

DECISION 1277

IN RE: A Request from the Alaska Annual Conference for a Declaratory Decision on the Constitutionality, Meaning, Application, and Effect of ¶ 316.6 in Light of ¶ 35

STATEMENT OF FACTS

The Alaska Annual Conference meeting in session May 30-31, 2014, at Anchor Park United Methodist Church, Anchorage, Alaska, passed a resolution asking for a declaratory decision on the constitutionality, meaning, application, and effect of ¶ 316.6 of the *2012 Discipline* in light of ¶ 35 regarding the voting status of local pastors in the election of delegates to general, jurisdictional, and central conferences. According to the errata sheet from the editor of the *2012 Discipline* based on the work of the Committee on Correlation and Revision, the concern raised in the request for a declaratory decision has been addressed. The current paragraph now reads as follows:

¶ 316.6 The membership of local pastors under full-time and part-time appointment is in the annual conference where they shall have the right to vote on all matters except constitutional amendments, election of delegates to general, jurisdictional, or central conferences, and matters of ordination, character, and conference relations of clergy. Local pastors who have completed course of study or an M. Div. degree and have served a minimum of two consecutive years under appointment before the election may vote to elect clergy delegates to general and jurisdictional or central conferences. See Decision 1181 and ¶ 35, Article IV of the *2012 Discipline*.

DIGEST

The Judicial Council does not have jurisdiction since the matter does not involve annual conferences or the work therein (¶ 2610.2j of the *2012 Discipline*).

Our longstanding jurisprudence has interpreted ¶ 2610. 2j to mean that a request that comes from an annual conference must be germane to the regular business, consideration, or discussion of the annual conference and must have a direct and tangible effect on the work of the annual conference session. *See* Decision 452 and Memorandum 1114.

However, in light of the correction by errata to the *2012 Discipline*, the concern raised by the Alaska Annual Conference is no longer an issue. *See* Decision 1181.

Kabamba Kiboko was absent.

Timothy K. Bruster, first clergy alternate, took part in this decision.

William B. Lawrence, President

F. Belton Joyner, Jr., Secretary

October 25, 2014