

Global Young People's Convocation Legislative Forum Guidebook

1. Small Groups

Each GYPC delegate will be a part of a small group. This will give them an opportunity to build relationships with other delegates and create awareness and appreciation for the global nature of the church. Through these small groups, young people will talk about a variety of topics and issues in the church and the world for which they are passionate. The small groups are meant to be a welcoming space to engage in dialogue and conversation.

Members of each small group are encouraged to attend different workshops during GYPC to help provide additional information on the topics that they will discuss.

Composition of Small Groups

Each small group will have a maximum of ten (10) members. Delegates are assigned to small groups based on the topics they chose during registration and the language they are comfortable using in discussions. Groupings will ensure geographic, ethnic, gender, and age diversity. Voting delegates will be assigned to small groups with other voting delegates. Non-voting participants will be assigned to groups with other non-voting participants. A monitor will be assigned to each group to help ensure that all voices in the small group are heard.

Non-voting participants' small groups may produce outputs (recommendations, statement, and legislation—resolutions or proposed changes to the Book of Discipline) but these will not be considered as part of the Legislative Forum. Non-voting participants may take these outputs to their own conference or submit them to appropriate bodies beyond the GYPC.

Small Group Leader and Secretary

Each small group will choose a leader to lead the discussion, as well as a secretary to record the discussions.

If the small group discussion becomes too intense to continue effectively, the small group leader and the monitor of the small group will work with designated resource persons to help resolve conflict and move the small group discussion forward.

Topics

As part of the registration process before GYPC, delegates chose three (3) topics in which they are interested. All topics for discussion are listed below. The following questions are meant as a guide for discussion, but each small group is free to explore other aspects and related topics to the main topics listed below.

UMC Theology and Spirituality.

- How did you become involved with the United Methodist Church?
- What do you love most about the United Methodist Church?
- What do you believe is God's preferred future for the United Methodist Church?

Poverty / Economy.

- Do you know of young people in your church or community who are affected by poverty?
- How does poverty affect young people in your church, community, and country?
- In your personal context what are some concrete ways the church could address poverty?

Human Trafficking / Arranged Marriages

- Are you aware of incidents of human trafficking in your community or country?
- What are some concrete ways that the church could address human trafficking and arranged marriages in your setting?

Migration / Immigration and Refugees

- Are there migrants and refugees in your community or country? What do you notice about the treatment of immigrants/migrants and refugees in your country?
- What do you think causes migration/immigration and the increase in the number of refugees?
- How is the church responding to migrants and refugees in your country or community?
- How can the church/young people address these issues?

Racism / Nationalism

- When is it good to affirm nationalism? What are the dangers when it is taken to extreme?
- Are there cases in your community/country where people are treated differently because of their race/skin color?
- How can young people and the church help in racial reconciliation?

Sexism / Feminism

- In your setting, what are some of the issues that people face because of their gender?
- As young people of the church, how can we affirm the sacred worth of everyone regardless of sex or gender?

Politics in your context

- How would you describe politics in your context--the leaders of your community and country; the people who participate (or not) in the electoral process?
- In your community how involved and engaged are young people in politics?
- What are the positive ways in which the church (and its young people) engage with the government and other political forces in your setting?

Climate Change

- Has there been a noticeable change in the weather patterns and climate in your community and country?
- What do you think is the role of humans in the changing climate of our planet?
- God calls us to be stewards of our natural resources. What are concrete ways that young people and the church can address climate.

Drug Crisis

- Is drug addiction a problem in your community or country? How is it affecting young people and adults?
- How do families, friends, and government authorities deal with this matter?
- What other issues arise because of dependence on drugs?
- What are concrete ways that the church could address the problem of drug addiction and the war on drugs?

Small Group Discussion Guidelines

At the beginning of each session, participants are encouraged to engage in a provided prayer or scripture reading to guide their time together.

Helpful reminders for conversations, especially around sensitive topics.

R- take **Responsibility (control)** for what you say and feel without blaming others

E- use **Empathetic (understand and know what they feel)** listening

S- be **Sensitive (knowing or understanding)** to differences in communication/cultural styles

P- **Ponder (think about)** what you hear and feel before you speak

E- **Examine (look at or consider)** your own assumptions (beliefs or viewpoint) and perceptions (opinions or approach)

C- keep **Confidentiality (keep in mind the privacy of a person's thoughts and feelings)**

T- **Tolerate (accept)** ambiguity (open to one or more opinion) because we are not here to debate. There are no "winners" or "losers."

Small Group Discussion Outputs

Small group outputs may come in the form of a statement, a resolution, a referral, a call to action, or a legislation proposal. In some instances, however, the small groups may declare that they had a good conversation and that they do not have anything to report. The process of conversation, discernment, and conferencing is important.

Proposals from small groups will be combined with those of other groups through the legislation writing process. The Legislation Writing Group will collate, gather, and translate the communicated intent into proposals to be considered in the Legislative Forum.

2. Legislation Writing Group

The Legislation Writing Group will collect and collate reports from the small groups. They will carefully write proposals for the Legislative Forum based on the outputs submitted by the small groups, combining similar proposals as needed. The advisory members will provide guidance on format, template, and background on church law and related topics.

Advisory members may include the following:

- The Associate General Secretary of Young People's Ministries;
- The Secretary of the General Conference;
- Staff person/s of general agencies that can serve as subject matter experts on specific topics on which legislation are being written;
- The Discipleship Ministries staff person in charge of legislation matters.

3. Translation

As legislation are completed, they are sent to the Translation & Interpretation Coordinator. Off-site translators will translate the legislation into the official languages of the GYPC. The translators on-site will review the translation for nuances and context before being uploaded to the document server.

Legislation will be uploaded to the document server at least 12 hours before the first Legislative Forum session.

4. Legislative Forum

There will be four (4) Legislative Forum co-chairs, representing each region of the church (Africa, Asia, Europe, and USA). These persons come from the Division on Ministries with Young People and are not entitled to vote:

Africa: **Germain Mupasa** (Congo Central Conference)
Asia: **Venus Mae Gatdula** (Philippines Central Conference)
Europe: **Maria Thaarup** (Northern Europe & Eurasia Central Conference)
USA: **Connor Prusha** (USA - North Central Jurisdiction)

The Bishops of the Church present will provide guidance on church law and matters of procedure.

Decision-making Process

The Legislative Forum will use a simple decision-making process, based on the decision-making process of the Executive Table of the Division on Ministries with Young People as represented below:

