



TO: Lay and Clergy Members of the Alaska United Methodist Conference
Secretary of the Alaska United Methodist Conference

FROM: Bishop Elaine JW Stanovsky, residential bishop of the Alaska Conference

RE: Special Session of the Alaska Annual Conference

Grace and peace to you in this new year, and the season of Epiphany, when, especially in Alaska, we notice and celebrate the return of light as earth shifts again and turns toward the sun. May the light of the love of Christ shine in your hearts to lighten thick darkness of a long winter.

Call to Special Session of Alaska Annual Conference

I hereby call a special session of the Alaska Annual Conference of The United Methodist Church, a missionary conference,ⁱ according to the provisions of ¶ 603.5 of *The Book of Discipline 2016 (BOD)*. This special session is being called in consultation with, and the consent of the Conference Superintendent, Rev. Carlo Rapanut, and the Leadership Team of the Conference.

Where and When?

The special session will be held on Saturday, February 22, 2020 beginning at 10:00 am Alaska Time at the Alaska Conference office, 1660 Patterson Street, Anchorage, AK. Anticipated adjournment is no later than 2:00 pm. This is the day following the Winter Rendezvous meetings, which have been rescheduled for February 20-21.

Why?

The purpose of this special session of the Alaska Conference shall be limited to receiving and acting upon two recommendations from the Leadership Team of the Alaska Conference regarding the future of the Alaska Conference:

1. To petition the 2020 General Conference to discontinue the missionary conference status of the Alaska United Methodist Conference.
2. To petition the 2020 Western Jurisdictional Conference to fulfill its responsibility to adjust conference boundaries within the Western Jurisdiction in order to provide affiliation and oversight for the ministries of the Alaska Conference.ⁱⁱ

Who?

Lay members or alternates “who were last seated in the annual conference, shall be seated in a special session of the annual conference when convened.” If the last seated lay member or alternate is unable to be present, another lay member may be elected by the charge conference.ⁱⁱⁱ If it is necessary for your church to elect a new lay member, please notify Rev. Rapanut immediately to schedule a special charge conference in time for the newly elected member to be present.

Clergy members of the special session shall include clergy members of the Alaska Conference and those in affiliated relationship with the Alaska Conference and eligible at the time of the special session (¶ 586).

Members of the annual conference must be present to vote.

How can I Prepare?

To ensure that members of Annual Conference come to the Special Session well-informed to make these important decisions, the conference office will provide background materials and schedule opportunities for face-to-face and Zoom information sessions. They will also provide registration information.

As we prepare for this important decision in the life, ministry and mission of the people called Methodists in Alaska, may we be reminded of the story of the Magi, who after experiencing the Christ Child and careful discernment of their call in the current situation, were willing to be led by God to continue their journey “by another road”.



Bishop Elaine JW Stanovsky

ⁱ *The Book of Discipline, 2016, (BOD)* ¶¶ 585-588.

ⁱⁱ *BOD* ¶27.4. Note also the responsibility the jurisdictional College of Bishops in ¶48 to “arrange the plan of episcopal supervision of the annual conferences, missionary conferences, and missions within their respective territories.

ⁱⁱⁱ *BOD* ¶ 251.2, ¶ 602.5.