

55. Special Resolutions from the 2008 Conference

Under Standing Order 126, special resolutions of the Conference require to be confirmed the following year after appropriate consultation before they can become effective. For the purpose of consultation, they are either referred to the Methodist Council (unless moved on the Council's behalf, in which case they are referred to the Law and Polity Committee) or dealt with as provisional legislation under Standing Order 122 and submitted to the Synods and the Law and Polity Committee.

The bodies consulted may approve or disapprove the resolution but may not amend it.

At the Conference of 2008, there were three special resolutions that were referred to the Methodist Council.

Submitted by the Conference to the Methodist Council

(A) *Numbers of Conference representatives*

The Conference amends the Deed of Union as follows:

Clause 14 The Representative Session. (1) **(a) Numbers.** The Conference in its Representative Session shall consist of ~~the number of persons~~ **ministers, deacons and lay persons to the total number** prescribed by Standing Orders, of whom at the opening of the Conference ~~at least one third shall be ministers, at least one third shall be lay persons, and at least the minimum number similarly prescribed shall be deacons.~~

(b) Of those who are members of the Conference at its opening otherwise than by virtue of sub-clause (2)(vii), (3) or (4)(d) below at least one half shall be lay persons.

The Methodist Council approved the resolution.

***RESOLUTION

55/1. The Conference confirmed the amendments to the Deed of Union set out in (A) above.

(B) *Conference Diaconal Committee*

The Conference amends the Deed of Union as follows:

Section 1. Interpretation

Clause 1. Particular Expressions. In this Deed, unless the context otherwise requires: ...

(viiiA) 'Conference Diaconal Committee' has the meaning appearing from clause 25A below;

(xiB) 'Diaconal Session' means a session of the Conference of which, except for the

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President and Secretary and any other officers of that session appointed under Standing Orders, only deacons are members;

(xxix) 'Representative Session' when used in relation to the Conference means a session of the Conference other than the Ministerial or Diaconal Session and when used in relation to **or** a Synod means a session of the **Conference or** Synod **respectively** other than the Ministerial Session;

Section 5. Constitution of the Conference

13 The Sessions. The Conference shall meet in Representative Session; **and** in Ministerial Session and in Diaconal Session, each constituted as provided below.

15A The Diaconal Session. (a) The Conference in its Diaconal Session shall consist of

- (i) the President and Secretary of the Conference;
 - (ii) all those members of the Representative Session of the Conference who are deacons, including any persons ordained to the office and ministry of a deacon who are appointed under clause 14(3) or 14(4)(d) but excluding persons received into full connexion during the course of the Conference;
 - (iii) those persons, whether deacons or not, appointed by the last preceding Conference as assistant secretaries or other officers of the Conference in its Diaconal Session;
 - (iv) as associate members, any persons ordained to the office and ministry of a deacon who are appointed as associate members under clause 14(4);
 - (v) subject to sub-clauses (b) and (c), such other deacons as attend under their own arrangements and with the permission of the Warden of the Methodist Diaconal Order.
- (b) Persons who are members of the Conference under heads (iv) and (v) of sub-clause (a) shall not be entitled to vote nor, except as otherwise resolved by the Conference at the time, to be present during any closed meeting of the Conference.
- (c) Any meeting of the Conference in its Diaconal Session convened under clause 24(i) shall be a meeting of those only who are members under heads (i) and (ii) of sub-clause (a) above.

17 Substitutes.

(b) **When the Conference meets first in Ministerial Session** The Conference **it** shall **in that session** have power when meeting before the Representative Session to elect in the Ministerial or in the Diaconal Session such a substitute for any such member of that session.

Section 7. The Sessions of the Conference

23 Functions of the Ministerial Session.

...

(m) The Conference may in its Ministerial Session discuss any subject in the Agenda

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of the Representative or the Diaconal Session or any other subject within the jurisdiction of the Conference and communicate its views thereon to **the Representative Session** one or both of the other sessions by resolution or otherwise.

23A Functions of the Diaconal Session.—(a) In addition to any powers conferred by any other clause of this Deed the Conference shall in its Diaconal Session have the powers and perform the functions specified in the following sub-clauses:

—(b) While the Conference meets in Diaconal Session before the Representative Session it shall in that session have power to appoint the diaconal members of any committee required by Standing Orders to be appointed by the Conference from among its own members and to function in both that and the Representative Session:

—(c) The Conference shall in its Diaconal Session make such other appointments as may be prescribed by Standing Orders:

—(d) The Conference in its Diaconal Session shall have exclusive jurisdiction over the following business:

—(i) continuance or discontinuance in training or on probation or reinstatement of each student or probationer in training or on probation for diaconal ministry;

—(ii) any appeal to the Conference arising out of any charge against a deacon or probationer or a student in training for diaconal ministry.

—(e) The decisions of the Diaconal Session in the exercise of its jurisdiction under sub-clause (d) and all appointments made by the Conference in that session in exercise of its powers in that behalf shall be reported to the Conference in its Representative Session and there incorporated in the Journal provided for by clause 36:

—(f) The Conference shall in its Diaconal Session engage in conversation on the servant ministry of the church:

—(g) Acceptance of candidates for diaconal ministry shall be by the Conference in its Representative Session, but no candidate shall be proposed for acceptance except upon the recommendation of the Diaconal Session:

—(h) Admission (including re-admission) into full connexion as a deacon, whether of probationers or others, shall in all cases be by the Conference in its Representative Session, which shall by the same act resolve that any person thus admitted and not already ordained shall be ordained by the laying on of hands, but no person shall be presented for admission into full connexion without the judgment of the Diaconal Session that he or she is fit for such admission and, if appropriate, for ordination:

—(i) The Conference shall by Standing Order prescribe the circumstances in which a deacon may or shall become supernumerary on the ground of age, years of travel, ill health, compassion, difficulty of finding an appointment or otherwise. A deacon may be directed to become supernumerary by any competent church court upon finding a charge against him or her proved, and may in cases of urgency arising between meetings of the Conference be permitted by the President to become supernumerary on the ground of ill health, but otherwise all permissions and directions to become supernumeraries shall be given by the Conference in its Representative Session. All cases requiring a decision of

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~~the Conference shall be considered first by the Diaconal Session, which shall recommend to the Representative Session who shall become supernumeraries and on what grounds. Any permissions granted by the President shall be reported to the Conference in both the Diaconal and Representative Sessions.~~

~~— (j) The deaths of all deacons shall be reported to the Conference in both the Diaconal and Representative Sessions and obituaries shall be approved by the Conference in its Diaconal Session and reported to the Representative Session and there incorporated in the said Journal.~~

~~— (k) The resignation of a deacon or withdrawal of a diaconal probationer shall be reported to the Conference in both the Diaconal and Representative Sessions.~~

~~— (l) The Conference in its Diaconal Session shall have such functions in relation to the stationing of deacons and diaconal probationers as may be prescribed by Standing Orders.~~

~~— (m) The Conference may in its Diaconal Session discuss any subject in the Agenda of the Representative or the Ministerial Session or any other subject within the jurisdiction of the Conference and communicate its views thereon to one or both of the other sessions by resolution or otherwise.~~

24 Transaction of General Business. (a) In this clause 'general business' means decisions on matters of policy or principle, the adoption, amendment or repeal of Standing Orders, other general resolutions and all other business of the Conference not involving decisions on matters within clause 23 or **23A 25A** as to particular persons.

(b) The Conference in its Representative Session shall have jurisdiction over all general business, but subject to the following sub-clauses of this clause.

(c) In this clause 'shared business' means any general business which concerns any of the matters listed below, and for the avoidance of doubt includes any direction as to the process by which a resolution which is shared business is to come into effect, or the date or dates on which and the extent to which it shall do so, or as to any consultation which is to take place:

(i) any special resolution to which section 5(3) of the 1976 Act applies; or

(ii) the procedure of the Ministerial Session of the Conference; or

(iii) the continuance, composition, functions or procedure of the Ministerial Session of the Synods; or

~~— (iv) the continuance as a separate body of the Diaconal Session as provided by this Deed or the definition, by virtue of this Deed, of the relative duties and privileges of that and the Representative Session respectively; or~~

~~— (v) the procedure of the Diaconal Session of the Conference; or~~

~~— (vi) the continuance, composition, functions or procedure of the Convocation.~~

(d) Shared business which concerns heads (i), (ii) or (iii) of sub-clause (c) shall be dealt with as specified in sub-clauses (e) to (j), which relate only to such business except as provided in clauses (k) and (l). Shared business which concerns heads (iv), (v) or (vi) shall be similarly dealt with, substituting the words "Diaconal Session" for "Ministerial

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Session” in sub-clauses (e) to (f) wherever they occur.

....

25 Reference of Business and Correction of Records. (a) Any **Either** session of the Conference may refer or delegate to **the** another, for comment or decision, any matter within the jurisdiction of the referring session. The majority required for delegation of a matter for decision shall be that required for a substantive resolution on that matter. Any comment or decision on any such matter shall be reported to the referring session and any such decision so reported to the Representative Session shall there be incorporated in the Journal provided for by clause 36.

(b) Any **Either** session of the Conference may exercise, in relation to the **earlier** proceedings of an ~~earlier~~ **the other** session of the same Conference, the same powers of correction of records as in relation to its own proceedings and also any powers which have been conferred by Standing Orders on the Conference, acting on the recommendation of any committee or sub-committee charged with responsibility for Methodist law and polity, to make consequential provisions or to rescind or amend resolutions for purposes arising out of that responsibility.

Section 7A The Conference Diaconal Committee

25A The Conference Diaconal Committee: constitution and functions. (a) **There shall be a Conference Diaconal Committee constituted in accordance with sub-clauses (b) and (c) below, which shall, in addition to any powers conferred by any other clause of this Deed or Standing Orders, have the powers and perform the functions specified in sub-clauses (e) to (k) below.**

(b) The committee shall consist of

(i) the President of the Conference;

(ii) the Secretary of the Conference or his or her deputy;

(iii) subject to sub-clause (c)(i) below, all those deacons who were, ex officio or by appointment or election, members of the Representative Session of the last preceding Conference or, if the committee meets during the Representative Session itself, of the current Conference;

(iv) any persons appointed by the President in accordance with sub-clause (c) below;

(v) any persons appointed in accordance with Standing Orders as officers of the committee.

(c) The President shall have power, acting in consultation with the Warden of the Methodist Diaconal Order and in accordance with Standing Orders made in that behalf, to appoint persons to serve on the committee in substitution for or in addition to those deacons falling under head (iii) of sub-clause (b) above where:

(i) a casual vacancy arises because a person falling under that head has, since

the last Conference, died or ceased to be a deacon or otherwise become ineligible by reason of disqualification or incapacity to be a member of the Conference; or

(ii) for any other reason it appears that the number of deacons able and willing to attend a meeting of the committee is likely to fall below the minimum number of deacons prescribed by Standing Orders to be members of the Conference; or

(iii) it is necessary to reach the minimum number prescribed by Standing Orders for the committee when exercising its jurisdiction under sub-clause (e)(ii) below.

Any persons appointed for the purposes of head (i) or (ii) above shall be deacons.

(d) At every meeting of the committee the President if present shall preside. If the President is absent from any meeting, he or she shall appoint the Vice-President or a former President or Vice-President to preside, failing which the Warden, or such other person as the committee may choose, shall during the absence of the President preside.

(e) The committee shall, in relation to deacons and to students and probationers in training or on probation for diaconal ministry, have the responsibility and power, on behalf of the Conference, to:

(i) make all decisions as to the continuance or discontinuance in training or on probation of each student or probationer;

(ii) consider and determine any application for reinstatement by a former student or probationer:

(iii) hear and determine any appeal to the Conference arising out of any charge against a deacon, probationer or student; and its decisions on such matters shall be final.

(f) The decisions of the committee in the exercise of its powers under sub-clause (e) shall be reported to the Conference in its Representative Session and there incorporated in the Journal provided for by clause 36.

(g) Acceptance of candidates for diaconal ministry shall be by the Conference in its Representative Session, but no candidate shall be proposed for acceptance except upon the recommendation of the Conference Diaconal Committee.

(h) Admission (including re-admission) into full connexion as a deacon, whether of probationers or others, shall in all cases be by the Conference in its Representative Session, which shall by the same act resolve that any person thus admitted and not already ordained shall be ordained by the laying-on of hands, but no person shall be presented for admission into full connexion without the judgment of the Conference Diaconal Committee that he or she is fit for such admission and, if appropriate, for ordination.

(i) The Conference shall by Standing Order prescribe the circumstances in which a deacon may or shall become supernumerary on the ground of age, years of travel, ill health, compassion, difficulty of finding an appointment or otherwise. A deacon may be directed to become supernumerary by any competent church court upon finding a charge against him or her proved,

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and may in cases of urgency arising between meetings of the Conference be permitted by the President to become supernumerary on the ground of ill health, but otherwise all permissions and directions to become supernumeraries shall be given by the Conference in its Representative Session. All cases requiring a decision of the Conference shall be considered first by the Conference Diaconal Committee, which shall recommend to the Representative Session who shall become supernumeraries and on what grounds. Any permissions granted by the President shall be reported both to the committee and to the Representative Session.

(j) The deaths of all deacons shall be reported to both the Conference Diaconal Committee and the Representative Session of the Conference and obituaries shall be approved by the committee and reported to the Representative Session and there incorporated in the said Journal.

(k) The resignation of a deacon or withdrawal of a diaconal probationer shall be reported to both the Conference Diaconal Committee and the Representative Session of the Conference.

25B Conference Diaconal Committee and Convocation: Required Consultation

(a) This clause applies where general business of the Conference as defined by clause 24(a) above concerns any of the matters listed below, and for the avoidance of doubt includes any direction as to the process by which a resolution which is governed by this clause is to come into effect, or the date or dates on which and the extent to which it shall do so, or as to any consultation which is to take place:

(i) the continuance of the Conference Diaconal Committee as provided by this Deed or the definition, by virtue of this Deed, of the relative responsibilities and powers of that committee and the Representative Session respectively; or

(ii) the continuance, composition, or functions of the Convocation.

(b) Any business falling under sub-clause (a) above shall be dealt with by way of special resolution and the appropriate consultation required by section 2(1) of the 1976 Act shall include submission for approval or disapproval to the Conference Diaconal Committee and, in the case of business falling under sub-clause (a)(ii) above, the Convocation.

Section 8. Officers of the Conference

28 Who presides at the Conference. (a) At every meeting of the Conference the President if present shall preside, save that the President may at his or her absolute discretion, without leaving the Conference, invite the Vice-President to preside for such period as the President may determine.

(b) If the President is absent from any meeting of the Representative Session the Vice-President shall during the absence of the President preside and if both are absent the ex-President, failing whom the ex-Vice-President, who has most recently held the substantive office and who is present and willing to act, and failing any such person then

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such other member of the Conference as the Conference may choose, shall during the absence of the President preside and act as President of the Conference and in each such case with all the powers rights and duties of the President.

(c) If the President is absent from any meeting of the Ministerial Session the ex-President who has most recently held the substantive office and who is present and willing to act, and failing any such person then such other member of the Conference (being a minister) as the Conference may choose shall during the absence of the President preside and act as President of the Conference and in each such case with all the powers rights and duties of the President.

~~(d) If the President is absent from any meeting of the Diaconal Session such other minister or deacon as the Conference may choose shall during the absence of the President preside and act as President of the Conference and in each such case with all the powers rights and duties of the President.~~

The Methodist Council approved the resolution.

***RESOLUTION

55/2. The Conference confirmed the amendments to the Deed of Union set out in (B) above with effect from the close of the Conference.

(C) *Superintending a Circuit*

The Conference amends the Deed of Union as follows:

Clause 1 Particular Expressions ...

...

(xxxiii) 'Superintendent minister' or 'Superintendent' in relation to a Circuit means the minister **or ministers** whose name **identified as such** stands first or alone in the list of ministers appointed to the Circuit. ~~or in~~ In the event of the death, resignation or incapacity of that **a** person **so identified it includes also** such other **minister or ministers** as may become the Superintendent **be appointed as Superintendent** under the provisions of Standing Orders in that behalf;

The Methodist Council approved the resolution.

***RESOLUTION

55/3. The Conference confirmed the amendments to the Deed of Union set out in (C) above.