtaining permission of individuals in the publication and sharing of their personal contact details.

Given the above direction, Conference resolves, that upon receipt of the necessary permissions sought, that personal contact information be published in future Yearbooks effective 2023 whilst remaining compliant to POPIA

12. APPROVAL OF LEASE AGREEMENTS

Conference notes and refers to the Connexional Trust Property Committee the request to reconsider its processes in respect of regulations governing Lease agreements, to enable Circuits and Districts to enter into such agreements subject to the following provisions:

1. That such lease agreement is for a maximum income of R1m per annum or less and limited to periods of 3 years or less.
2. That upon completion of all foreseeable risks been considered in the lease agreement and approved by the District Trust Property Committee that such agreement be referred to CTP for noting and record keeping purposes.

The Connexional Trust Properties Committee is to submit a report on this to the ensuing Conference.

13. THE USE OF CHURCH PROPERTIES AS AN ADDITIONAL INCOME GENERATING STREAM

Conference notes with concern the current dire post Covid economic climate as well as its subsequent effects on the church economy in general and Circuits specifically across the Connexion in particular. This negative economic climate has contributed to and resulted in the inability of many Circuits to meet their financial obligations to the Methodist Connexional Office, to service local accounts as well as to meaningfully respond to local missional needs.

Conference urges the church to recognise the importance and need for minimising costs on one hand whilst finding additional and meaningful income generating streams on the other.

Conference affirms the 2019 Resolution on the establishment of a Property Office and Company *“to create a vehicle to utilise resources, land and property to generate income for mission and ministry at Society/Circuit, Synod*

and Connexional level. This work is to be coordinated at a Connexional level in cooperation with Societies/Circuits and Synods to generate income from such properties, either through the purchase or sale of properties or the development of existing properties in partnerships, or joint ventures with developers. “

In the light of the above Conference directs the Connexional Trust Property Committee and Property Office/Company:

1. To provide guidance to Circuit and Society Trust Property Committees in conducting land and property audits and assist where necessary in obtaining title deeds.
2. To offer guidance on profiling available land and properties in respect of amongst others matters, evaluation, land usage and rates exemption restrictions, insurance cover and explore the usage some of the properties into income generation streams for the benefit of Societies, Circuits, Districts and the Connexion wherever applicable.

14. REVIEW OF THE METHODIST CONNEXIONAL OFFICE

Conference notes the increasing number questions raised about the Methodist Connexional Office structure and size as well as the current challenges faced by the local Church and Circuits in relation to financial viability and sustainability in the face of the negative economic impact of Covid-19, coupled with the high rate of unemployment. and dwindling membership.

In the light of the above Conference resolves:

1. That the MCO be reviewed and to reassess its operational costs in an endeavour to cut costs and alleviate the financial impact to local Societies and Circuits.
2. To place a moratorium on the employment of any new or additional staff or on the filling of current vacancies.

15. THE SETH MOKITIMI METHODIST SEMINARY

Conference celebrates with gratitude to God the significant milestone as the Seth Mokitimi Methodist Seminary now enters its second decade of existence having produced over 700 graduates through its four Academic offerings namely the, Higher Certificate, Diploma, Degree and Post Graduate Qualifications.

Conference affirms its desire that all future Ministry Agents of the MCSA should be individuals who have achieved the minimum required academic qualifications as well the necessary spiritual formation needed to assist the MCSA in fulfilling its God Given Vision of a “*Christ Healed Africa for the Healing of the Nations*”

Conference notes with concern the sustainability challenges facing SMMS resulting from major capacity gaps including but not limited to:

- a declining student population,
- financial challenges,
- technical maintenance needs (*structure including engineering*) for the state-of-the-art facilities at SMMS,

Conference notes the sale of SMMS linked property purchased by the Methodist Connexional Office specifically and purposefully for the future sustainability of SMMS and is alarmed at the reports of the withholding of the proceeds from the sale of those properties by the MCO despite the financial struggles and liabilities of SMMS towards MCO.

Conference further notes the countless attempts by the Seminary to engage MCO about its financial challenges in seeking and exploring solutions.

Conference therefore, instructs the SMMS Board, Finance Unit and Presiding Bishop's Office, to engage in further conversation, develop proposals and report back to Conference 2023 on amongst others the following matters that:

1. The proceeds of all property sold by the MCO be remitted to the Seminary without conditions to alleviate the immediate financial struggles and offer financial relief.
2. All the proceeds of the rentals of the Seminary flats be remitted to the Seminary without fail to ensure SMMS sustainability.
3. MCO revisits its decision of withdrawing grants amounting to 50% of the SMMS budget and its decision to instead pay per student cost of those students sent by the church to SMMS, given that SMMS cannot be sustained by less than the 10 students appointed by the MCSA based on the current trends.
4. The process of selling the flats for accommodation of students be engaged by all stakeholders including the Seminary, church and people called Methodist at large, in the light of the understanding that these properties were purposed for the sustainability of SMMS.

Conference further refers the initiation of a SMMS Institutional Funding Model Review to the SMMS Board, Natal West District, EMMU and the Finance Unit to:

1. Develop a clear plan of financial sustainability for the Seminary
2. Develop proposals for an Independent Assessment and or Institutional review of the Seminary.

16. THE STATIONING OF MINISTERS WITHIN THE SOVEREIGN STATES OF OUR CONNEXION

Conference in recognising, affirming, and respecting the Sovereignty of all Countries within the Methodist Church of Southern African as a Connexion as well as their respective legislation and regulations governing Labour and Immigration, reaffirms its Missional and Pastoral obligation to ensure oversight and agency through the stationing of its agents without regard to their nationality in all of its Mission Fields across the various, cultures, nations and borders.

Conference acknowledges the concerns and difficulties experienced by those agents and their families who are stationed in countries outside of their home country as they fulfil their vocational call and honour our Stationing Policy.

Conference affirms that the wellbeing of its ministers and their families so stationed, remains the responsibility of the MCSA.

To this end Conference directs the Human Relations Unit to develop a policy on cross-border stationing, that considers the sovereign laws of the various countries within the Connexion.

In addition, the HR Unit together with the Office of the Presiding Bishop is instructed and authorised based on the above new policy to enter into a Memorandum of Understanding with each of the Countries who form our Connexion within SADEC to facilitate, enable and ease movement through our Stationing processes.

17. SUPPORT FOR SELF-SUSTAINABLE LIVELIHOOD AND DEVELOPMENT THROUGH ENTREPRENEURSHIP

Conference notes that as a church we host various and diverse events through all levels of our structures such as Conventions, Retreats, Workshops and fundraisers which requires the procurement of goods and services from various service providers.

In an endeavour to Promote local procurement and stimulate local economies especially amongst those within our Church, Conference directs the Finance Unit to develop a framework of guidelines for the Development of District Databases of Methodist Entrepreneurs inclusive of the following provisions

- a. Such databases should be reviewed annually
- b. Include a provision for checks and balances in order to safeguard the reputation of the church especially against poor service delivery
- c. Ensure the provision of Business Ethics
- d. Provides a compulsory process for vetting and combating Scammers
- e. Ensures the management of reputational risk of the church.

Given the development of the above policy Conference encourages all structures of the Church to grant preference to all suppliers and service providers listed in the data base for all MCSA events.

18. MEDICAL INSURANCE FOR BIBLE WOMEN AND EVANGELISTS.

Given the the impending changes to the current Extra-Ordinary Affliction (Medical) Grant system conference instructs the Finance Unit through the Connexional Medical Aid Standing Committee to consider as a matter of urgency the provision of a Medical and Hospital Plan for members of the Order of Evangelism.

19. MEDICAL AID FOR MINISTERS AND FAMILIES

Noting the recommendations received from Circuit Quarterly Meetings and District Synods, on the Assessment Review Proposals, Conference resolves to discontinue the current Medical Aid provisions for all Ministers, Supernumeraries, Spouses and Beneficiaries effective January 2023 whilst implementing a subsidy system to be paid to all Ministers including Pensioners. The following principals must be adhered as the subsidy system is implemented:

- Supernumeraries and Active Ministers must receive the same subsidy amount
- Uninterrupted care whilst revisiting the funding system
- Consider revising the 19% circuit contribution to actual costs per table considering beneficiaries
- Consider medical aid cover for those countries of the connexion beyond the South African borders.

In addition, the following technical considerations are to be met:

- The provision of Suitable Hospital Cover
- The provision of options with extended plans for doctors' visits.
- Split Costs Centres options be given to the funding of Medical Aid for Supernumeraries
- Ensuring the Safety of and implications of non-payment by Circuits in respect of their Ministers
- Exploration of options for the provision of a Mozambique Medical Aid system

20. FINANCING OF CHILDREN'S MINISTRY

Conference affirms the Methodist Children and Youth Unit, as the responsible body of the Children & Youth entities within the church, who are to receive funds from Circuits & Societies as well as the district, allocated by the applicable Treasurer through a line item in the Annual Society, Circuit/District budget, for Children's Ministry.

The MCYU is required to prepare budgets as per the usual budget cycle, through the appropriate structures of Society, Circuit and District.

Conference directs the Finance Unit to amend the 4D, 4C and 4S schedules to include a line showing figures spent towards children and youth for accountability purposes.

21. SOCIAL DISTRESS GRANT

Cognisant of and concerned by the high levels of unemployment within South Africa and its consequential effect on the increasing number of people living in poverty and further exacerbated by the Covid-19 pandemic, Conference applauds the SA Government on the decision to continue the Social Distress Grant until March 2023 thereby seeking to strengthen its resolve towards the alleviation of poverty for the 11.4 million people living in poverty.

Conference accordingly directs the Office of the Presiding Bishop and the Methodist Church of Southern Africa, as per Resolution 31 of Conference 2021 to continue lobbying the Republic of South Africa and SASSA for the continuation of this SDG post March 2023.

In addition, Conference directs, the MCSA through the Justice and Service Desk to support the Black Sash and Human Rights organisations' appeals to increase the SDG to R624, to match South Africa's food poverty line as well as ensuring that the SDR grant remains in place until a Basic Income Grant is established.

Conference further directs the Mission Unit to engage other countries of the Connexion to determine their emergency needs and engage with their governments on their responses to their needs as envisaged in the 2021 Resolution 30.

22. ZIMBABWE EXTENSION PERMIT (ZEP)

Conference, notes with grave concern the decision by the South African Government to discontinue the Zimbabwe Extension Permit (ZEP) at the end of 2022, and recognises that this will result in a humanitarian crisis for both Zimbabwe and South Africa in particular, and possibly affect other countries in

the Southern Africa region. This action will possibly have a devastating impact on about 1 million people who are dependent on the income earned from relatives employed in South Africa. In addition, it is estimated that approximately 200 000 people will be displaced through this action.

Being mindful of the huge unemployment crisis currently facing South Africa, Conference affirms that it cannot condone any action that would cause pain and hurt on such a large scale as proposed by the South African Government neither may we endorse and support any legislation that would offer justification for xenophobic activity.

Conference expresses concern of the reported Xenophobic activity by organisations such as Operation Dubula and affirms its denouncing of Xenophobic actions and any harm inflicted upon our Zimbabwean siblings and believes that in doing so, we honour our Vision, Mission and Calling to “*A Christ Healed Africa for the Healing of the Nations*” especially at a time in which we are committed ourselves to “*Sustaining hope and Healing*”.

Conference therefore instructs the Mission Unit to conduct research on the possible related socio-economic and socio-political factors of Xenophobia so that a better understanding and more strategic proposals may be made available for the church.

Conference further requests the Presiding Bishop in consultation with our Ecumenical and other Faith partners to engage and lobby the South African government on all matters pertaining to the Zimbabwe Extension Permit whilst endeavouring to assist the Government in developing a more compassionate and just system.

23. RUSSIAN INVASION OF UKRAINE

Conference in celebrating the long, proud history of the Methodist Church in fulfilling its Prophetic role of speaking truth to power and its compassionate siding with the disenfranchised oppressed, confesses that our silence and non-expression of a clear view on the violent invasion of Ukraine by Russia, is not in keeping with our prophetic witness.

Accordingly, Conference condemns this act of war by Russia inflicted upon Ukraine and calls upon all Methodists to pray with and for all who live with the tragedy of loss as a result of the war and further calls upon all parties involved to enter into dialogue and mediation for the ending of this war.

24. CONSIDERATION OF LOGO'S FOR THE UNITS OF THE CHURCH

Conference notes the need for conversation on the corporate identity of the Units within the Methodist Church of Southern Africa on the usage of individual logos, especially in exploring whether it is aligned to our current regulations, and permissible for different Units within the MCSA to each having their own logo.

Conference therefore directs the Communication Unit to convene a conversation with the Units regarding the matter and to submit a report to Conference 2023 thereon.

25. PRACTICAL INTERVENTIONS AGAINST SEXUAL ASSAULT AND GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE BY METHODIST MINISTER'S:

Conference notes a need for the strengthening of practical interventions against Sexual Assault. Conference notes and receives the following proposals:

25.1 Regarding the minister in training / Ordained who has been charged or sentenced for of sexual assault:

- a) that due diligence and oversight checks with relevant law enforcement agencies must be conducted to ensure that there are no pending charges against Ministers, before reinstatement and stationing. Conference notes the enquiry whether due diligence was conducted in respect of the above cases, and whether the Ministers were found to have charges against him. Conference further notes the proposal that the Committees responsible for the recommendation of reinstatement and/or stationing, be held to account to by Conference for gross negligence and violation of the Child Protection Act.

25.2 Criminal Background Checks- Screening and Vetting of Clergy

It is proposed that all MCSA Minister's both ordained and in training, effective 2023 to submit Annually, their personal clearance certificate to the Human Resource Unit of MCSA. Clearance certificates are to be processed through an accredited institution for screening and vetting in accordance to the law of each country. Failure to submit such clearance by the 30th January 2023 and subsequent years, would result in such minister's being placed on leave of absence until the said certificate is submitted to the Human Resources Unit.

The Office of the Presiding Bishop, District Bishop's and Circuit Superintendents are to ensure that all minister's under their oversight have submitted their clearance certificates in time to Human Resource Unit.

It is furthermore, recommended that the Justice and Service Desk obtain access to the Sexual offenders Register and Child Protection Register, to ascertain if there are any Methodist minister's whose names recorded in the register, if so, such Ministers are immediately to be reported to the office of the Presiding Bishop, for that minister to be subjected to our internal Disciplinary Processes within 30 days of the discovery.

25.3 Sexual Assault Response Desk

The Methodist Church of Southern Africa is to establish a Sexual Assault Response Desk at Connexional and District level, which will not be attached and aligned to any Circuit or Society, as the current system of Sexual Harassment Committees have failed to show impartiality in most of the reported sexual harassment cases in different circuits, in fear of prejudice and intimidation. Some reported cases involve their own local minister's, it becomes difficult for them to act with partiality. The proposed Sexual Assault Response Desk, will comprise of persons with expertise on sexual assault response, who are independent non MCSA members, yet appointed by Conference and who will work independently under the direction of the Office of the Presiding Bishop. Victims of Sexual and Physical assault within the bounds of MCSA, will have direct access to the Sexual Assault Response Desk, without having to

follow local protocols to reach and access them, in order to protect the victims from any harm in the local church. The Desk to be responsible for:

- Setting up a MCSA Sexual Assault Hotline, where victims of Sexual Assault can report cases of sexual assault by Methodist minister's and any person with the knowledge of any cases of Sexual Assault by Methodist minister's
- Receive Complaints of Sexual Assault, from Methodist members against any Methodist Minister's and Members
- Offer tele-care and in-person, Psychosocial Support to the Victims of Sexual Assault
- Offer guidance to the victims and complainants about the internal disciplinary processes on sexual assault and external processes to be followed in reporting sexual assault
- To assist the Methodist Church of Southern Africa to align its Safeguarding Policies, with Child Protection laws of the six member countries
- Assist the victims and complainants throughout the process until they realize justice in their case of concern.
- To liaise with courts of law and enforcement agencies, if there are Gender based violence cases against any of the MCSA Ministers for continuous update of the case
- Together with Gender Justice Desk to plan and facilitate public awareness programs on the negative impact of gender-based violence in our society and present practical ways to end this scourge of our time.
- To set aside November Annually, as the Churches Sexual Assault and Harassment Month, where a series of public campaigns, including teaching and preaching focusing on awareness and intervention strategies to end Sexual Harassment in our communities
- To develop material that can be used as a tool to train Student Ministers and for Post ordination training on "*Appropriate and Inappropriate behaviour in the Vocation of Ministry in relation to Sexual Ethics* "

25.4 Courage to Heal and Sexual Assault Awareness Care Groups

Circuits within the MCSA to establish Sexual Assault Awareness Care Groups, in all circuits, which shall offer safe space for the victims of Sexual Violence, to get mutual support and psychosocial support group therapy

- The Care givers in the Sexual Assault Care groups, to partner with existing community stakeholders doing the same work in their communities, and to recruit members of the congregation with expertise in the area of psychosocial support, public advocacy and healthcare.
- Care Groups to work in partnership with Gender Desks in circuits in bringing awareness about some
- practical interventions o response to the scourge of gender-based violence

25.5 Independent Commission on Sexual Assault

The MCSA to setup an Independent Commission at Connexional level, comprising of people with expertise in law, social work, healthcare and pastoral care.

- The Commission to receive any formal complaint against Methodist Minister's or members, related to sexual assault and gender-based violence
- To formulate charges against any Minister or Member reported for sexual assault or gender-based violence

- To preside over Sexual Assault Cases guided by Chapter 11 of the Methodist Laws & Discipline

Conference notes the Proposals and refer these to the Human Resource and Mission Unit's (Justice and Service Desk) to consider aligning the proposals with the Anti-Harassment Policy, as well as to the Structures and Revisions Committee to consider alongside Chapter 11

26. ORDER OF EVANGELISM: ORDER OF BUSINESS FOR THE CONVOCATION

Conference receives from the Order of Evangelism the proposed Order of Business for the holding of its District and Triennial Convocations and refers it to the Connexional Structures and Revisions Standing Committees for further engagement and report to the ensuing Conference.

**Conducted by District Bishop and District Coordinator chairs Annual District Convocation
Warden chairs the Triennials Convocations
Order of Opening
Devotions**

Calling of the Roll

Appointments of Scrutineers, Letter Writers, Reporter, Resolutions on the work of God, Resolution of the Hours of Session, Notice of Motions. Presenters, Listening Committee.

The Minutes of the previous Convocation shall be considered for adoption.

Questions of Discipline

1. Is there any objection to any Evangelist / Biblewoman
 - 1.1 Is there any objection to their moral and religious character?
 - 1.2 Do they believe, preach and observe our doctrines?
 - 1.3 Have they duly observed our discipline?
 - 1.4 Have they competent abilities for our work?
2. Has any Evangelist/Biblewoman removed to or into another Circuit?
3. Is there any Evangelist/Biblewoman who has married since the previous Convocation?
 1. Has any Evangelist/ Biblewoman resigned since last Convocation?
 2. Has any Evangelist/ Biblewoman died since last Convocation?
 3. Does this Convocation recommend that any Evangelist/Biblewoman be received or transferred from another church?
 4. Does this Convocation recommend that any Evangelist/Biblewoman cease to be recognised by the Conference/Connexional Executive?
 5. Does this Convocation recommend that any Evangelist/ Biblewoman retires?
 6. Is there any Evangelist/ Biblewoman without Circuit appointment in our District/ Connexion?
 7. Is there any Evangelist/ Biblewoman who was Commissioned since last Convocation?
 8. Does this Convocation recommend acceptance of any Evangelist/ Biblewoman into the Order of Word and Service?
 9. What is the progress report of those who are in training?
 1. 10.What is the report for each Probationer to be Commissioned at District Convocation?
 2. 11.How best can we equip our Agents for Word and Service?

3. 12. Which syllabus will constitute the training of Biblewomen and Evangelists, and what will be the duration of training?
4. 13. Whom do we elect as District Committee Members for the next three (3) years (4 members). Coordinator is appointed by the bishop.
5. 14. Who are the members of the General Committee?
6. 15. Which month should be set aside for District / Triennial Convocation? (March for District Convocation and August for Triennial Convocation)
1. What Audited Financial Statements does the Convocation receive, and who is appointed as Treasurer?
2. What matters are referred by the Connexional Executive or Conference to the Convocation?
3. Does the Convocation have any Recommendations/ Resolutions for the General Committee to be considered by the next Conference?

HYMN

Prayer

Reading the Rules of Helper

Benediction

27. Proposed Structure for the Order of Evangelism

Conference receives from the Order of Evangelism its New Structural Proposal and refers it to the Structures and Revisions Committees for further engagement and report to the ensuing Conference

Connexional Level

1. Warden
2. General Secretary
3. General Treasurer (MCO)
4. Mission Communications Officer

District Level

1. District Coordinators
2. District Secretary
3. District Treasurer
4. Mission Communication Officer

Duties of the District Executive Committee

- To care for all members in the district.
- To prepare for the District Candidates screening in preparation for acceptance by the Annual District Synod.
- To co-operate with the Connexional Committee.
- To promote the general interests and to improve the effectiveness of the members in the Circuits.
- To consider recommendations of the Circuit Quarterly Meetings in respect of applications for admission of candidates.
- To organise the commissioning services of the members in consultation with the Circuits concerned and the district bishop's office.
- To report the work of God within the District.
- To organise, in consultation with the District Bishop, annual gatherings or convocations.
- To observe and implement the decisions of the Connexional Executive and the Conference.

- To organise retreats, training and workshops intended to develop the mission of the Order of Evangelism.
- To report to the Synod Annual gatherings and to the Warden any matter referred to it by the Circuit Quarterly Meeting relating to the fitness of a member for the work, the continuance of employment and any questions of character.

Duties of District Coordinator:

- District Coordinator will receive all applications from Circuits and submit to the Warden to be processed through Registrar.
- She/he shall co-ordinate the screening committee for the candidates in consultation with the District Supervisor of Studies.
- She/he shall be member of the District Executive Committee and report about all mission work of the Order of Evangelism in the District.
- She/he shall guide the convocation in matters of Policy, Mission and Doctrine of the church during the business
- Shall update the District and Circuits about current Church issues as they affect the Order and requiring attention.
- Shall be a liaison between the District, the Circuits and Connexion in cases where the District Executive requests donations from Circuits, from the District Mission Fund, and from the Connexional Mission Resource Fund towards mission activities of the District Order of Evangelism.

Duties of District Secretary:

- She/he shall be responsible for the order and maintenance of the procedures during the district gatherings e.g., Convocation/Plunge/Mission weeks /Evangelistic
- Campaigns.
- She/he shall consult with the hosting Circuit in case of district gatherings or the hosting District
- She/he shall keep inventory of the Convocation for ease of transition when there is change in office bearers. The Secretary shall:
 - Write and keep all records of the decisions, resolutions and minutes during all District gatherings of the Order.
 - Write letters whenever it is necessary.
 - Record monies collected to help the Treasurer.

Duties of the District Treasurer:

- Shall be appointed by the bishop in consultation with the District Coordinator
- Shall record and bank all monies collected from members of the Order at District / Connexional gatherings.
- Shall organise fund-raising programs to help in mission activities of the Order.
- She/he shall make sure that a qualified Auditor in accordance with the MCO policies and procedures shall audit all financial accounts of the Order whenever this is necessary.
- Shall make sure that all bank accounts are in the name of *“The Methodist Church of Southern Africa (MCSA) Order of Evangelism followed by “District Name”*
- Shall makes sure that all members pay an annual subscription fee as decided and agreed by the district general / convocation / plunge, etc. or agreed by the Connexional convocation.

- Make sure that the district fulfils its financial obligations towards the Connexion as decided by the Triennial Connexional Convocation. The District Treasurer shall give a comprehensive and audited (where necessary) Financial Report
- both at Synod Committees, Annual Convocation or gathering where this is required.

Functions and Duties of Mission Communication Officer

- He /She will be responsible for all the mission work of the Order
- Collect all the goods for the mission work for annual District Convocation
- He/she will be the liaison officer for the mission work of the Order.
- He/she will work and advocate For Justice and all social ills in community/Circuit/District
- He/she will be working as District Spiritual worker

28. PROVISION FOR THE HOLDING OF HYBRID OR VIRTUAL MEETINGS

Conference noting the responses and approval of Circuit Quarterly Meetings and District Synods, on the proposed Amendment to Laws and Discipline 5.3, on the holding of meetings, adopts the said amendments and instructs the Revisions Committee to engage on those submissions and report to the Connexional Executive thereon for decision.

Amendment to L&D 5.3

5.3 Conference shall meet annually or as it determines.

5.4 Conference and all other meetings within the governance structures of the Church may be held physically, virtually or hybridly, given various circumstances operative at any time. The following provisions shall be met should any meeting be held virtually or hybridly:

- a) Ensuring that all members have duly received notice and declared their availability to participate on the Virtual Platform so determined and have accepted the various communication platforms to be used to ensure that their participation is not limited or prejudiced.
- b) That should the need arise for any vote to be taken that the process of voting is clearly defined by the Presiding Officer and understood by all members allowing them to cast their vote without fear or prejudice.
- c) If all these provisions are not met then the meeting shall not proceed and be rescheduled to a date when all these provisions are able to be met.

29. PHOTOGRAPHY POLICY

Conference re-affirms its existing policy on Photography, as contained in Resolution 2. of the 2018 Conference (pg. 219 Yearbook 2019), aimed at protecting the rights of children and urges all Districts and Circuits to comply with the guidelines on the publication of images of all children.

30. ASSISTANCE WITH THE COST OF SCREENING FOR CHILDREN MINISTRY PRACTITIONERS (CMPS)

Conference affirms the Methodist Safe Guarding Policy (2012), which requires that all people working with children be screened as well the importance of complying with the Child Protection Act of South Africa, and similar Legislation in the Countries of our Connexion.

Conference notes the financial limitations of Circuit/Societies, which often hinders the church from the said compliance, and therefore directs the Mission

Unit to engage the Department Social Development and other Stakeholders in all the countries of our Connexion, to explore cost effective ways for vetting and screening of religious workers.

Conference instructs the Children's Ministry entity through the Connexional Children and Youth Conference to prioritise the screening of all people who work with children and youth in our circuits whilst encouraging Circuits to provide funding for the screening of Children's Ministry Practitioners in particular.

31. MINISTRY TO DIFFERENTLY ABLED CHILDREN

Conference re-affirms its commitment to enabling safe spaces for all children especially those who are differently abled and recognises that we are not always able to minister to such children and parents in meaningful ways.

Conference therefore directs the Methodist Children and Youth Unit together with the Mission Unit to facilitate capacity building workshops through its Coordinators for Ministers, Parents, and Children's Ministry Practitioners to strengthen its ministry to differently abled children and their parents.

32. YOUTH LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

Conference directs the Education for Ministry and Mission Unit to develop and initiate Leadership Development Programmes focusing on children, youth and young adult ministries for participation by especially young people.

33. CHILDREN AND YOUTH UNIT DIRECTOR

Conference re-affirms Resolution 24 of the 2019 Conference on the appointment a full-time director for the Children and Youth Unit and instructs the Human Resources Unit to complete the development of recruitment guidelines for such post and present the same for final decision at the ensuing Conference.

34. CAPACITATION OF CHILDREN'S MINISTRY PRACTITIONERS WITH BASIC COUNSELING SKILLS

Conference recognises and affirms the importance of equipping of Children Ministry practitioners and people working with Youth and Children with basic counselling skills to assist them to respond effectively to the varying needs of Youth and Children under their care.

Therefore, Conference directs Districts and Circuits MCYU to identify, engage and partner with professionally qualified individuals and or local institutions of Higher Learning to facilitate capacitation programmes for all Children's Ministry practitioners as well as other individuals working with Youth and Children in the area of Counselling.

35. DEVELOPMENT OF RESOURCES TO AID CONVERSATION/TRAINING. FOR YOUTH (ESPECIALLY PRE-TEENS, TEENAGERS AND YOUNG ADULTS) (10 – 35 YEARS) AND TO PROVIDE A FRAMEWORK FOR DISCUSSIONS AROUND SEXUALITY, SEX AND GENDER.

Conference acknowledges the value of the Connexional Task Team on LGBTIAQ+ appointed by the 2019 conference and affirms the work they do in

providing a safe space in facilitating, theological reflection and strategizing around pastoral care, mission and advocacy for the LGBTIAQ+ Community.

Conference affirms their endeavours to facilitate the inclusion of the opinions, insights, and experiences of the LGBTIAQ+ community into the ongoing conversation especially within the Church in respect of Gender identities, sexuality, Marriage and family life.

Conference directs the LGBTIQ+ Standing Committee in partnership with DEWCOM to produce standardised resources which would provide a framework for discussions and teaching around sexuality, sex and gender.

36. COORDINATION OF CHILDRENS MINISTRY WITHIN THE MCYU AND ORGANISATIONS

Conference notes and affirms the various forms of ministry offered by Mission groups/Organisations to Children and Youth Ministry generally and in particular, by the Young Women's Manyano through the Junior Manyano.

Whilst noting that reports on the work of the Junior Manyano are processed through the Young Women's Manyano the same does not happen through the Methodist Children and Youth Unit structures who has oversight of all Children's Ministries. This sadly creates a disconnect between this important ministry.

Conference in affirming the provision of the appointment of an Ad-Hoc Committee in Appendix 6a clause 8.2.3 (Yearbook 2022, page 136) directs the various levels of the MCYU to establish such committees to consolidate and synergize the work of children and youth ministries within the various organisations and report thereon to relevant structures of the church.

37. DEGENERATION OF EDUCATION

Conference notes with alarm and concern the ongoing killing of teachers, high rate of teenage pregnancy and behaviour associated with Satanism in our schools.

Conference therefore encourages all Superintendent Ministers together with Circuit Ministers to offer pastoral support to local schools to improve the state of degenerating education systems.

38. BLOOD DONATION

Conference noting the impact of Covid-19 on the lives of many Methodists people through ongoing health challenges directs the Health Desk in the Mission Unit to design programmes of conscientization for Methodist people on the value and importance of blood donation as agents of healing for the healing of the nations.

39. POSTPONEMENT OF THE ELECTION OF THE PRESIDING BISHOP

Resolutions were received at the 2022 Conference from Synods 2022 regarding the election procedure of the Presiding Bishop that took place in 2022.

Conference acknowledges that the process of Electing a Presiding Bishop in 2022, was tumultuous, leading to many different emotions and questions, and

in many ways the Church has felt itself divided due to the way the process unfolded.

The Conference affirms the statement of the Connexional Executive Statement of 22 September 2022:

Issues distilled out by CE Statement out of the Resolutions referred to CE in relation with the process of Presiding Bishop 2022:

- The powers and processes of the General Secretary were questioned;
- There was a call for an immediate meeting of the Connexional Executive;
- A call to re-look the methodology of elections of leadership in the light of L&D 1.46;
- A call for the delay of the election of Presiding Bishop to Synods 2023;
- Questioning the legitimacy of using a Special Synod for the purpose of election;
- The role of the Presiding Bishop when Synods pronounce on a matter that precedes Conference;
- The continued need for a quota system is questioned in the appointment of Leadership.

Conference Notes:

1. The election of Presiding Bishop was called by the General Secretary at Conference 2021, to take place at Annual Synods 2022.
2. One week before the Annual Synod, the General Secretary realized a mistake had been made in his calculation of the gender proportion of the leadership as it will be in 2024 when the new Presiding Bishop takes office.
3. He wrote to all members of Synods, bringing attention to the error, and apologized for the error.
4. Consequently, the election could not take place in May 2022 as it was now stipulated that the Synods had to elect a woman.
5. Correctly, the General Secretary called for an Election with three months' notice.
6. It must be mentioned that in March 2022 the Connexional Executive met and gave permission for Special Synods to take place in August 2022 for the discussion of a proposed Assessment Model. The GS announced, on the 13th May, that the Special Synods would accommodate the Election as well.
7. That it was the General Secretary who wrote the correspondence is correct and procedural, as it is the General Secretary who is the Correspondent of the Church. (L&D 5.10.4.19)
8. We however note, that it was unprocedural to expand the remit of the Special Synods, that had been called for one specific purpose, to include the Election, without consulting with the body who had given approval for Connexion wide Special Synods, in the Connexional Executive.

Change Recommendations to Conference resolves:

- 39.1 to re-look the methodology of implementing L&D 1.46, now that it has been in use for three years, to streamline and strengthen the process. This to include the appointment of a small team to make the gender determinations together with the General Secretary.
- 39.2 The role of the Presiding Bishop as Conference between Conferences, when Resolutions are received, from Synods that pertain to urgent matters that

should not wait for the Annual Connexional Executive and Conference meetings, should be reconsidered or clarified.

- 39.3 The question is asked by one synod as to whether we still need a quota system to ensure women in leadership.
- 39.4 It is time to re-look the provisions of L&D for Special Synods (e.g., the 80% presence required) Ref L&D 6.2
- 39.5 Devise a process to facilitate healing divisions in the Connexion after the Election Process.
- 39.6 A process of accountability to be put in place for the person/s who did not follow procedure. The work above is done by an augmented Revision Committee to include the Committee appointed by the Connexional Executive.
- 39.7 Conference embraces the outcome of the Election, notwithstanding the flaws of the election process.

40. STATIONING OF SUPERNUMERARY MINISTER'S

The challenges of Covid-19 and consequential financial impact has led to a subsequent reduction of agency in various stations, which has in turn given rise to the appointment of Supernumerary Ministers instead of active Ministers.

Conference affirms its Stationing Policy and Practise on the appointment of Supernumeraries and instructs Bishops and Stationing Committees to guard this policy. Conference further directs that Active Ministers available for stationing be stationed wherever a station needs a Minister.

41. CIRCUIT TRUST PROPERTIES CO-ORDINATOR

Whilst noting the provision in Laws and Discipline Appendix 8 .9.1 for the appointment of a Circuit Trust Property Coordinators, Conference recognises the omission of a specified term of office.

Conference resolves that the said regulation be amended to add a term of office of three (3) years, renewable to a maximum of three (3) terms and refers this amendment to the Revisions Committee for alignment and inclusion in the Book of Order.

42. PASTORAL COMMISSIONS

Conference resolves to amend Laws and Discipline 5.14 dealing with Pastoral Commissions by making it obligatory for the Presiding Bishop or the Bishop, as the case may be, to communicate the outcomes of any Pastoral Commission with the person/s under consideration and any other affected party.

Therefore, Conference resolves that clause 5.14.3 be amended to read as follows:

"...The Bishop or Presiding Bishop shall communicate the findings of the Commission to the person who is under consideration"., and refers this amendment to the Connexional Revisions Committee for alignment and inclusion of the Book of Order.

43. RECOGNITION AND OFFICIATING OF CIVIL UNIONS

Conference acknowledges the protracted period of time the Methodist Church of Southern Africa has been in dialogue on Human Sexuality in general

and the conducting of civil unions in particular. This has similarly resulted in an equally long wait for many couples who wish to have their marriages solemnized, blessed and officially recognised within the church

Conference recognises that there may be ministers amongst the couples who feel they cannot express their Human Sexuality, for fear of prejudice and discrimination in ministry.

Conference resolves to place the matter of same sex marriage on the agenda urgently, and undertakes that a decision on whether to officially allow MCSA Ministers to officiate at Same Sex marriages be made.

Conference further refers this work to the LGBTIQ+ Task Team and DEWCOM to provide the theological framework to guide the MCSA to make a decision at the ensuing Conference.

44. CHILDREN AND YOUTH UNIT THEOLOGICAL AND SPIRITUALITY DESK

Conference notes Resolution 34 of the 2019 Conference, which served as an affirmation of Resolution 2.3 of the 2017 Conference whereby Conference directed the Seth Mokitimi Methodist Seminary and the Education for Ministry and Mission Unit to develop intergenerational liturgies to be available in January 2020. Conference notes with concern that Two years later this has not been made available as yet.

Conference notes the ever- changing theological landscape in the Church generally, whilst further noting a need to create spaces of reflection on spiritual and theological challenges faced by children and young people within the church. We further note the use of Social Media platforms and the calibre of topics discussed on those platforms.

Conference receives the proposal of the Connexional Children and Youth Unit Conference to establish a task team to explore the possibility of a Children and Youth Spirituality and Theology Desk. This desk would work closely with DEWCOM to create spaces and forums of Theological reflection and also produce Child and Youth friendly worship and discipleship material as an attempt to be intentional with deepening spirituality of children and youth, and encouraging ongoing theological and Spiritual reflections and engagement on Children and Youth related matters.

Conference endorses the proposal for the establishment of a Children and Youth Theological and Spirituality Desk, as an ad hoc Committee appointed by CCYC. The task of the desk will be to look at the possibility of reimagining our worship models and theories as children and youth, for the realization of transformational inter-generational worship space and theories.

Conference further resolves that:

1. The proposed Desk should work closely with the Doctrine Ethics and Worship Committee, the Education for Ministry and Mission Unit as well as the Mission Unit to align their work in respect of our MCSA Doctrines, Ethos and Polity and furthermore to investigating through EMMU and DEWCOM whether

there are any worship and discipleship material available, which may assist in deepening the spirituality of children and youth.

2. The Desk immediately develop worship and discipleship material that is transformational and inter-generational, to be distributed across the Connexion for use by our churches.

45. CONNEXIONAL ENTITY REPRESENTATIVES

Recognising that Children's Ministry is the only entity within the Children and Youth Unit to have a representative serve on the Connexional Executive as provided for in Appendix 6, A. 8.2.1. Conference notes that this provision creates an anomaly and an unequal representation in respect of all entities within the MCYU.

Conference therefore refers to all formal youth structures at Circuit and District level the proposal to delete the provision for such representation and amend it to read "The Connexional Executive shall consist of the Coordinator, Secretary and the Treasurer "

Further that provision be made for such representation at CCYU Conference .and report thereon to the ensuing Connexional Children and Youth Unit Conference for further discussion and recommendation.

46. CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENTS - APPENDIX 6A

Expansion of the function of the Connexional Secretary of the Children and Youth Unit Committee

Conference notes the importance of the collection of statistics for the Unit and refers to the Revisions Committee and MCYU the request to add the role of the Statistical Secretary to the responsibility of the Connexional / District MCYU Secretary described in Appendix 6A 13.2 and amend this accordingly.

Conference receives from the Connexional Children and Youth Unit the following amendments to the Constitution of the Wesley Guild and refers these to the Revisions Committee for consideration:

- a) The Constitution is silent about the Quorum
CCYC resolves that the general principle be 50+1 (quorum)
Connexion – 50% of Districts +1
District – 50% of Circuits +1
Circuits – 50% Members +1
Society – 50% Members + 1
- b) Clause 7.1 To rescind chairperson and vice chairperson at circuit level and revert back to President and Vice President
- c) CCYC resolves that 10.1 and 10.2 be merged, amended and be read as:
10.1 The Connexional Wesley guild executive shall organise a Triennial Convention; such a convention will be for spiritual upliftment, fellowship and to transact the business of the Wesley Guild.
- d) The CCYC resolves that 10.2 reads as:
10.2 The Connexional Wesley Guild Executive shall be elected at the Triennial Convention of the Wesley Guild for a three-year non-renewable term and shall be inducted at the following triennial convention.
- e) Amend 10.4 to read as follows:
10.4 A General Executive Committee Meeting may be convened annually or when the need arises and shall consist if of the General

Executive Committee and all District president, secretaries and treasurers. This meeting will consider all major matters for reporting to the Connexional Children and Youth Conference. This clause shall be applicable to Districts and circuits, where it shall be called a District Executive Committee Meeting at District only to consist of the District Executive Committee and all the circuit presidents, secretaries and treasurers and Circuit Executive Committee Meeting at circuit only to consist of the Circuit Executive and all the society chairpersons, secretaries and treasurers. The CEC meeting at Circuit level shall however sit quarterly.

- f) Replace 11.8 with *"If a member is unavailable, to fulfil his/her duties the Wesley Guild District executive committee may co-opt but that substitute should be endorsed by the district convention"*
- g) 13.4 Replace vice-chairperson to chairperson (who is a lay member)
- h) Amend this chapter which shall read as follows:

47. YOUNG ADULTS' MOVEMENT

Conference resolves that all constitutional review matters in respect of the Young Adult Movement be suspended for the ensuing year, given that the process has not been completed as yet. This suspension will allow the ensuing Connexional Children and Youth Conference to receive and deliberate on all new proposed constitutional reviews received from District Synods

48. UKUTHWASA AND THE PRACTICE OF BEING A TRADITIONAL HEALER WITH THE MCSA

The recent Doctrine Ethics Worship Committee roundtable discussion on Ukuthwasa (initiation into an ancestral calling) and the practice of being a traditional healer in the Methodist Church of Southern Africa unearthed a number of critical theological and practical polity issues that requires an honest reflection by the church. Amongst other issues the discussion brought to the fore the following:

1. Experiences of ministers and lay members. The few accounts of Ministers who are initiated Sangomas or traditional healers reveal that they have experienced a substantial amount of judgement, suspicion and sometimes forced to choose between their Ministerial calling and Ancestral calling. The perceptions of a 'double calling' -ministerial and ancestral are at large. Methodist societies and leadership do not have enough understanding of how to deal with such ministers as agents of the gospel.
2. No theological position on the existence of Ancestors and the practice of initiation into Ancestral calling. The MCSA as an institution does not have an expressed theological position on the existence of Ancestors and by extension how people relate to their ancestors. As such and depending on one's cultural heritage and theological persuasion, divergent views spanning between separatist and integrationist approaches exist across the MCSA. A further collective of themes that need to be explored have emerged and these include:
 - African Christian spirituality and ancestral calling
 - Decolonisation of Christian spirituality and African traditional healing practices is responding to an ancestral call different from a call into the ministry of word

and sacrament? Can they co-exist as part of a response to the same God? Is this a form of Syncretism?

3. The Practice of Ministry. The question of actively living out a ministerial call alongside an ancestral calling carry practical polity and ethical ramifications. There is a need for the MCSA to clarify its understanding of Christian vocation in relation to African traditional healing practice. From this comes a number of related questions the church needs to answer, for example:
 - What are the practical realities of being a Christian and a traditional healer in a Circuit?
 - How should leaders at a Circuit, District and Connexional level respond to ministers and leaders who are initiated Sangomas or traditional healers?
 - What are the ethical issues involved in practising both as a minister and a traditional healer?

Conference notes and commends the preliminary work done by DEWCOM on Ukuthwasa and the practice of being a traditional healer within the MCSA.

However, Conference notes that this work requires theological reflection on the key themes and practical polity issues this work evokes.

Conference further notes with concern the painful experiences of Ministers and members with an ancestral calling.

Therefore, Conference requests DEWCOM to develop a Discussion Document on Ukuthwasa and the practice of being a Sangoma or traditional healer in the MCSA for discussion at the April Circuit Quarterly Meeting and for report to the ensuing Conference through District Synods.

Conference further encourages Districts, Organisations, and formations to facilitate reflective sessions on the subject in order to deepen awareness and listening to the experiences of Methodist members who may have an ancestral calling.

49. MEMBERSHIP OF THE DISTRICT EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Conference notes and receives the comments and approvals from Synods on the proposed amendment to Standing Orders 6.7 on District Executive Committees.

Conference refers these comments to the Revisions Standing Committee for consideration, and recommendation and report to Connexional Executive 2023 for decision.

APPOINTMENT OF A DISTRICT MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

Conference notes and receives the comments and approvals received from Synods on the proposed appointment of a District Management Committee. Conference refers these comments to the Revisions Standing Committee for consideration, and recommendation and report to the Connexional Executive for decision.

50. DISTRICT COMMUNICATIONS OFFICER

Conference receives from the Communications Unit, Structures and Revisions Standing Committees in response to Resolution 14 of Conference 2019 the guidelines for the role, task and appointment of a District Communications Officer and refers it back to the said Committees and Unit for further engagement and report to the ensuing Conference for decision.

The role will include the following:

- Develop, write and disburse District communications materials, including event articles and social media content
- Feed District level stories to the Connexional Communications Unit for use in Connexional publications
- Assist with the livestreaming and coverage of District level events and when called upon to, assist with Connexional events taking place within his/her District.
- Ensure that all communications within the district aligns with brand standards and the MCSA Brand Policy
- Ensure that standards spelt out in the MCSA social media Policy are upheld
- Administer the District social media channels
- Maintain digital media archives including photos and videos
- Assist in dealing with communication crises, should they arise within the district

The individual must be one who:

- Is conversant with church polity
- Is aware of the Church Social Media Policy
- Understand the value of the MCSA Brand and is willing to promote and protect it
- Understands the best practices of main social media channels including Facebook, Instagram
- Is a strong communicator who works well independently and with people, has some secular media links and possibly design capabilities for posters etc.
- Someone with a love for the church, an interest in the changing forms of communication and is proactive and willing to grow their portfolio

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- That this individual become an official member of Synod and possibly of the District Management Team, 6.4.23 would be the District Communications Officer.

Financial Implications

- The district would need to invest in some basic equipment including but not limited to a small camera; ring-light and maybe a laptop
- The district would also have to cover the costs of Data and travel for the individual whenever the need arises.

51. TENTMAKING MINISTRIES IN THE MCSA

Conference affirms the decision of the Methodist Church of Southern Africa in considering and introducing a form of Tentmaking Ministry for Presbyters, that makes provision for Itinerant Ordained Ministers in Full Connexion to apply with motivation from the Circuit Quarterly Meeting and endorsement from the

District Bishop to the Connexional Stationing Committee and Conference to serve the Circuit as part time, non -stipendiary and itinerant agent.

Conference reaffirms its view that this is not a proposal to re-establish a version of the former category of Non-Itinerant Ministry. The concept of this ministry has features that are completely different from the old category, and which considers the difficulties experienced which led to the discontinuance of the category.

Recognising the tentmaking report received Conference refers this work to the Structures and Revision Standing Committees for consideration, alignment and report to the ensuing Conference.

52. MCSA HARASSMENT POLICY

Conference having received the amended Harassment Policy in 2019 and its subsequent referral to the Human Resources Unit for further work receives the comments from Synods on the revised proposals and directs the HR Unit to consider these together with consulting with relevant expertise on such policies.

Conference further notes that the Synod Harassment Team currently only exists to deal with complaints from Women Clergy and therefore requests the Human Resources Unit to consider including the possibility of bringing complaints against any minister into the policy document.

Conference instructs the HR Unit to ensure the completion of this work for referral and comment to the April 2022 Circuit Quarterly Meetings as well as The Annual Synods and for decision at the ensuing Conference.