

1 SUBJECT TO FINAL EDITING

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3 **JUDICIAL COUNCIL OF THE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH**

4 **MEMORANDUM NO. 1365**

5 IN RE: Petitions for Declaratory Decision from the Upper New York Annual Conference,
6 the New England Annual Conference, the East Ohio Annual Conference, and the Pacific
7 Northwest Annual Conference regarding the constitutionality and legality of mandatory
8 registration fees for non-delegates at the called session of General Conference.

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10 **STATEMENT OF FACTS**

11 On May 11, 2018, the Commission on the General Conference of the United Methodist
12 Church, received a report that there was an approximate \$700,000 difference between the
13 amount needed and the amount already funded for the 2019 Special Session. A proposal was
14 received that the difference be funded through registration fees set at various levels. In order to
15 avoid deficit spending, and in an effort to be good stewards of the funds available, the
16 Commission determined there was no alternative available at that time but to charge the
17 proposed registration fees.

18 On Saturday, June 2, 2018 a lay member of the Upper New York Annual Conference
19 moved that the annual conference request a declaratory decision from the Judicial Council
20 regarding the constitutionality and legality of mandatory registration fees for non-delegates at the
21 called session of the General Conference in February of 2019. The request for the declaratory
22 decision passed.

23 On Saturday morning, June 16, 2018 a clergy member of the New England Annual
24 Conference moved that the annual conference request a declaratory decision from the Judicial
25 Council regarding the constitutionality and legality of mandatory registration fees for non-
26 delegates at the called session of the General Conference in February of 2019. The request for
27 the declaratory decision passed.

28 On Tuesday, June 12, 2018 a member of the East Ohio Annual Conference moved that
29 the annual conference request a declaratory decision from the Judicial Council regarding the
30 constitutionality and legality of mandatory registration fees for non-delegates at the called
31 session of the General Conference in February of 2019. The request for the declaratory decision
32 passed.

33 On Sunday, June 24, 2018 a clergy member of the Pacific Northwest Annual Conference
34 moved that the annual conference request a declaratory decision from the Judicial Council
35 regarding the constitutionality and legality of mandatory registration fees for non-delegates at the

36 called session of the General Conference in February of 2019. The request for the declaratory
37 decision passed.

38 On July 12, 2018, upon receiving an updated financial report which reflected the
39 allotment of additional funds, the Commission on the General Conference was able to approve a
40 motion to no longer charge mandatory registration fees for the 2019 Special Session of the
41 General Conference.

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JURISDICTION

44 The issue raised in this matter is moot. Therefore, we do not reach the question of
45 whether we have jurisdiction.

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DIGEST

48 Because the Commission on the General Conference reversed the decision to charge
49 mandatory registration fees, the requests for Declaratory Decision from the Upper New York
50 Annual Conference, the New England Annual Conference, the East Ohio Annual Conference,
51 and the Pacific Northwest Annual Conference are moot.

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54 Ruben Reyes was absent.

55 Warren Plowden, first lay alternate, participated in this decision.

56 Luan-Vu Tran did not participate.

57 First clergy alternate, Tim Bruster, participated in this decision.

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