

# U.M. Daily

## Wednesday, June 17, 2026

42nd Annual Session of the California-Pacific Annual Conference  
Opening Worship  
1:30 p.m. (PDT)

Prelude *The Astonish Ensemble*

Call to Worship with Movement, Music & Voice

Before the opening hymn, Bishop Dottie Escobedo-Frank shared that every time we gather we sing this hymn written by the Wesley brothers. They used this song when they gathered and asked the question, “Are we still alive?” When they came to America, life was hard and each time they gathered, they asked, “Who is still alive among us physically? After COVID-19, we had that same question, “Who survived the pandemic?” Bishop Dottie Escobedo-Frank invited the attendees to stand and sing it with gusto!

Opening Hymn *And Are We Yet Alive*, UMH 553

Opening Prayer Bishop Dottie Escobedo-Frank

Scripture Reading John 14:8-14

Song: *How Great Thou Art*, performed by *The Astonish Ensemble*

Message: *Astonish* - Bishop Dottie Escobedo-Frank

Bishop Dottie Escobedo-Frank explored the theme of “Astonish,” inviting the Conference to consider the vastness of God’s creation, from the immeasurable universe to the beauty and abundance of the earth. Drawing on the Book of Job, she noted that creation reminds us of God’s greatness and inspires humility, wonder, and praise.

Bishop Escobedo-Frank highlighted the miracles and teachings of Jesus, including the feeding of 5,000 with five loaves and two fish, the calming of the storm on the sea of Galilee, and the healing of the man at the Pool of Bethesda. She emphasized that Jesus not only performed miracles but also transformed hearts and minds through his teachings, challenging people to live according to God’s values.

Bishop Escobedo-Frank examined Jesus’ promise that believers would do greater works through their collective ministry. She invited members of the Conference to light candles representing the ministries of their local churches and celebrated the many ways congregations across the California-Pacific Conference are

serving their communities. She cited examples including disaster recovery, food ministries, advocacy for marginalized communities, environmental stewardship, community outreach, spirited worship, and faithful discipleship.

The Bishop emphasized that these greater works are accomplished not by individuals alone, but through the united efforts of the Church. She reminded the Conference that God sees every act of compassion, justice, hospitality, and service, even when the results are not immediately visible.

Concluding with personal remarks on the recent loss of her brother, Bishop Escobedo-Frank shared his encouragement to view life's challenges from an eternal perspective. She called the Conference to recognize the light of Christ at work in and through them, affirming that each person is part of God's ongoing work in the world. She concluded by encouraging all present to live in awe of God's grace and the astonishing ways God continues to work through the Church.

### **Communion**

Communion Music:                    *How Great Thou Art & This Little Light of Mine*

Closing Song:                                *A Million Dreams*

Blessing:                                        Bishop Dottie Escobedo-Frank

Postlude:                                        *Reprise : A Million Dreams*

Participants in Worship Service:

*The Astonish Ensemble:*

Braden Pontoli – Music Director

Dr. Lara Urrutia – Piano, Keyboards & Vocals

Sarah Finley, Vocals

Kirk Averitt, Vocals

Agustin Donati, Guitar

Emilia Borja, Percussion

Nigel Deane, Violin 1

Manoela Wunder, Violin 2

Sean Lyons, Viola

Jeness Johnson, Cello

Mawusi Nennonene, Dancer

**42nd Annual Session of the California-Pacific Annual Conference**  
**Plenary 1**  
**3:00 p.m. (PDT)**

**Call to Order** - Bishop Dottie Escobedo-Frank called the plenary session to order.

Bishop Escobedo-Frank welcomed the Annual Conference by offering greetings in the various languages represented among its members. The Bishop introduced the conference staff and the moderators serving participants joining online. It was announced that a different District Lay Leader would join the Bishop during each plenary session; Mele Maka was welcomed in that role for the opening plenary. The Bishop expressed gratitude for the leadership guiding the Conference's work and recognized special guest Bishop Manuel Ruelas López of Mexico, who was present for the session.

**Opening Business** - Rev. Bob Rhodes, Conference Secretary

Rev. Rhodes welcomed Bishop Escobedo-Frank and the people of the Cal-Pac Conference, both online and in person. Rev. Rhodes instructed the attendees in person and online on voting procedures and protocols.

Rev. Rhodes led us through a sample voting session with two test votes. Rev. Rhodes discussed the upcoming jurisdictional votes coming up. Test questions were sent to both laity and clergy to test this technology. Rev. Rhodes said that we are a connectional group, so please share the wisdom you all bring to this gathering.

**Opening Motions** - Rev. Bob Rhodes

**Motion #1**

Rev. Won-Seok Yuh: May I invite our tech wizards to rise and who volunteered to help you get signed in. Please check with them if you need assistance.

Rev. Rhodes moved to set the bar of the 42nd Annual Session of the California-Pacific Conference to be:

Members of the Conference as specified by the Discipline and the Rules of the Conference as well as lay members of the Board of Ordained Ministry; the Bishop's Secretary; and such other persons as specified by the Bishop and approved by the Conference; authenticated and connected through the MeetingPulse platform; present in our broadcast location(s); and/or present in the Flores Ballroom of the La Quinta Resort & Spa, in La Quinta, California.

Staff and technical crew.

And that the Registrar and others designated by the Registrar shall ensure that participants are among those named in #1 and #2.

Rev. Rhodes moved to approve Motion #1.

**Bishop Escobedo-Frank called for a vote.** It was supported.

**Motion #2**

I move that the Agenda in the Participant Guide be the official agenda of this 42nd Annual Session of the California-Pacific Conference, and that the Agenda Chair and/or Conference Secretary be authorized to make necessary adjustments in consultation with the Bishop.

Rev. Rhodes moved to approve Motion #2.

**Bishop Escobedo-Frank called for a vote.** It was supported.

**Motion #3**

I move that the proceedings published in the UM Daily be the official minutes of this 42nd Annual Session of the California-Pacific Conference after they are corrected, edited and approved.

Rev. Rhodes moved to approve Motion #3.

**Bishop Escobedo-Frank called for a vote.** It was supported.

**Motion #4**

I move that the registration forms and the Registrar's list of those who have signed in to the online platform(s) shall be used as the official roll call of the 42nd Annual Session of the California-Pacific Conference.

Rev. Rhodes moved to approve Motion #4.

**Bishop Escobedo-Frank called for a vote.** It was supported.

**Motion #5**

I move that all resolutions not adopted by the end of this 42nd Annual Session of the California-Pacific Conference be referred to the appropriate entities.

Rev. Rhodes moved to approve Motion #5.

**Bishop Escobedo-Frank called for a vote.** It was supported.

**Orders of the Day** - Rev. Cathie Capp, Agenda Chair

Rev. Capp presented the Orders of the Day and moved the Orders of the Day.

**Bishop Escobedo-Frank called for a vote.** It was supported.

**Announcements** - Rev. Won-Seok Yuh

Rev. Yuh welcomed the people of the California-Pacific Conference.

Rev. Yuh discussed the microphone procedures:

For online attendees, please enter the appropriate phrase: For, Against, Question, Amendment, Motion, Point of Order, Personal Privilege. This helps the moderators cue the process.

When the Bishop recognizes you, please state:

- Name
- Self-Identification
- Church or Ministry Context you are a part of
- Clergy or laity
- Your purpose as to what you are speaking to.

All information is made available at the California-Pacific websites: [calpacumc.org/ac2026](http://calpacumc.org/ac2026) and [calpacumc.org/secretary](http://calpacumc.org/secretary). Please do not use video while on Wi-Fi.

If you have an amendment or motion, in person or online, you need to put them in writing. To do so, go to [calpacumc.org/ac2026/legislation](http://calpacumc.org/ac2026/legislation). Once again, the technical helpers/wizards were introduced and highlighted. Individual credentials were highlighted for voting procedures.

Rev. Yuh shared where all the Annual Conference information is located on MeetingPulse, and how to find your personal Conference schedule. Page 5 of the Participant Guide also shares the microphone procedures and the protocol of coming to the microphone.

The following legislation has been uploaded since the Pre-Conference: Recommendations 26-12 to 26-19, Resolutions 26-03 to 26-06; Rule 26-02 as corrected; and Rules 26-03 and 26-04. Housekeeping items were discussed, along with information regarding mental wellness provided by Rachel Gipson during the Conference, and an invitation to use MeetingPulse for technical questions.

Additional information was provided for those attending the Annual Conference in person.

**Land Acknowledgment** – Rev. Greg Douglass and Dr. Kim Marcus

Rev. Douglass introduced a modified Land Acknowledgment. Dr. Kim Marcus, a Cahuilla Spiritual Leader, was invited by the Conference to welcome us to the lands of his people. The welcome will be followed by a brief time of ceremony, during which they request that no filming take place. A Return Ceremony will also be offered today.

Dr. Marcus offered a welcome in the Cahuilla language, followed by an English translation. He acknowledged the gathering's location on traditional Cahuilla land and shared the cultural and spiritual significance of the area, noting that the land was entrusted to the people by the Almighty to care for rather than own. He spoke of the region's history, its original name, and his ancestral connections to the site, including family ties dating back generations. Dr. Marcus welcomed attendees, encouraged them to honor and appreciate the sacredness of the land, expressed gratitude for the Land Acknowledgment, and thanked the Conference organizers for the invitation before concluding the ceremony.

Rev. Gregory Douglass introduced a time of ceremony, explaining that the giving of gifts was an acknowledgment of relationship and kinship. He recognized Lori Meaders and Suanne Ware-Diaz for their leadership in the ceremony. Representing the Kiowa people, Suanne Ware-Diaz presented Dr. Marcus with a ceremonial gift and words of thanksgiving and recognition. Dr. Marcus was also wrapped in a ceremonial blanket, symbolizing the ways communities care for and honor one another throughout life.

Bishop Escobedo-Frank and Rev. Douglass each presented gifts to Dr. Marcus. In response, Dr. Marcus expressed gratitude for the offering of tobacco as a sign of respect and thanked the conference for the return of items belonging to his people.

Bishop Escobedo-Frank offered a prayer of blessing. Rev. Douglass noted that although an honorarium had been offered to Dr. Marcus, he chose to donate it to the 580 Café in support of the gathering.

**General and Jurisdictional Delegate Nominations** – Rev. Bob Rhodes

We have received a number of nominations for both clergy and laity. This is a time to receive nominations from the floor. More nominations than have been published in the reports have been given. If you see names on these slides, then those people do not need to be nominated.

We have both Clergy and Lay Persons who have been nominated.

Lay Nominees:

Maikolo Brown; Gayle Fisher; Rosie Guadarrama; Erin Hawkins; Ana Goar Johnson; Young Mae Kim; Sonya Lee; Mele Maka; Sharon McCart; Michael Mitchell; Rachel Rhodes-Wickett Gipson; Jason Takagi; Dione Taylor; Monalisa S. Tu’itahi; Connor Walden; Cathy Wilson.

Clergy Nominees:

Sunny Ahn; Amy Aitken; Israel Alvaran; Richard Bentley; Lea Booth; Thomas Choi; Jonathan Chute; Christy Ann Clark; Drew Davis; Sione Finau; Brian Suk-Boo Lee; Moonyoung Lee; Melissa MacKinnon; Allison Mark; Brian Parcel; Mary Ann Pickard; Bob Rhodes; Stephanie Rice; Brent Ross; Molly Vetter; Won-Seok Yuh; Charlene Zuill

You are invited to go to a microphone to nominate a person and state whether they are clergy or laity. For those online, if you wish to offer a nomination, please go to the “go to mic” tab.

Scott Andrews, Clergy, Cal Heights Long Beach: We in the back cannot read the names of those who have been nominated. Can they please be enlarged?

The slides were shown again.

- Scott Caprio, Laity, First United, San Diego – I would like to nominate Lay Person Frederick “Rick” Cook III
- Frank Wulf, Clergy, Echo Park & La Plaza – I would like to nominate Lay Person Guillermo Torres.
- Yoshi Kuramoto, San Pedro UMC, Clergy – I nominate Kevin Kang, Lay Delegate
- Leah Switzer, Van Nuys UMC, Laity – I nominate Laity, Ana-Haydeé Urda

Rev. Rhodes:

Because we will be voting on this later during this Conference, it would be good for you to know about these nominees. A document will be published this evening with information on the nominees. If your name was lifted up in some way, and you would like to have information included, please go to the nominee form on MeetingPulse and fill it out.

## COSROW / 70th Anniversary Ordination of Women – Rev. Stephanie Rice and Ellen Evans Agee, Co-Chairs for COSROW

Rev. Stephanie Rice:

We are celebrating a very important milestone in our Methodist History.

A video was presented by COSROW, which shared resources provided by COSROW to assist with celebrating the 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the ordination of women, and resources to support trauma care regarding sexual harassment and abuse.

Ellen Agee:

The primary purpose of this commission is to challenge the United Methodist Church, including its general agencies, institutions, and connectional structures, to a continuing commitment to the full and equal responsibility and participation of women in the total life and mission of the Church, sharing fully in the power and the policymaking at all levels of the Church's life (*The Book of Discipline*, P.2102)

Rev. Rice:

We have been focusing on creating boundaries and sexual ethics training. Here is what is next:

- God of the Bible: A study on inclusive language for God. Every Wednesday in July at 7:00 p.m. on Zoom.
- Sexual Ethics: Writing a Sexual Ethics policy for clergy and lay staff in collaboration with conference leadership.
- Do No Harm: GCSRW Conference, November 12-14, 2026 online.

Ellen Agee:

One of the main roles of COSROW at the Annual Conference is for us to monitor who is getting heard, and who is speaking. We are grateful to the Bishop, the Conference staff and the Sessions Team for their support of the monitoring efforts.

What is Monitoring?

- A responsibility outlined in the Book of Discipline
- Observing with intention to help us grow in self-awareness
- Documenting self-identified gender, race, age and status (clergy or lay) of those who speak.

How it works:

- When you step to the mic state your name clearly and loudly, whether you are clergy or lay, your local church.
- Monitors collect names and document observations
- Data is compiled to create an aggregate, anonymous report
- Initial findings reported on Saturday
- Full report sent to the Bishop, Conference, and GCSRW

The 70<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Women's Ordination was lifted up, and information was given about the history of women in the Methodist Church. The first clergy woman ordained as a Deacon was Rev. Nan Self, and the first ordained Elder was Rev. Faith Conklin in 1974.

40% of active clergy in Cal Pac are women, and we continue to educate, train and equip women for leadership in churches. Our female siblings in the Southern Baptist Convention were lifted up. An invitation for women in the Cal-Pac Conference to join COSROW was extended.

### **Calgary Conference Blessing** - Bishop Dottie Escobedo-Frank

The Council of Bishops is hosting this gathering. We have five participants attending:

Erin Hawkins  
Allison Mark  
Yoshi Kuramoto  
Rachel Gipson  
Martin Finau

They ask for our partnership in prayer and imagination. The Council of Bishops were called to Spirit-Filled, Christ-Centered Imagination. The theme is “Emboldened by the Spirit – imagining the Church that is yet to be.” It brings together Bishops, General Secretaries, Clergy, Laity, and young adults from across the Conference. Each Conference will have a young adult under the age of 35 representing them. This design will draw from Scripture and our Wesleyan history, which teaches us to ask three central questions: What are we teaching? What does it mean to love boldly, serve joyfully, and lead courageously? How will we become people who consistently live in this vision?

They also added two more questions – How do we do it? Why do we do it?

This is deeply rooted work grounded in who we are as people called Methodists, while being open to what God is calling us to become.

A survey was taken in 2025, and we gathered hopes and feedback from United Methodists around the world. Those responses have been prayerfully analyzed as testimonies to the hopes and holy discontent of God’s people. We have been engaged in a worldwide season of learning through webinars. Love Boldly occurred in January; Serve Joyfully in February; and Lead Courageously in March. On April 25th, a virtual pre-gathering was held with breakout groups engaging in focused ecclesiological discernment, which were monitored by GCSRW to ensure inclusiveness.

We have organized into five covenant groups around these areas:

- Discipleship
- Leadership
- Impact
- Stewardship
- Accountability

We are engaging younger generations, deepening disciple formation, and elevating global and connectional voices.

This leadership gathering will not be a legislative body; instead, it is consultative and exploratory, feeding into future discernment processes.

This image shaped our work: Becoming Good Ancestors. All of us are heirs of the faith and ancestors in the making. Our young people are watching. They are watching how we handle conflict and diversity. How we care for creation, how we confront racism and honor voices from the margins. They are watching. To be good ancestors means three things:

1. We tell the truth.
2. We refuse to hoard power or privilege.
3. We sow seeds whose harvest we may never see. We make decisions for the next 50 years, not just the next budget cycle.

We ask that you pray for the participants gathering in Calgary. Pray for the Bishops, the general secretaries and the young adults. Pray for wisdom, hope, clarity, and trust that the Spirit is calling us into greater vitality and engagement. When we return in November, we will share what we learned. Start now having conversations in our local churches to serve boldly and to love courageously in your context.

Together we are living and writing a chapter in the story of the UMC that generations will come to. Did we choose faith over fear? Let us choose to be good ancestors. May God root us in steadfast love and breathe fresh wind into our hearts and give us courage for the journey ahead.

Bishop Dottie Escobedo-Frank offered a prayer of blessing.

**Lay Servant Ministries Recognition** – Troy Goar Johnson, Conference LSM Director and Mele Maka, Conference Lay Leader

Bishop Dottie Escobedo-Frank invited Mele Maka, Conference Lay Leader, Cathy Wilson, and Troy Goar Johnson, Conference Lay Servant Ministries Director to come forward.

**Troy Goar Johnson:**

Today we celebrate a meaningful milestone in Lay Ministry. We are proud to present these dedicated individuals who have faithfully completed their coursework and training to become Certified Laity. Through study, prayer and commitment, they have answered God's call to grow in service, leadership and proclamation.

As they step forward, they are equipped not only with knowledge, but with a deeper passion to serve Christ and the Church – ready to share the Word, uplift communities and help transform the world through their ministry.

Let us recognize and support them as they continue this important journey. Friends, please join me in thanking our newly certified laity who are leading, serving and loving.

The congregation joined in celebrating and honoring the Certified Laity:

We celebrate and honor those who have answered the call to serve with faith, compassion, and dedication. Your commitment to ministry and leadership is a true blessing to the churches and communities of our conference. Thank you for stepping forward in faith. Thank you for your servant hearts. Thank you for making a difference. Thank you and we appreciate you!

**Candidates Certifying as Lay Speakers:**

Cristina Barrientos (North District) - Unfortunately, Cristina could not be with us today.  
Kimberly Emerson (West District) - Unfortunately, Kimberly could not be with us today.

Karen Field (Hawaii District)  
Nancy Fuentes (North District)  
Ana Goar Johnson (West District)  
Odilon Gomez (South District) - Unfortunately, Odilon could not be with us today.  
Angela Lopez (East District)  
Ana Molestina (West District)  
Lourdes Muratalla (South District) - Unfortunately, Lourdes could not be with us today.  
María Luisa Najera (South District)  
Marco Salinas Alvarez (South District)

#### Certified Lay Minister Recognition

##### **Troy Goar Johnson:**

This year, we have one person who has completed the requirements to become a Certified Lay Minister. In 2023, she became a Certified Lay Speaker and began courses to become a Certified Lay Minister, after feeling a deeper call to lay ministry. I am happy to announce our newest California-Pacific Certified Lay Minister, Melissa Basch (South District).

This concludes our Lay Servant Ministries certifications.

#### **Conference Staff Recognition** – Erin Hawkins

##### **Retirement Videos** – Media Team

MJ Buist – Diaconal Minister, Anaheim UMC

##### **Instructions** – Rev. Bob Rhodes

Information was given regarding nominees for General and Jurisdictional Conferences. The Celebration of Ministry Dinner is in Fiesta 1-8. Laity Session will take place at 7:00 p.m. in Fiesta and the Clergy Session is also at 7:00 p.m. in Flores Ballroom.

#### **Closing Prayer** – Mele Maka, Conference Lay Leader

## **42<sup>nd</sup> Annual Session of the California-Pacific Annual Conference**

### **Clergy Executive Session**

**7:00 p.m. (PDT)**

Bishop Dottie Escobedo-Frank offered the opening prayer.

Bishop Dottie Escobedo-Frank welcomed the Clergy members and the Board of Ordained Ministry and called the session to order. She clarified who was entitled to be present, which included Elders and Deacons in Full Connection, Provisional & Associate Members, Licensed Local Pastors, and Laity serving on the Board of Ordained Ministry.

Bishop Escobedo-Frank introduced Greg Batson, Chair of the Board of Ordained Ministry for the first action item.

#### **Rev. Greg Batson, Chair of the Board of Ordained Ministry:**

Good evening, Bishop Escobedo-Frank and members of the Annual Conference. In addition to the lay members of the Board of Ordained Ministry, we respectfully request that certain other laity, who are vital to our work today, be allowed to be present in this session.

The laity assisting with the media and technical systems: Rod Sprott (Pensions and Health Benefits Chair); Manuel Vargas (Wespath Client Relations Manager); Cathy Wilson (BOM Associate Director); Margaret Irwin (Episcopal Office). We also request that if they are present, Adel Torino (Elder from Bulacan Philippines Conference) and guest Bishop Ruelas-López be admitted with no vote to clergy session.

**Bishop Escobedo-Frank called for a vote and the motion was supported.**

#### **Rev. Greg Batson:**

Thank you Bishop and members present. We will now hear the Clergy Pensions and Health Benefits announcements from Rod Sprott and Manuel Vargas.

Announcements were made regarding Clergy Pensions:

#### **Rod Sprott:**

This past year has been a big change in the pension program. Getting started into Compass was a challenge for many people. Everyone stepped up and did what they needed to do and made the transition work well. I would like to also say that we need members of the Board. Please let the Conference know if you are interested.

#### **Manuel Vargas:**

I have three reminders – as Rod mentioned, we started Compass at the beginning of the year. We now have the ability to make online changes to contributions and your elections. On January 1, 2027, there will be an auto-escalation. The automatic contribution was at 4%. There will be an increase up to 5% on January 1, 2027. The cap is 5% unless you make an election yourself. Also, there is a student loan provision – if you are unable to make the 4% contribution and you are making payments on loans, you will have that counted

toward your matching component. I will be here for the next few days, so please find us if you have any questions.

**Bishop Escobedo-Frank:**

Thank you, Board of Pensions, and Wespath for your announcements. Thank you to Pensions for your report. We now move on to the Board of Ordained Ministry report from Chair of the Board, Greg Batson.

**Rev. Greg Batson:**

Thank you, Bishop Escobedo-Frank and greetings to all our colleagues in ministry.

This year marks two important milestones for clergy in the United Methodist Church. In 1956, women were granted full clergy rights in the Methodist Church. While women have led our church through their preaching and service since the beginning of Methodism, we celebrate the past seventy years of ordained ministry in our denomination.

We also recognize the thirtieth anniversary of creation of the Order of Deacons in the United Methodist Church in 1996. Deacons are called and ordained to ministry of Word, Service, Compassion and Justice, connecting the church and community. Deacons have full and equal clergy status to elders and are essential members of our Conference and the Church. We are celebrating these important milestones throughout our session this week – in the Clergy Orders lunch held earlier today, in our plenary sessions, and in the Ordination Service this Saturday.

In addition to the ongoing work of the Board, I want to report on two efforts to increase our awareness and improve our processes. In September 2025, members of the BOM, the District Committees of Ordained Ministry (DCOM) and extended Cabinet attended a training on disabilities awareness. Led by the Rev. Jonathan Campbell, Co-Chair of the United Methodist Association of Ministers with Disabilities, this training provided a valuable introduction to understanding the needs of candidates with disabilities in the ordination process. This training helped us to fulfill our denominational and conference commitment to training requirements as we seek to support all candidates in their journey.

We also continued our work on offering our candidates psychological assessments in their primary language. In response to the legislation introduced at the 2025 Annual Conference, BOM members and Connectional Ministries have met to discuss this topic. We are working with the Executive Director and staff of the Samaritan Counseling Center that does this work for our Conference to expand the options available to our candidates. We are also planning a listening session this fall with those who have experienced this process to address difficulties that have arisen in the past. This work is ongoing, but we are making progress to ensure a more equitable process for all.

Clergy colleagues, it takes a lot of work to get to this point, and I would like to thank all the very hard-working members of the Board of Ordained Ministry, who have spent countless hours reading papers from candidates, sitting in interviews, and following up with candidates.

I especially want to recognize Cathy Wilson, the Associate Director serving this Board. Her wealth of knowledge and attention to detail are vital to our work. She works tirelessly on behalf of Board members and candidates alike. Thank you, Cathy.

I also give thanks for the people who filled leadership roles on this Board, some of whom will be presenting today, as we work our way through the Disciplinary Questions.

By now all clergy should have received the 2026 DQs, which you may refer to as we go over the Disciplinary Questions. Some of these questions require a vote and are marked with a letter “(V)” and others do not. We will only be going through those items that require a Vote today.

Please be sure that you have the link you received from the Annual Conference for voting, as we will be using the online system.

As a reminder, only Elders and Deacons in Full Connection and members of the Board of Ordained Ministry, including the lay members, may vote on matters of commissioning, ordination, character, and Conference relations of our clergy.

Provisional and Associate Members, Licensed Local Pastors and appointed clergy from other Annual Conferences may not vote during this session. Those appointed from other denominations who have submitted the required documents may also vote except on specific matters of ordination.

At this time, we invite the appointive Cabinet to share any updates to the Disciplinary Questions that they may have.

Cabinet Members were invited to the microphones.

Rev. Garth Gilliam, North District Superintendent - I wish to make sure our records are accurate. Local Pastor Glenn Hoskins has transferred his credentials on June 3rd to the Pacific Northwest, so he needs to be moved to 15c for transfer to a DCOM in another Annual Conference.

Rev. Moonyoung Lee, East District Superintendent – Question 16 Lona Renee Seymour. She is not approved as a Local Pastor.

Finally, if you have any editorial corrections such as misspelling and other pertinent revisions that do not have any impact on action items, we ask you to email those to Cathy Wilson at: [cwilson@calpacumc.org](mailto:cwilson@calpacumc.org)

At this time, I call upon Eva Thai-Erwin, the Board Registrar, for the next business items.

**Rev. Eva Thai-Erwin:**

Thank you, Greg. Good evening, Bishop, esteemed colleagues, and members of the Board of Ordained Ministry. It's with heartfelt appreciation that I present the work of our dedicated Board.

Over the past year, they've served with unwavering diligence and faith, shepherding new members into our connection.

As we proceed with today's agenda, our first order of business is the election of both provisional and full members.

For your reference, detailed information on each candidate can be found on page 19 of the Disciplinary Questions.

The Board proudly presents the 2026 candidates for provisional membership and membership in Full Connection.

The candidates are invited to enter and are escorted to the stage.

Candidates, welcome to the clergy session. Please step forward as your names are called.

For provisional membership and commissioning on the ELDER track, the Board presents:

- Ruben Esponda
- Viliami Ongo Koli
- Kiana Nicholson
- Zicong Li
- Bridie Charlotte Roberts

For ordination as a DEACON in full connection, the Board presents:

- Brian Tipton

For ordination as ELDERS in full connection, the Board presents:

- Martin Finau
- Christian Jung
- Sejin Kaleb Oh
- Kimberly Ports

Thank you, candidates. In a moment, we will invite you to step outside of the ballroom as we proceed with the approval process. In your absence, Karl Stuckenberg, Provisional Membership Registrar, will introduce each commissioning candidate and will present your provisional membership for approval.

Following a similar process, Greg Batson will introduce each Deacon and Elder candidate and will present your full connectional membership for approval. We lift up Amy Aitken, Full Connectional Registrar in our prayers. She is not feeling well and will not be with us for this Annual Conference.

Candidates, please follow Greg and exit the ballroom.

**Rev. Karl Stuckenberg, Assistant Registrar for Provisional Membership:**

Bishop Escobedo-Frank, members and guests of the Clergy Session, today I have the privilege to present to you the election of the 2026 class of provisional members which needs a 3/4 majority vote of the clergy session. If you would like to follow along in the DQ file, you will find a list of our candidates on page 7 under Disciplinary Question 25.

Each year, we share what the Board has seen in these candidates. This year, we asked the candidates what they are excited about in their new ministry, and we also asked for a fun fact.

The Board moved to approve Ruben Esponda for provisional membership and commissioning on Elder track. The candidate was introduced.

**Bishop Escobedo-Frank called for a vote. It was supported.**

The Board moved to approve Viliami Ongo Koli for provisional membership and commissioning on Elder track. The candidate was introduced.

**Bishop Escobedo-Frank called for a vote. It was supported.**

The Board moved to approve Kiana Nicholson for provisional membership and commissioning on Elder track. The candidate was introduced.

**Bishop Escobedo-Frank called for a vote. It was supported.**

The Board moved to approve Zicong Li for provisional membership and commissioning on Elder track. The candidate was introduced.

**Bishop Escobedo-Frank called for a vote. It was supported.**

The Board moved to approve Bridie Charlotte Roberts for provisional membership and commissioning on Elder track. The candidate was introduced.

**Bishop Escobedo-Frank called for a vote. It was supported.**

Rev. Karl Stuckenberg offered a prayer for those received as provisional members.

**Rev. Greg Batson, Chair of the Board of Ordained Ministry:**

As Bishop Escobedo-Frank shared earlier that Rev. Aitken is not feeling well, and I will pinch-hit on her behalf.

Rev. Batson presented each candidate for election for full conference membership and ordination. The gathering was reminded that election to full connection membership and ordination requires a 3/4 majority vote of the clergy session.

The Board moved to approve Brian Tipton for ordination as Deacon in Full Connection. The candidate was introduced.

**Bishop Escobedo-Frank called for a vote. It was supported.**

The Board moved to approve Martin Finau for ordination as Elder in Full Connection. The candidate was introduced.

**Bishop Escobedo-Frank called for a vote. It was supported.**

The Board moved to approve Christian Jung for ordination as Elder in Full Connection. The candidate was introduced.

**Bishop Escobedo-Frank called for a vote. It was supported.**

The Board moved to approve Sejin Kaleb Oh for ordination as Elder in Full Connection. The candidate was introduced.

**Bishop Escobedo-Frank called for a vote. It was supported.**

The Board moved to approve Kimberly Ports for ordination as Elder in Full Connection. The candidate was introduced.

**Bishop Escobedo-Frank called for a vote. It was supported.**

Rev. Batson offered a prayer for those to be ordained.

**Diane Rehfield, Interim Conference Relations Chair:**

Friends, let's now turn our attention to the matter of transfers. The clergy transfer process in our Conference involves a period of service, Bishop and Cabinet recommendations, and a Board of Ordained Ministry review. We invite them now to exit the ballroom and enter after they have been approved. For your reference, the names of the transfer candidates can be found on page 8 under Question 26d of the Disciplinary Questions.

For Provisional Membership on the Elder track through transfer from another Methodist denomination, the Board Recommends Baldwin Avendano (Metodista de Mexico)

The Board moved to approve Baldwin Avendano for Provisional Membership on the Elder track through transfer from another Methodist denomination (§347.1, simple majority). The candidate was introduced.

**Bishop Escobedo-Frank called for a vote. It was supported.**

For Provisional Membership on the Elder track through transfer from another Denomination, the Board Recommends Riju Jayan (Church of South India)

The Board moved to approve Riju Jayan for Provisional Membership on the Elder track through transfer from another Denomination (§347.2, simple majority). The candidate was introduced.

**Bishop Escobedo-Frank called for a vote. It was supported.**

Ms. Rehfield offered a prayer for those transferred into our Conference.

**Rev. Eva Thai-Erwin:**

Bishop, as outlined in Paragraph 236, the clergy session is required to hold an annual vote on the continued preparation for ordination of our provisional members. Their names are listed on page 8 under Question 26a of our Disciplinary Questions. A simple majority vote is needed to proceed:

- Bradley Biggerstaff
- Sylina Kidd
- Heather KinKennon
- Moon Kong
- Maria Longley
- Manuel Lopez (Lopez-Reyes)

- Molly Lorden
- Mark Maddix
- Derek Nguyen
- Royce Porter, Sr.

The Board moved to approve the names listed under Disciplinary Question 26a (§326, simple majority).

**Bishop Escobedo-Frank called for a vote. It was supported.**

**Rev. Eva Thai-Erwin:**

Now that we've had the pleasure of welcoming our new clergy members and reinstating our provisional members, let's transition to the remaining Disciplinary Questions, starting from the very first page.

Bishop, we turn to Question 13, ¶605.7 states, "Board of Ordained Ministry may make inquiry of each district superintendent about each ordained minister in the district and make one report of the Bishop and the Conference in open session."

Question 13 does not require a vote, but the Board needs to make a report on the number of clergy who are under review. Bishop, this we year we have NONE under review.

Moving on, we now turn to Questions 14(a) regarding the Administrative Review Committee.

The Board moved to approve the names listed under Disciplinary Question 14(a) to serve on the Administrative Review Committee (§636, majority).

**Bishop Escobedo-Frank called for a vote. It was supported.**

I now present the certified candidates for Ordained Ministry, as listed under Question 15(a) on page 2 of the Disciplinary Questions.

While approval of these candidates ultimately rests with the District Committee on Ordained Ministry, I would like to express our collective support for them today. Their dedication and commitment are commendable. Let us lift them up, and on the count of 3, I invite you to shout out the name of a certified candidate that you know of!

May we be reminded that this process requires great discernment, and we offer these three persons listed for our continued pastoral care and support as they discern their next steps.

We now turn to Question 16 on page 3. This question lists those who have completed the studies for the license as a Local Pastor, are approved, but are not currently appointed.

The Board moved approval of Disciplinary Question 16 as printed and as corrected today (§315, 3/4).

**Bishop Escobedo-Frank called for a vote. It was supported.**

Please take a moment to review Question 17 on pages 3 to 5. These are the lists of our full and part-time Licensed Local Pastors who are approved and given appointments, with the correction that was made today regarding Glenn Hoskins.

From these two lists, I would like to draw your attention to our first-year Licensed Local Pastors:

Kumrila (Akum) Mongzar, Sela Taupaki, Hanna Jang, Khemaron Lay, Parris Mann, Laura Perez, and Joshua Ryoo

The Board moved to approve DQ 17 as printed (3/4)

**Bishop Escobedo-Frank called for a vote. It was supported.**

For the rest of the Licensed Local Pastors listed under Question 17, the Discipline requires a simple majority vote for their continuance as Licensed Local Pastors.

The Board moved approval of the remaining names listed in Disciplinary Question 17 (§318, simple majority)

**Bishop Escobedo-Frank called for a vote. It was supported.**

Bishop Dottie Escobedo-Frank offered a prayer for the Licensed Local Pastors.

**Rev. Eva Thai-Erwin:**

We continue to page 7 to review Question 22. These are clergy in good standing from other Christian denominations serving in our Annual Conference while retaining their denominational affiliation. The Book of Discipline requires this list to be approved annually by the Clergy Session. It needs a simple majority vote.

The Board moved approval of Disciplinary Question 22 as printed (§346.2, majority)

**Bishop Escobedo-Frank called for a vote. It was supported.**

I now invite our Board's Interim Conference Relations Chair, Diane Rehfield, to come and present the next action items to us. As Diane is coming up, I want to lift up our previous Conference Relations Chair, Mark Ulrickson, a blessed soul whom we lost this year. We will always remember his dedication and service to the Board and are thankful for Diane's work as she stepped into the position just a few months ago.

**Diane Rehfield, Interim Conference Relations Chair:**

Bishop and Conference members, please see DQ 42 on page 10. You will find listed there the names of those who have served in ministry and finished their labors and are now in the Church triumphant.

Let us take a moment to hear the names and remember our deceased colleagues:

- George Cisnearos, Jr.
- David Corbin
- Gwen Ehrenborg
- Nancy Goyings
- Steve Islander

- Youngstone Jhun
- Gwen Jones-Lurvey
- Harvey Kemp
- Whan Ki Kim
- Russ Locke
- Frances Materra
- Heisik Oh
- Seungbae Paik
- Janis Specks
- J. Robert (Bob) Stimmel
- Wallace (Lee) Truman
- Mark Ulrickson
- Kirby Laurel Pickus

A prayer was offered for the above.

We now turn to the matter of leaves. Any leaves of absence are granted or renewed by vote of the clergy members in full connection.

Please turn to pages 12 and 13 and take a look at Question 44. Question 44(a)(1) lists names of those going on voluntary leave for LESS than five years. These lists require a simple majority vote to pass.

The Board moved approval of Disciplinary Question 44(a)(1) as printed (§354.2a-c, 3, majority)

**Bishop Escobedo-Frank called for a vote. It was supported.**

Question 44(a)(2) lists names of those going on voluntary leave for MORE than 5 years. This list requires a vote of 2/3 majority.

The Board moved approval of Disciplinary Question 44(a)(2) on personal leave for MORE than 5 years.

**Bishop Escobedo-Frank called for a vote. It was supported.**

Please take a look at Question 46 on page 13. This list contains the names of those granted medical leave. This requires a simple majority vote.

The Board moved approval of Disciplinary Question 46 that lists individuals on medical leave as printed (§357, majority)

**Bishop Escobedo-Frank called for a vote. It was supported.**

We now refer to Question 47 on retirement found on page 13. This is the list of names of those who have entered or who are entering the retired relationship with the Annual Conference after many years of faithful and active ministry.

The following are the clergy who are retiring this year as Elders:

- Jonathan Chute
- William DeBoss
- N. Adiel DePano
- April Herron
- Dohmin Kim
- Paul Kim
- Hakchoon Lim
- James Powell
- Lily Villamin
- Kenneth Walden

The Board moved approval of Disciplinary Question 47(b) those persons retiring (§358.2 of the 2020/2024 Book of Discipline, simple majority)

**Bishop Escobedo-Frank called for a vote. It was supported.**

No vote is needed for Disciplinary Question 49 found on page 13, but we recognize those who are retiring as a Local Pastor as listed:

- Jeri Newell-Davis
- Rafael Rios Garcia

Now please look at Disciplinary Question 72 on page 17. We have a DIACONAL minister who is retiring. We lift up Merrijoy Buist, who is part of the wonderful history of the diaconal ministry.

The Board moved approval of Disciplinary Question 72, the retirement of the Diaconal Minister (2/3 vote)

**Bishop Dottie Escobedo-Frank called for a vote. It was supported.**

Diane Rehfield offered a prayer for the retirees.

**Rev. Eva Thai-Erwin:**

Thank you, Diane. Let's turn to page 17 to look at Question 74(a) in regard to Associate, Provisional, and Full Connection Elders appointed to less than full-time appointments. Question 74(a) lists these names.

The Book of Discipline (§338.2, 342.2) requires the less than fulltime category to be confirmed by a 2/3 vote for those 8 years or less, and 3/4 vote for those after 8 years.

The Board moved approval of Disciplinary Question 74(a) for clergy appointed for less than full-time service for the past 8 years or less as printed (§§338.2, 342.2, 2/3)

**Bishop Dottie Escobedo-Frank called for a vote. It was supported.**

The Board moved approval of Disciplinary Question 74(a) for clergy appointed less than full-time service for more than 8 years (§§338.2, 342.2, 3/4)

**Bishop Dottie Escobedo-Frank called for a vote. It was supported.**

The rest of the report includes other pertinent information such as the contact information of the Orders Executive Committee and the Board's Statement on LGBTQIA+

At this time, I invite Anna Lee Mulford and Martha Morales from the Orders Executive Committee to present their annual report.

Anna Lee Mulford:

Good evening, everyone. If you will allow us, we have a show-and-tell for a few minutes to share with you. She shared the history of the stole she was wearing.

Anna Lee Mulford and Martha Morales:

We come together this year to celebrate two important milestones in the ministry of the United Methodist Church. This is the 70<sup>th</sup> Year Anniversary of the ordination of women in our denomination. We celebrate all the women who came before us, clearing a path for those of us who are following in their footsteps. Faith Conklin is with us this evening and she was the first woman ordained in our Annual Conference.

We are grateful to Stephanie Rice and Ellen Agee, Chairs of COSROW for sharing information about this meaningful anniversary. We also celebrate the 30th anniversary of the ordination of Deacons in full connection. We are grateful for the many deacons who have paved this way. This is the ministry of word, service, justice, compassion, and sacrament. We connect the church with the needs of the world. In 1996, the church recognized that Diaconal ministry is not a stepping-stone, but a permanent calling. It is an important gift to our church and to our neighbors in the world.

If you were a part of that first class of Deacons in Full Connection, please stand so that we can recognize you. Since that time, in the summer of 1996, deacons have worked closely with our Elder siblings. They have been many things - teachers, nurses, music ministers, and so much more. We are grateful for them. In 2024, the General Conference voted to approve the granting of sacramental rights to Deacons. Deacons have been approved by the UMC and General Conference to preside at the sacraments of Holy Communion and Baptism. These sacramental rights are vital to our ministries. We are working to ensure that all people are included in the community of our beloved United Methodist Church.

I invite all the Deacons who are with us today to please stand so that we can recognize you and the work you do.

Thank you to all as we rejoice in these 30 years of Deacon ministry in full connection.

A slide show was shown as part of their presentation, honoring Deacons, past and present.

We honor the relationship between Elders and Deacons, with each responding to their distinct call from God. Distinct, but still united. Our calls are different, but complementary. Over these past 30 years, we have learned from, supported, and encouraged one another in ministry. We have discovered that our different gifts strengthen the church and enrich our communities.

Their commitment and process have strengthened and expanded God's grace. This ministry is not simply about the work we do, but about the relationships we build and the way we help each other. We honor 70 years of woman in ordained ministry and 30 years of deacons in full connection, and we look toward the future with hope. The story is not finished. May these anniversaries inspire future generations.

**Rev. Eva Thai-Erwin:**

I now welcome the Rev. Bob Isip from the Conference Archives and History Committee for his report.

**Rev. Bob Isip:**

I had a year to prepare for this! I would like to let you know that we are hosting an event September 8-10 for the Western Jurisdiction in Hawaii. If you are interested in archives and history, stop by our booth.

I am here to read these milestones, but also to make fun of all of us. I would like to apologize to Rob Fusler, I forgot and did not read his name last year and he had a 25-year anniversary, so let us recognize him for that. We also forgot Diane Rehfield, who celebrated 25 years.

I compare clergy to different kinds of coffee. Some of you are like espresso – you are over the top. Some of you are like gourmet coffee – you cost a little more. Some of you are like McDonalds coffee – not bad and you get the job done. Some of you are like gas station coffee – you are just cheap. If you have worn the same robe your entire career, you are cheap. Or, if you only wear hand me down stoles from retired clergy, then you are cheap. The best appointment for you is a church with a thrift store. Some clergy are like decaf – what's the point? The majority of us are like church coffee – not very good. Church members depend on coffee every Sunday. They rely on coffee and we are like coffee to them because they rely on us for astonishment. I would like to thank Jenifer Gaylord – she keeps track of all the years of anniversaries.

This list does not include a provisional period, but only anniversaries of ordained elders. It is not years of service, but your anniversary as an elder.

I was at a 100-year church anniversary at Normal Heights UMC. There is a worship service and we are about to process in. We are standing together in the Narthex – a couple of clergy, a Bishop and an acolyte, just waiting to get in. The acolyte must have been around 6 years old. She looks at the Bishop and says, "Why are you holding that stick?" The Bishop replied, "I am the Bishop, I'm like a shepherd and this is a shepherd's staff." The acolyte looks at the Bishop and asks, "Yes, but do you know Jesus?" The Bishop says, "Yes, Jesus is in my heart." The Bishop should have ordained the acolyte right then and there!

Please stand when your name is read.

Rev. Isip read the names of clergy marking ordination anniversaries at five-year milestones from 25 to 60 years, inviting each anniversary class to stand and be recognized. The complete list of honorees is recorded in the Conference Journal.

One year I went to Annual Conference and a colleague said to me, “You look young for your age. Another said, “You look old for your age.” And another said, “You look better than your picture.” I was astonished! Then I said, “You too Bishop.” I didn’t really, but I should have. Do you know who that Bishop was? It was not Bishop Dottie.

This concludes my report.

**Rev. Eva Thai-Erwin:**

I have a Bishop story for you too. The Bishop just leaned over and said, “Are we nearly done?” And I said, “It’s Bob.”

Congratulations to all our clergy celebrating milestones in their service.

Bishop Escobedo-Frank, this concludes the Board of Ordained Ministry’s report to the Clergy Session. Thank you!

**Bishop Dottie Escobedo-Frank:**

Thank you, Board of Ordained Ministry, for the hard work put into preparing for this report.

Bishop Dottie Escobedo-Frank offered the Benediction.