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United Methodist Annual Conference Members Refuse to Ratify Harmful Proposed Constitutional Amendments

(Most of this report was provided by GOOD NEWS, a United Methodist renewal and reform organization. *METHODIST LAITY REFORM MOVEMENT* has edited it.

All 62 U.S. Annual Conferences have now voted on the 32 proposed amendments to the United Methodist Church's Constitution. Forty-eight of those conferences, representing at least 86% of the total votes cast in the US and approximately 80% of the votes worldwide, have publicly shared with all United Methodists their vote tallies on the proposed amendments. At least 24 of the proposed amendments have not been ratified.

Here are the overall results from those 48 Annual Conferences on the most contentious proposed amendments:

Proposed amendment 1 (the "Trojan Horse amendment"), which would have dramatically liberalized UM Church membership standards, has failed to receive two-thirds support in 36 of the 48 Annual Conferences reporting results. For the 48 reporting actual vote totals, the overall results are:

Proposed amendment 1: 17,457 (48%) Yes 18,857 (52%) No

For a proposed UMC Constitutional Amendment to be ratified, two-thirds (66.67%) of all the worldwide Annual Conference members present and voting must vote yes.

Proposed amendment 1 will fall far short of ratification.

The 23 proposed amendments on the World-wide Nature of the UM Church (the "Segregation Amendments") were soundly defeated in 38 of the 48 Annual Conferences that have reported their results. Five of the 23 proposed amendments would have authorized the creation of Regional Conferences, which could have been used to separate African United Methodists from U.S. United Methodists in voting on sexual morality and other major issues. Here are the total results from the 48 Annual Conferences that have reported vote tallies for those five amendments:

Proposed amendment 4:	13,383 (37%) Yes	22,984 (63%) No
Proposed amendment 10:	13,325 (37%) Yes	23,096 (63%) No
Proposed amendment 13:	13,504 (37%) Yes	22,879 (63%) No
Proposed amendment 23:	13,199 (36%) Yes	23,186 (64%) No
Proposed amendment 26:	13,127 (37%) Yes	22,830 (63%) No

Proposed amendment 19, which would extend to Associate Clergy Members, Provisional Clergy Members, and many Local Pastors the right to vote for clergy delegates to the General and Jurisdictional Conferences, has received substantial support. Based on the total number of ballots cast in prior years when proposed Constitutional Amendments were considered, and the heightened interest in the current issues, proposed amendment 19 needs to secure only 30% of the approximately 10,000-11,000 ballots still outstanding. Here are the total tallies from the 48 Annual Conferences that have shared voting totals with the worldwide UM connection:

Proposed amendment 19: 27,089 (77%) Yes 8,027 (23%) No

In 2005, the last time Annual Conferences worldwide voted on Constitutional Amendments, there were approximately 2,000 total votes cast in the Central Conferences (United Methodists outside the U.S.). Given the heightened interest in the current proposed amendments and the dramatic growth in many Annual Conferences beyond the U.S. (especially in Africa), it seems possible that as many as 3,000 to 4,000 votes may come from the Central Conferences this year. Worldwide, approximately 45,000 to 46,000 Annual Conference members will have voted on the proposed amendments before the Council of Bishops meets in November to officially certify the results.

Readers from most US Annual Conferences can see how their Annual Conference voted on proposed amendments by going to www.goodnewsmag.org and clicking on the spreadsheet at the top of our webpage.

Please note, if you are aware of official and publicly shared voting results that we have not included in this update, please share them with us ([HYPERLINK "mailto:wbfenton@goodnewsmag.org" wbfenton@goodnewsmag.org](mailto:wbfenton@goodnewsmag.org)). Thank you.

IMPORTANT UPDATE BY *METHODIST LAITY REFORM MOVEMENT*: We have received vote totals from two United Methodist Annual Conferences in Africa: West Congo and South Congo. Both of them cast overwhelming votes AGAINST the harmful proposed Constitutional Amendments:

Amendment 1 on church membership (Trojan Horse):

West Congo: 1 yes, 98 no

South Congo: 0 yes, 211 no

Segregation Amendments (worldwide Church structure):

West Congo: 2 to 4 yes, 95 to 99 no

South Congo: 0 to 1 yes, 199 to 220 no