

## **Update on MFSA Analysis of Constitutional Amendments**

### **Judicial Council Rules on US Regional Conference (s)**

Background: In its analysis of the 23 Constitutional Amendments on the Worldwide Church, MFSA addresses the issue of whether the passage of the amendments would *necessitate* the formation of one or more U.S. regional conferences. Our paper states that passage of the amendments would lay the groundwork for one or more regional conferences in the U.S. but that action to form such a regional conference(s) would need to be taken by General Conference 2012.

**Judicial Council Ruling:** This issue was addressed at the most recent meeting of the United Methodist Judicial Council (April 2009). According to Judicial Council ruling #1100, passage of the Worldwide Church amendments would “*mandate* creation of a regional conference or regional conferences in the United States.” The decision continues that if the amendments are passed, “the 2012 General Conference *must* enact enabling legislation in order to create a U.S. regional conference or regional conferences.”

The action of the Judicial Council is definitive. General Conference 2012 would have to take action to create one or more regional conferences in the U.S. which would become effective on January 1, 2013.

**Does this change MFSA’s position?** The fact that passage of the amendments will lead to having one or more regional conferences in the US does not change our basic stance of supporting the amendments. Change in our structure is long overdue. We have a viable plan before us that opens up possibilities for the Spirit to move in and through the church in new ways.

We urge the church to move forward, not with a sense of fear, but with a sense of the possibilities that the proposed changes put before us.

You will note that in our analysis paper, MFSA deals with several *additional* justice issues that we believe must be addressed whether we adopt the structural changes suggested in these amendments or move in another direction.

We urge the Task Force on the Worldwide Church and General Conference 2012 to address these issues fully as we move into the future.

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