

Approved 2006 UMCD By-Laws

Article I

Name, Territory, and Principal Office

Section 1: Name. The name of this organization shall be known as the United Methodist Congress of the Deaf, Inc., hereafter referred to as UMCD.

Section 2: Territory.

The primary service area of UMCD shall include the five Jurisdictions and the Central Conference of the United Methodist Church .

Section 3: Principal Office.

UMCD shall maintain a registered office at the

General Board of Global Ministries

Health & Welfare

United Methodist Church

800-862-4246 | 888-252-6174

458 Ponce de Leon Avenue NE, Building A, Suite 1

Atlanta, Georgia 30308

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Article II

Purpose

Section 1: The United Methodist Congress of the Deaf celebrates and promotes Christian leadership and discipleship within the Deaf community.

Section 2: UMCD shall use the Book of Discipline of the United Methodist Church as guidance in conducting its affairs. Section 3: The United Methodist Congress of the Deaf affirms the authority of Scripture in matters of faith.

Article III

Membership

Section 1: Members of UMCD are those who share the goals of UMCD as stated in Article II Purpose and are current in their dues to UMCD.

Section 2: Voting members of UMCD meet all of the requirements of Article III Section 1 and, in addition, are lay or clergy members of the United Methodist Church .

Article IV

Committees

Section 1: There shall be an Executive Committee consisting of the President, Vice-President, Secretary and the Treasurer.

Section 2: There shall be a Nominations Committee consisting of members of the Executive Committee and two at-large voting members of UMCD. The nominations committee shall be chaired by the Vice-President.

Section 3. The President and the Board may establish standing and ad hoc committees whenever the need arises.

A. The President shall have the power to appoint committee chairs and to appoint committee members subject to the approval of the Board. Much important work of UMCD is done by its Committees.

B. The President is an ex-officio member of all committees.

Article V

Board Members

Section 1: The Board shall consist of the following officers:

A. President

B. Vice-President

C. Secretary

D. Treasurer

E. Northeast Jurisdiction President

F. Southeast Jurisdiction President

G. North Central Jurisdiction President

H. South Central Jurisdiction President

I. Western Jurisdiction President

J. International (Central Conference) President

Section 2: During Board meetings, only Board members shall have voting privileges, the President voting only in case of a tie.

Section 3: The Board members shall serve terms of four years and shall not serve more than two consecutive terms in the same office.

Section 4: The President of the United Methodist Committee on Ministries with Deaf, Late-Deafened, Hard of Hearing and Deaf-Blind People shall be an ex-officio member of the UMCD Board without vote.

Section 5: Past Presidents of UMCD shall have ex-officio membership on the Board without vote.

Section 6: The Liaison Officer to the United Methodist General Board of Global Ministries shall have ex-officio membership on the Board without vote.

Article VI

Vacancies on the UMCD Board

Section 1: If a vacancy occurs between general membership meetings of UMCD, the Board is empowered to fill the vacancy until the next general membership meeting of UMCD. At the next general membership meeting, an officer will be elected to serve a full four-year term. The person selected by the Board to fill the vacant position in the interim shall be eligible for election to that position.

Section 2: In the case of the death or resignation of a President, the Vice-President assumes the duties of the President and completes the term of office.

Article VII

Qualifications of Officers

Section 1: The officers of UMCD must be members in good standing in the United Methodist Church and voting members of UMCD.

Section 2: The officers must be of sound character, competent, and mature in judgment and experience.

Section 3: At least two of the officers of the Executive Committee shall be Deaf, Late-Deafened, Hard of Hearing or Deaf-Blind.

Section 4: A person nominated for office must be a member of UMCD and have attended one Conference or a Jurisdictional meeting, previous to the Congress at which he/she is nominated.

Article VIII

Election of Officers

Section 1: Officer terms are for four years. Elections will be held once every two years on years ending with an odd number via mail balloting, in August, following the general membership meeting held in July. Though terms are for four years, the Officer's terms are staggered so that at no one time will the entire Board composition be voted upon.

Section 2: The Nominating Committee shall prepare a slate of nominees for approval by the UMCD Board. The nominees will be introduced at the general membership meeting of UMCD, held the third week of July every other year on years ending with an odd number.

Section 3: The Treasurer and the UMCD member who is in charge of keeping the membership database up to date shall determine the correct listing of voting members and shall send mail ballots to all eligible voting members at their most recent mailing addresses.

Section 4: The Nominating Committee shall oversee the collection and counting of the ballots under the supervision of the Vice-President. Impartial observers will be involved in each step of the process, from collecting the mail to counting the ballots in order to ensure that the election is conducted with the highest integrity and honesty.

Section 5: Jurisdictional Presidents and the International (Central Conference) President are elected by their respective Jurisdictions or Central Conference.

Section 6: In the event of a resignation of an Officer between general meetings of UMCD, the Board is empowered to fill the vacancy until the next general membership meeting of UMCD (or Jurisdictional or International meeting in the event of the resignation of a Jurisdictional or International President). The President has the authority to appoint a person as an Interim Officer with the approval of the Board and this person will serve until the next mail balloting at which time the Interim Officer shall be eligible to run for election to the appointed position.

Article IX

Duties of Officers

Section 1: The President shall function as chief executive officer of UMCD and shall:

- a. Preside at all business meetings of UMCD.
- b. Provide liaison between UMCD and the United Methodist Church .
- c. Work closely with the staff of the Health and Welfare Ministries Program of the General Board of Global Ministries for promoting Deaf ministries.
- d. Work closely with the Jurisdictional and International Presidents and Committee Chairs.
- e. Officially represent UMCD at national conferences of the United Methodist Church .
- f. Maintain contact with the membership of UMCD through regular contributions to the UMCD newsletter.
- g. Be an ex-officio member of all UMCD Committees.

Section 2: The Vice-President shall perform all the duties of the President in case of the absence of the President and shall:

- a. Work closely with the President on all matters related to UMCD.
- b. Shall be in communication with the Jurisdictional and International Presidents of UMCD and receive information concerning activities concerning Deaf ministries within each Jurisdiction.
- c. Shall be the Chairperson of the Nominating Committee.

Section 3: The Secretary shall keep a record of all regular and special meetings of UMCD and shall

- a. Provide all Officers with a copy of minutes of all meetings.
- b. Correspond in relation to any business of the UMCD when requested to do so.
- c. Be responsible for notification of all meetings and elections.
- d. Discharge all other duties usual to the office of Secretary.

Section 4: The Treasurer shall be responsible for the financial affairs of UMCD and shall

- a. Collect dues and donations from members and other monies, giving appropriate receipts.
- b. Have the responsibility to write and sign all checks for UMCD, but only upon receiving written authorization from the President.
- c. Oversee the UMCD Endowment Fund serving as Chairperson.
- d. Provide the Board and membership with accurate financial statements.
- e. Discharge all other duties usual to the office of Treasurer.

Section 5: The Jurisdictional Presidents and International President are responsible for their Jurisdiction and/or Conference and shall:

- a. Work to increase the numbers of UMCD members from their area.
- b. Hold a biennial Jurisdictional/International Conference on the even years.
- c. Preside over meetings of the Jurisdictional or International Officers and the general membership meetings of the Jurisdiction or International Conference.
- d. See that the Jurisdictional Officers or International Officers carry out their duties and assist in writing a Jurisdictional/ International newsletter when possible.
- e. Follow the By-Laws written for their respective Jurisdiction or International Central Conference and ensure that the By- Laws support the work of UMCD.
- f. Work with the larger church in the respective Jurisdiction or International Conference to establish new Deaf ministries and encourage the growth of existing Deaf ministries.

Article X

Conferences/Meetings

Section 1: Conferences/meetings of the UMCD shall be held in accordance with the following guidelines:

- a. The biennial conference and general membership meeting of UMCD shall be held the third week of July once every two (2) years. These meetings shall be held on years ending with an odd number.
- b. The dates of the biennial conference and general membership meeting can be adjusted by majority vote of the Board.
- c. All conferences/general membership meetings shall be accessible to persons who are Deaf, Late-Deafened, Hard of Hearing or Deaf-Blind.
- d. The UMCD Board will select a primary site for the upcoming biennial conference/general membership meeting and an alternative meeting site. The sites should alternate between the various Jurisdictions and the Central Conference.

Section 2: The agenda of the general business meetings shall be as follows:

- a. Invocation
- b. Roll Call
- c. Reading of the minutes
- d. Treasurer's Report
- e. Reports of Officers and Committees
- f. Unfinished Old Business
- g. New Business
- h. Adjournment and Benediction

Section 3: Two-thirds (2/3) of the members of the Board must be present to constitute a quorum for Board meetings. Board meetings can be conducted in person or via email.

Section 4: In case of questions regarding procedure of any UMCD meeting not otherwise covered in the By-Laws, the Book of Discipline of the United Methodist Church and Robert's Rules of Order shall determine parliamentary procedure.

Article XI

Finances

Section 1: The fiscal year shall be from January 1st through December 31st.

Section 2: There shall be an annual fee for membership dues set by the Board.

Section 3: UMCD Jurisdictions/Conferences shall establish and collect their own dues, set up their own By-Laws, and elect their own officers but shall work with and coordinate with UMCD, the parent organization, and shall follow the purpose of UMCD in all Jurisdictional/International affairs. A financial statement and listing of Jurisdictional/International members shall be submitted to UMCD at least once per year: on even years these reports need to be submitted within 30 days of the Jurisdictional/International Conference. On odd years, the reports should be submitted prior to the UMCD International Conference in July.

Section 4: Standard accounting procedures shall be used. If financial records are maintained on a computer system, backup procedures shall be utilized as established by a designated person and approved by the Executive Committee.

Section 5: Within two (2) months after the end of the fiscal year an audit of the financial records of UMCD shall be made by an auditor familiar with standard accounting procedures appointed by the Executive Committee. The auditors shall not be current or outgoing officers. The audit need not be certified.

Section 6: The Treasurer shall provide a financial report at regular Board meetings and a full financial statement at the biennial conference/general membership meeting and complete any necessary financial paperwork required by the Internal Revenue Service.

Article XII

Resignation and Removal of Officers

Section 1: Any Officer who wishes to resign must submit a letter of resignation to the President at least thirty (30) days prior to the effective date of resignation. In the event that the President resigns, the letter must be submitted to the entire Board.

Section 2: Any vacancy created through resignation shall be filled by procedure outlined in Article VIII Section 6.

Section 3: The Board may declare the position of an Officer vacant and may remove such Officer for cause on the occurrence of any of the following events:

- a. The Officer has been declared of unsound mind by an order of the Court.
- b. The Officer has failed to attend the last three meetings of the Board.
- c. The Officer has committed a chargeable offense under the Book of Discipline of the United Methodist Church (paragraph 2702).
- d. The officer is no longer a member of the United Methodist Church .

Article XIII

Dissolution

Section 1: In the event UMCD dissolves, any and all money, assets, and liabilities shall be transferred to the General Board of Global Ministries.

Article XIV

Amendments

Section 1: These By- Laws, all or in part, may be amended, altered, suspended, or repealed by a majority vote of the voting members of UMCD or by a 2/3 vote of the Officers of the UMCD Board.

Note: UMCD has been working on its By-Laws and Constitution. Many thanks to the efforts of the UMCD Task Force: Dan Kenyon, Tom Hudspeth, Lisa Harvey, David Ennis, Julie Howard, Wineva Hankamer, Curt Keller and Marian Aiken. They cut, simplified and streamlined our organization's governing rules, bringing us up to date with today's way of doing things. The UMCD Officers UNANIMOUSLY voted to accept the new By-Laws and we are presenting them to you, our members, in this newsletter,

The first change we made was to combine the By-Laws and the constitution into one document which will be known as our By-Laws. Again, this is in keeping with current practice for nonprofit organizations.

Then, we created a clear and concise mission statement that gives our organization a sense of purpose and direction: The United Methodist Congress of the Deaf celebrates and promotes Christian leadership and discipleship within the Deaf community.

Committee Chairs are no longer officers. Their work is vital to UMCD, and it will continue as Committee work rather than Officer work. The new Board will consist of the Jurisdiction Presidents, a new International or Central Conference representative, and a President, Vice-President, Secretary and Treasurer.