



2023 Western NC UMC Annual Conference Summary

Wonderful worship services.

Lots of special events and resources.

Consent Calendar (Petitions 3 – 13) –

These include approving budgets, new board members for various camps, retirement homes, colleges, and commissions.

Council on Finance Petition to keep 2024 apportionments will be based on the 2023 totals with a 2% reduction (if paid on time).

Churches:

- I. 9 churches in the Western NC Conference have outstanding balances (as far as pension/insurance remittances are concerned).
- II. 5 churches closing (not disaffiliating).
- III. No reports of disaffiliations at this time (they were completed in May 2023 at called conference).

Lay Delegate Elections for Jurisdictional Conference in 2024.

3 persons were voted in:

1. John Barbee, Collins Grove UMC, Northern Piedmont District
2. Shareka R. Brown, St. Paul UMC, Winston-Salem, Yadkin Valley District
3. Joseph Navarro, Harrison UMC Pineville, Metro District

Petition 14 – Local Church Creation Care Teams

“...Resolved that every local church is urged to form a Creation Care Team or strengthen an existing one for action in five areas each year – Worship, Discipleship, Stewardship, Mission and Evangelism...”

Petition 15 – Added “Fossil Fuels” to Methodist Investment screens

Before the conference invests in anything, they will now screen to make sure the investment is not in fossil fuels. This will not change prior investments.

Petition 16 – Parental Leave in WNC Conference

The Conference provides 90 days of Parental leave but depending on the area, it might not be paid leave. There will now be a fund that can be applied for in case the area does not pay the full 90-day leave.



Petition 17 – Encouraging Leadership with Integrity

If a lay delegate or clergy intend to disaffiliate from the UMC, that they will recuse themselves from all district, conference, commissions, etc. voting.

Petition 18 – Voting at Church Conferences

Voting at Church Conference shall be extended to active church members (as defined in the Petition).

Petition 19 – Creating a U.S. Regional Conference

WNC Conference urges the General Conference to pass the creation of US Regional Conferences in order for regions of the world to utilize their own cultures and diversity in making disciples in the world.

Petition 20 – Removal of Discriminatory Language from Book of Discipline

WNC Conference supports the 9 petitions going to General Conference to remove all discriminatory language from the Book of Discipline.

Petition 21 – Justice and Empowerment for LGBTQIA+ People

WNC Conference supports and amplifies queer delegates until changes can be made to the Book of Discipline.

ALL PETITIONS PASSED

Other items:

2023 WNCC BMCR Annual Conference Statement about where the Conference could do better (Pastor salaries and pension disparities, maintain our conference antiracism initiative, lack of diversity in key positions among our conference staff, etc.). Let the church office know if you would like to read the entire report.

Disaffiliations to date in WNC Conference is around 190.

Kathy Woods' personal highlights:

Resource center (if you want to do anything in the church, there is probably support out there for it).

Land Acknowledgment statement to the Cherokee in the opening worship service by Bishop Kenneth Carter, Jr.

The music: Check out 'The Place UMC' and 'The Modern Worship Collective.'

Worship services that include Celebration of Life for Ministers, Ordering of Ministry, etc.

Diane's highlights:



Positive energy and hope were evident in the over 2000 laity and pastor delegations. Many people were wearing shirts that said, “BE UMC” which spoke to unity within the church. We were reminded of John Wesley’s simple rules to do no harm, do all the good we can, and love God.

Linda’s highlights:

The Resource Center had a plethora of materials that provided guidance in applying for grants, finding appropriate scripture, applying for scholarships, educational opportunities, programs for youth, adults, etc., and numerous other topics.

There were groups that provided information on joint projects between churches, new initiatives at individual churches as well as specific missions.