

# Frequently Asked Questions

## UMC Conferences

As of Dec 16, 2019

### **What is the structure of the United Methodist Church?**

Refer to the Structure of the UMC Frequently Asked Questions document to better understand the districts, annual, jurisdictional, and general conferences terms referred to below.

### **How often does the Annual Conference meet and what happens at these meetings?**

As described, each Annual Conference meets once a year. Bethany is in the Rio Texas Conference, led by Bishop Rev. Robert Schnase, and meets every year in June. There are an equal number of clergy and lay delegates present, and each church receives a number of lay delegates based on a formula developed by the annual conference, based roughly on the size of the church's congregation. At the annual meeting of the Rio Texas Conference various resolutions and other matters are voted on by the delegates. Prior to each General and Jurisdictional Conference, the delegates at the Annual Conference elect lay and clergy delegates to attend those conferences.

### **How can I find out more about the Rio Texas Annual Conference?**

Visit <https://riotexas.org/> to learn more about our conference.

### **What is the role and structure of the General Conference and how often does it meet?**

The General Conference is the legislative body of the United Methodist Church and makes policy decisions for the entire United Methodist Church worldwide. The General Conference is composed of an equal number of clergy delegates and lay delegates elected from the various annual conferences from around the world (not less than 600 nor more than 1,000).

The General Conference meets every four years unless a Special General Conference is called by the Council of Bishops. The next General Conference will be May 5-15, 2020.

### **What is the role and structure of the Jurisdictional Conference and how often does it meet?**

The Jurisdictional Conference meets every four years, a few months after the General Conference meeting. A major function of the Jurisdictional meeting is to elect and assign Bishops to serve the Annual Conferences located within the Jurisdiction.

### **How does one become a delegate to the Jurisdictional and General Conference?**

Delegates to Jurisdictional and General Conference are elected by the delegates of the Annual Conferences the year before the next General and Jurisdictional Conferences. Persons desiring to become delegates campaign to get elected by the delegates of the Annual Conference. Each Annual Conference sends an equal number of lay and clergy delegates to both Jurisdictional and General Conference. The number of delegates sent by an Annual Conference to either the Jurisdictional or General Conference depends on the total membership of the churches in the Annual Conference.