

**Exhibit A –
One Church Plan
Petitions**

Exhibit A – One Church Plan Petitions

Petition 1 of 17

Total Number of Pages: 1

Suggested Title: CWF - One Church Plan – Our Theological Task

Discipline Paragraph or *Resolution* Number, if applicable: ¶ 105

General Church Budget Implications: No

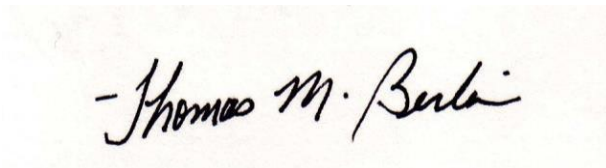
Global Implications: Yes

Amend ¶ 105 by adding new sub-paragraph as follows:

We agree that we are not of one mind regarding human sexuality. As we continue to faithfully explore issues of sexuality, we will honor the theological guidelines of Scripture, reason, tradition and experience, acknowledging that God’s revelation of truth and God’s extension of grace as expressed in Jesus Christ (John 1:14) may cause persons of good conscience to interpret and decide issues of sexuality differently. We also acknowledge that the Church is called through Christ to unity even amidst complexity. We affirm those who continue to maintain that the Scriptural witness does not condone the practice of homosexuality. We believe that their conscience should be protected in the church and throughout society under basic principles of religious liberty. We also affirm those who believe the witness of Scripture calls us to reconsider the teaching of the church with respect to monogamous homosexual relationships.

Date: 6/15/18

Signature of Petitioner: Thomas M. Berlin

A photograph of a handwritten signature in black ink on a light-colored, slightly textured paper. The signature reads "- Thomas M. Berlin" in a cursive, flowing script.

Identification of the Petitioner: on behalf of the Commission on a Way Forward

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Rationale: This addition acknowledges the common theological guidelines that are the sources of the diverse views in our global church regarding human sexuality. It recognizes the desire of the church to fulfill Christ's call to unity while holding a convicted humility toward one another as we honor religious liberty for all.

Petition 2 of 17

Total Number of Pages: 1

Suggested Title: CWF - One Church Plan – Social Principles

Discipline Paragraph or *Resolution* Number, if applicable: ¶ 161.C

General Church Budget Implications: No

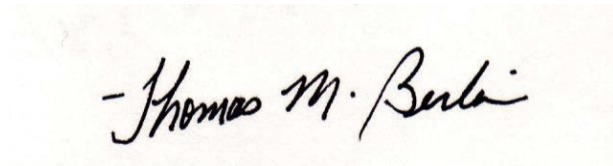
Global Implications: Yes

Amend ¶ 161.C as follows:

C) *Marriage*—We affirm the sanctity of the monogamous marriage covenant that is expressed in love, mutual support, personal commitment, and shared fidelity, traditionally understood as a union of one man and one woman. ~~between a man and a woman.~~ We believe that God’s blessing rests upon such marriage, whether or not there are children of the union. We reject social norms that assume different standards for women than for men in marriage. Where laws in civil society define marriage as union between two adults, no United Methodist clergy shall be required to celebrate or bless a same-sex union. ~~We support laws in civil society that define marriage as the union of one man and one woman.~~

Date: 6/15/18

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Rationale: The traditional understanding of marriage is honored. Religious liberty is intentionally protected for those whose consciences would be impinged if they celebrated a same-sex union in societies where it is allowed.

Petition 3 of 17

Total Number of Pages: 2

Suggested Title: CWF - One Church Plan – Social Principles

Discipline Paragraph or *Resolution* Number, if applicable: ¶ 161.G

General Church Budget Implications: No

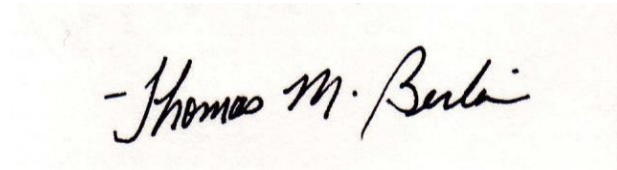
Global Implications: Yes

Amend ¶ 161.G as follows:

G) *Human Sexuality*—We affirm that sexuality is God's good gift to all persons. We call everyone to responsible stewardship of this sacred gift. Although all persons are sexual beings whether or not they are married, sexual relations are affirmed only with the covenant of monogamous, heterosexual marriage between two adults. We deplore all forms of the commercialization, abuse, and exploitation of sex. We call for strict global enforcement of laws prohibiting the sexual exploitation of children and for adequate protection, guidance, and counseling for abused children. All persons, regardless of age, gender, marital status, or sexual orientation, are entitled to have their human and civil rights ensured and to be protected against violence. The Church should support the family in providing age-appropriate education regarding sexuality to children, youth, and adults. We affirm that all persons are individuals of sacred worth, created in the image of God. All persons need the ministry of the Church in their struggles for human fulfillment, as well as the spiritual and emotional care of a fellowship that enables reconciling relationships with God, with others, and with self. ~~The United Methodist Church does not condone the practice of homosexuality and considers this practice incompatible with Christian teaching.~~ We affirm that God's grace is available to all. We will seek to live together in Christian community, welcoming, forgiving, and loving one another, as Christ has loved and accepted us. We implore families and churches not to reject or condemn lesbian and gay members and friends. We commit ourselves to be in ministry for and with all persons.

Date: 6/15/18

Signature of Petitioner: Thomas M. Berlin

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Identification of the Petitioner: on behalf of the Commission on a Way Forward

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Rationale: Sexuality is affirmed as a good gift to all people. Sexual relations are bound by the covenant of monogamous marriage between two adults. The elimination of this language is in recognition that we are not of one mind.

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Total Number of Pages: 1

Suggested Title: CWF - One Church Plan – Qualifications for Ordination

Discipline Paragraph or *Resolution* Number, if applicable: ¶ 304.3

General Church Budget Implications: No

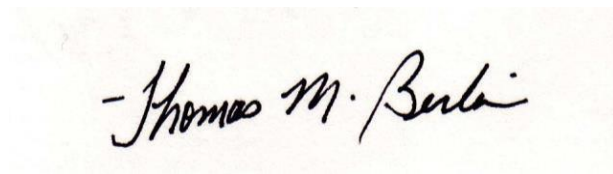
Global Implications: Yes

Amend ¶ 304.3 as follows:

3. While persons set apart by the Church for ordained ministry are subject to all the frailties of the human condition and the pressures of society, they are required to maintain the highest standards of holy living in the world. The responsibility for determining how standards, including standards related to human sexuality, may apply to certification or ordination in a given annual conference falls to the Conference Board of Ordained Ministry and the clergy session of the annual conference. The bishop may choose to seek the non-binding advice of an annual conference session on standards relating to human sexuality for ordination to inform the Board of Ordained Ministry in its work. ~~The practice of homosexuality incompatible with Christian teaching. Therefore self-avowed practicing homosexual persons are not to be certified as candidates, ordained as minister or appointed to serve in the United Methodist Church.~~

Date: 6/15/18

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Rationale: The Conference Board of Ordained Ministry and the clergy session of the annual conference set standards of holy living for clergy. By expanding this responsibility to include standards of human sexuality, they can best serve their missional context. Bishops can seek the non-binding input of the annual conference session.

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Total Number of Pages: 1

Suggested Title: CWF - One Church Plan – Candidacy

Discipline Paragraph or Resolution Number, if applicable: ¶ 310.2.d footnote

General Church Budget Implications: No

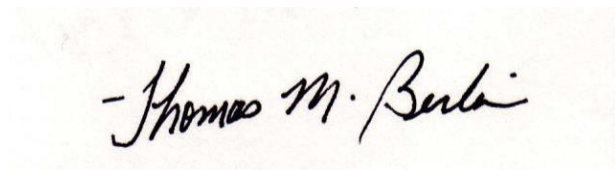
Global Implications: Yes

Amend ¶ 310.2.d footnote as follows.

The General Conference, ~~in response to expressions throughout the Church regarding homosexuality and ordination,~~ reaffirms the present language of the Discipline regarding the character and commitment of persons seeking ordination and affirms its high standards. ...

~~In The Social Principles, the General Conference has said that we “do not condone the practice of homosexuality and consider this practice incompatible with Christian teaching.” Furthermore, the Principles state that “we affirm the sanctity of the marriage covenant that is expressed in love, mutual support, personal commitment, and shared fidelity between two adults between a man and a woman.~~

Date: 6/15/18

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Rationale: This footnote is adjusted to reflect proposed changes in ¶ 161.C and ¶ 161.G.

Petition 6 of 17

Total Number of Pages: 1

Suggested Title: CWF - One Church Plan – Ministry of Deacons

Discipline Paragraph or *Resolution* Number, if applicable: ¶ 329

General Church Budget Implications: No

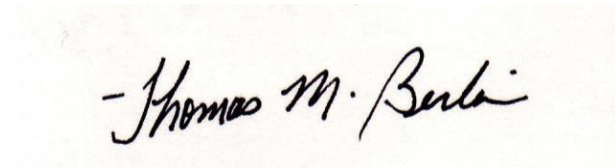
Global Implications: Yes

Amend ¶329 by adding new sub-paragraph after ¶ 329.3

¶ 329.4 In conferences where civil law permits a pastor to perform a same-sex marriage service, no deacon in full connection shall at any time be required or compelled to perform, or prohibited from performing, any marriage, union or blessing of same-sex couples, or of any couples. Each deacon shall have the right to exercise his or her conscience to refuse or agree when requested to perform any marriages, unions, or blessing as a matter of his or her individual religious liberty.

Date: 6/15/18

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Rationale: Deacons currently have the ability to decide whether or not to perform a marriage, union or blessing of heterosexual couples. This ability would be extended to these services for same-sex couples where legal. The right to refuse such a service due to conscience is expressly protected.

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Total Number of Pages: 1

Suggested Title: CWF - One Church Plan – Ministry of an Elder

Discipline Paragraph or *Resolution* Number, if applicable: ¶ 334

General Church Budget Implications: No

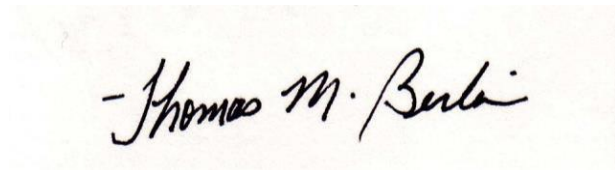
Global Implications: Yes

Amend ¶334 by adding new sub-paragraph after ¶334.5

¶ 334.6 In conferences where civil law permits a pastor to perform same-sex marriage services, no elder shall at any time be required or compelled to perform, or prohibited from performing, any marriage, union or blessing of same-sex couples, or of any couples. Each elder shall have the right to exercise his or her conscience to refuse or agree when requested to perform such marriages, unions, or blessing as a matter of his or her individual religious liberty.

Date: 6/15/18

Signature of Petitioner: Thomas M. Berlin

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Rationale: Elders currently have the ability to decide whether or not to perform a marriage, union or blessing of heterosexual couples. This ability would be extended to these services for same-sex couples where legal. The right to refuse such a service due to conscience is expressly protected.

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Total Number of Pages: 2

Suggested Title: CWF - One Church Plan – Responsibilities of Elders and Licensed Pastors

Discipline Paragraph or *Resolution* Number, if applicable: ¶ 340

General Church Budget Implications: No

Global Implications: Yes

Amend ¶ 340 by adding new sub-paragraph after ¶ 340.2

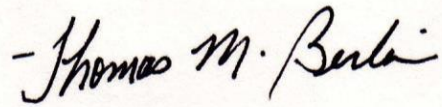
¶ 340.3 a. Each clergy shall have the right to exercise his or her conscience when requested to perform such marriages, unions or blessing as a matter of his or her individual religious liberty.

b. In conferences where civil law permits a pastor to perform same-sex marriage services, no clergy shall at any time be required or compelled to perform, or prohibited from performing, any marriage, union, or blessing of same-sex couples, or of any couples.

c. Clergy who cannot in good conscience continue to serve in a conference based upon that conference's standards for ordination regarding practicing homosexuals, may seek to transfer under ¶ 347, and shall be supported and assisted in that process. Similarly, clergy who cannot in good conscience continue to serve a particular church based on unresolved disagreements over same-sex marriage as communicated by the pastor and Staff-Parish Relations Committee to the district superintendent, shall be reassigned. All clergy with security of appointment shall continue under appointment by the bishop of the annual conference.

Date: 6/15/18

Signature of Petitioner: Thomas M. Berlin

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Rationale: Clergy would be allowed to perform or not perform a marriage, union or blessing of same-sex couples where legal. Clergy who desire transfer from conferences that ordain gay persons could transfer. Continued security of appointment for clergy is affirmed.

Petition 9 of 17

Total Number of Pages: 1

Suggested Title: CWF - One Church Plan – Unauthorized Conduct

Discipline Paragraph or *Resolution* Number, if applicable: ¶ 341.6

General Church Budget Implications: No

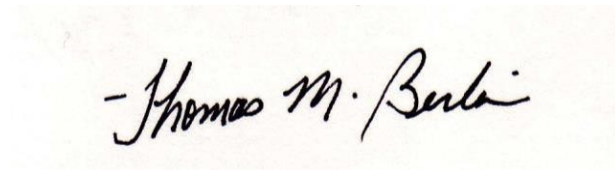
Global Implications: Yes

Amend ¶ 341.6 as follows:

6. Ceremonies that celebrate ~~homosexual unions~~ same-sex marriage shall not be performed
conducted by clergy our ministers and shall not be conducted in our churches on church-owned
property unless the church decides by a majority vote of a Church Conference to adopt a policy to
celebrate same-sex marriage on church property.

Date: 6/15/18

Signature of Petitioner: Thomas M. Berlin

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Rationale: This provision allows local church members to decide what is best for their congregational and missional context related to ceremonies of same-sex marriage on church property. A called Church Conference requires due notification of the meeting and invites all members to participate.

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Total Number of Pages: 1

Suggested Title: CWF - One Church Plan – Ordination by Bishops

Discipline Paragraph or *Resolution* Number, if applicable: ¶ 415.6

General Church Budget Implications: No

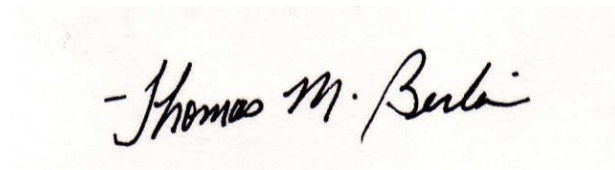
Global Implications: Yes

Amend ¶ 415.6 at its conclusion as follows:

No bishop shall be required to ordain an elder or deacon, commission a deaconess, home missionary, or missionary, or license a local pastor who is a self-avowed practicing homosexual. The Jurisdictional College of Bishops shall provide for the ordination, commissioning, and licensing of all persons recommended by the Board of Ordained Ministry and the clergy session of the annual conference in the bounds of its jurisdiction. All clergy with security of appointment shall continue under appointment by the bishop of the annual conference.

Date: 6/15/18

Signature of Petitioner: Thomas M. Berlin

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Rationale: The religious liberty of bishops who cannot in good conscience commission, license or ordain self-avowed practicing homosexuals is protected. Provision is made for such persons in annual conferences where they are deemed to be duly qualified and approved candidates. Security of appointment for appointed clergy is continued.

Petition 11 of 17

Total Number of Pages: 1

Suggested Title: CWF - One Church Plan – Responsibilities of Bishops

Discipline Paragraph or *Resolution* Number, if applicable: ¶416

General Church Budget Implications: No

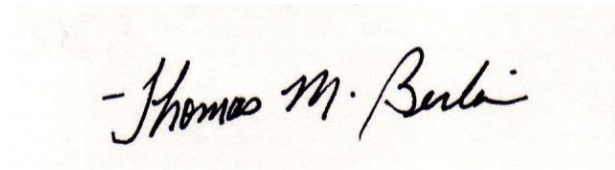
Global Implications: Yes

Amend ¶416 by adding new sub-paragraphs after 416.7: _

8. The bishop shall neither require any pastor to perform nor prohibit any pastor from performing any marriage, union, or blessing of same-sex couples.

9. The bishop shall neither require any church to hold nor prohibit any church from holding a same-sex marriage service on church property.

Date: 6/15/18

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Signature of Petitioner: Thomas M. Berlin

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Rationale: Clarity related to the boundaries of authority for bishops related to marriage, union, or blessing of same-sex couples enables clergy and congregations to know that their religious liberty will be affirmed in the future without penalty or unforeseen consequence.

Petition 12 of 17

Total Number of Pages: 1

Suggested Title: CWF - One Church Plan – Responsibilities of District Superintendents

Discipline Paragraph or *Resolution* Number, if applicable: ¶ 419

General Church Budget Implications: No

Global Implications: Yes

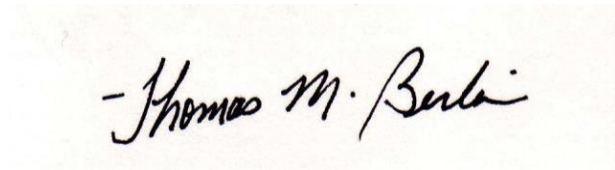
Amend ¶ 419 by adding new sub-paragraphs after 419.12: _

13. The superintendent shall neither require any pastor to perform nor prohibit any pastor from performing any marriage, union, or blessing of same-sex couples.

14. The superintendent shall neither require any church to hold nor prohibit any church from holding a same-sex marriage service on church property or otherwise coerce, threaten, or retaliate against any pastor who exercises his or her conscience to perform or refuse to perform a same-sex marriage.

Date: 6/15/18

Signature of Petitioner: Thomas M. Berlin

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Identification of the Petitioner: on behalf of the Commission on a Way Forward

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Rationale: Clarity related to the boundaries of authority for district superintendents related to marriage, union, or blessing of same-sex couples enables clergy and congregations to

know that their religious liberty will be affirmed in the future without penalty or consequence.

Petition 13 of 17

Total Number of Pages: 1

Suggested Title: CWF - One Church Plan – Business of the Conference

Discipline Paragraph or *Resolution* Number, if applicable: ¶605

General Church Budget Implications: No

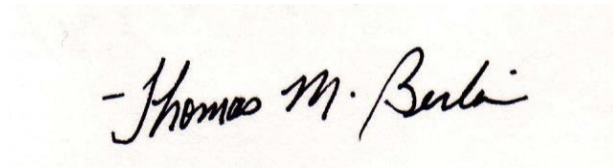
Global Implications: Yes

Amend ¶ 605 by adding new sub-paragraph after 605.9 as follows:

10. At any clergy session of an annual conference, the chairperson of the Board of Ordained Ministry shall, if directed by a vote of the Board of Ordained Ministry, present a motion regarding certification, ordination, and appointment of self-avowed practicing homosexuals. Provided, however, that any clergy session of an annual conference that votes on such matters shall not, without the consent of the presiding bishop, take up any subsequent motion on that issue during any called or special session of annual conference held within 30 full calendar months from the date of such vote regardless of the outcome.

Date: 6/15/18

Signature of Petitioner: Thomas M. Berlin

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Rationale: After receiving a motion from the Board of Ordained Ministry related to the ordination of self-avowed practicing homosexuals, the clergy session will not re-address this matter unless, the Bishop sees a critical need to re-address the question sooner.

Petition 14 of 17

Total Number of Pages: 1

Suggested Title: CWF - One Church Plan – Chargeable Offenses

Discipline Paragraph or *Resolution* Number, if applicable: ¶2702.1

General Church Budget Implications: No

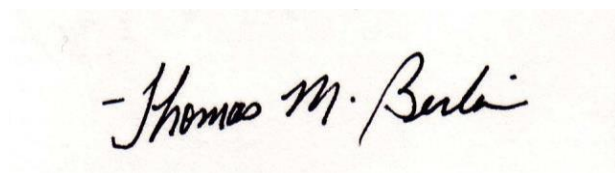
Global Implications: Yes

Amend ¶ 2702.1 as follows:

¶ 2702. 1. A bishop, clergy member of an annual conference (¶ 370), local pastor, clergy on honorable or administrative location, or diaconal minister may be tried when charged (subject to the statute of limitations in ¶ 2702.4) with one or more of the following offenses: (a) immorality including but not limited to, not being celibate in singleness or not faithful in a ~~heterosexual~~ monogamous marriage; (b) practices declared by The United Methodist Church to be incompatible with Christian teachings, ~~including but not limited to: being a self-avowed practicing homosexual; or conducting ceremonies which celebrate homosexual unions; or performing same-sex wedding ceremonies;~~ (c) crime; (d) disobedience to the order and discipline of The United Methodist Church; (e) dissemination of doctrines contrary to the established standards of doctrine of The United Methodist Church; (f) relationships and/or behavior that undermines the ministry of another pastor; (g) child abuse; (h) sexual abuse; (i) sexual misconduct including the use or possession of pornography, (j) harassment, including, but not limited to racial and/or sexual harassment; (k) racial or gender discrimination; or (l) fiscal malfeasance.

Date: 6/15/18

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Rationale: The language is adjusted to reflect proposed changes in ¶ 161.C, ¶ 161.G, ¶ 304.3, and ¶ 341.6.

Petition 15 of 17

Total Number of Pages: 1

Suggested Title: CWF - One Church Plan – Central Conference Implementation Time

Discipline Paragraph or *Resolution* Number, if applicable: ¶543.17

General Church Budget Implications: No

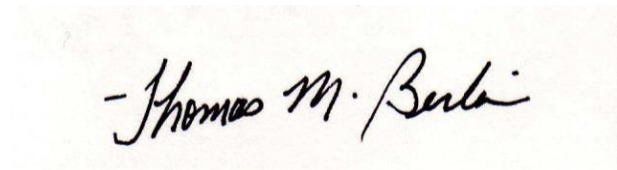
Global Implications: Yes

Amend ¶ 543.17 as follows:

17. In a central conference or provisional central conference using a language other than English, legislation passed by a General Conference shall not take effect until ~~twelve~~ 18 months after the close of that General Conference in order to afford the necessary time to make adaptations and to publish a translation of the legislation that has been enacted ...

Date: 6/15/18

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Rationale: An additional six months give the central conferences the appropriate time to meet, translate the legislation and consider whether they want to make adaptations.

Petition 16 of 17

Total Number of Pages: 1

Suggested Title: CWF - Pension Liabilities

Discipline Paragraph or *Resolution* Number, if applicable: ¶1504

General Church Budget Implications: No

Global Implications: No

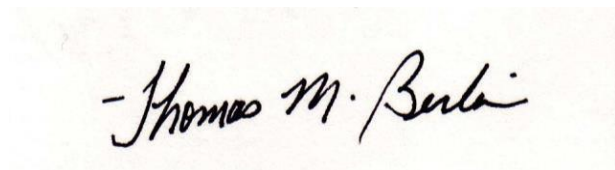
Amend ¶1504, effective as of the close of the 2019 General Conference, by adding a new

subparagraph 23 to read as follows:

If a local church or charge in the United States changes its relationship to The United Methodist Church through closure, abandonment, or release from the trust clause pursuant to ¶2548, ¶2549, or otherwise, notwithstanding whether property with title held by the local church is subject to the trust (under the terms of ¶2501), the local church shall contribute a withdrawal liability in an amount equal to its pro rata share of any aggregate unfunded pension obligations to the annual conference. The General Board of Pension and Health Benefits shall determine the aggregate funding obligations of the annual conference using market factors similar to a commercial annuity provider, from which the annual conference will determine the local church's share.

Date: 6/15/18

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RATIONALE: Local churches that change the nature of their connection to the Church must pay a proportional fair share of the annual conference's aggregate unfunded pension liability using market factors similar to a commercial annuity provider to account for the investment, longevity, and other risks they leave to the Church.

Petition 17 of 17

Total Number of Pages: 2

Suggested Title: CWF - CRSP Amendment

Discipline Paragraph or *Resolution* Number, if applicable: ¶ 1504

General Church Budget Implications: No

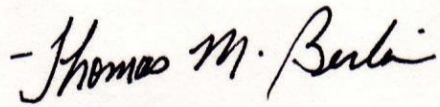
Global Implications: No

Revise the Clergy Retirement Security Program (“CRSP”), which is incorporated by reference in ¶1504.1 of *The Book of Discipline*, including any needed revisions to CRSP section numbering, formatting, pagination, or Table of Contents, effective as of the close of the 2019 General Conference as follows:

The General Board of Pension and Health Benefits is directed by the General Conference to amend the Clergy Retirement Security Program such that active clergy participants who terminate their annual conference relationship under ¶360 of *The Book of Discipline* will be treated as terminated vested participants under the Clergy Retirement Security Program. The terminated vested participant’s accrued pension benefits shall be secured and protected from future disruptions by converting such benefits to an actuarially equivalent account balance, using factors corresponding to those used when determining annual conference plan sponsor contributions to the Clergy Retirement Security Program. Such converted benefits, along with all other retirement account balances, shall be transferred to the United Methodist Personal Investment Plan, a voluntary defined contribution plan maintained by the General Board of Pension and Health Benefits under ¶1504.2. The General Board of Pension and Health Benefits is directed, authorized, and empowered to amend the Clergy Retirement Security Program effective as of the close of the 2019 General Conference and in the manner described above.

Date: 6/15/18

Signature of Petitioner: Thomas M. Berlin

A handwritten signature in black ink on a light-colored background. The signature reads "- Thomas M. Berlin".

Identification of the Petitioner: On behalf of the Commission on a Way Forward

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RATIONALE: The Clergy Retirement Security Program should be amended so active clergy who change their covenant are removed from the defined benefit and annuity risk pools for their former annual conference and the Church, and are provided an actuarially equivalent account balance benefit.