



General Conference Briefing: Proposed Articles of Faith

Disclaimer: This briefing was prepared for the South Georgia GMC delegation using NotebookLM to synthesize information from multiple sources. It is intended to summarize the proposed Articles of Faith legislation and the major conversations surrounding it. It does not represent an official position of the South Georgia Conference or its delegation. Readers are encouraged to consult the original sources listed below.

One of the most significant pieces of legislation coming before the 2026 General Conference is Petition 1441, the proposed Articles of Faith.

The legislation would replace the Global Methodist Church's two inherited doctrinal standards—the Methodist Articles of Religion and the Evangelical United Brethren (EUB) Confession of Faith—with a single unified statement of faith. The proposal was developed by a writing team working under the Commission on Discipleship, Doctrine, and Just Ministry in response to action taken by the Convening General Conference in 2024.

Why Was This Proposal Created?

When the Global Methodist Church was formed, it inherited two doctrinal standards from its Methodist roots. While both documents have served the church well, General Conference directed the Commission to develop a single statement that could serve as a unified doctrinal standard for the denomination moving forward.

Supporters of the proposal argue that a single document provides greater clarity, accessibility, and consistency for a growing global church. Critics generally agree with the goal of a unified

statement but have raised questions about whether the Commission produced a simple combination of the two existing documents or created a broader theological synthesis.

Major Conversations Surrounding the Proposal

1. The Doctrine of Scripture

The most discussed portion of the proposal is Article VIII on Holy Scripture. The article describes Scripture as “without error in all it affirms.”

Supporters argue that this language reflects historic Christian teaching, aligns with statements such as the Lausanne Covenant, and is consistent with many classical Methodist theologians.

Critics argue that the language imports categories more commonly associated with modern evangelical or Reformed debates. They contend that Wesleyan theology has traditionally emphasized Scripture’s role in forming holy people and revealing God’s saving truth rather than focusing on philosophical questions about errorlessness.

2. Human Nature and the Image of God

Earlier drafts described humanity as “fundamentally good.” Some readers expressed concern that the phrase could weaken the doctrine of humanity’s fallen condition or imply a Pelagian understanding of human nature.

The writing team responded that the phrase was intended to affirm the continuing reality of the image of God in every person, not deny humanity’s fallenness. In response to feedback, the final language was revised to describe humanity as “created good” or “originally good.”

3. Combination or New Synthesis?

Another significant discussion centers on the Commission’s mandate.

Some have argued that General Conference requested a combination of the Articles of Religion and the EUB Confession of Faith and that the proposal goes beyond that instruction by introducing substantial new language.

The Commission has responded that a simple merger of two nineteenth- and twentieth-century documents would not adequately serve the church’s present mission. They argue that the proposal remains faithful to the historic doctrines of Methodism while presenting them in a clearer and more unified form.

4. Ecumenical Language

The proposal also removes several anti-Roman Catholic statements found in older doctrinal documents.

Supporters view this as an expression of ecumenical maturity that allows the church to affirm historic Christian doctrine without retaining polemical language from earlier centuries.

Others worry that removing such language may blur important theological distinctions that earlier Methodists believed were necessary to maintain.

How We Arrived Here

- 2024: The Convening General Conference directs the Commission to develop a unified doctrinal statement.
- Spring 2026: Drafts are released for public comment and reviewed by both a designated review team and the wider church.
- April–June 2026: Articles, webinars, panel discussions, and online conversations generate extensive feedback.
- May 2026: Final revisions are completed and submitted as Petition 1441.
- September 2026: Delegates to General Conference in Johannesburg will consider the legislation.

Questions Delegates Should Consider

As delegates prepare for General Conference, several questions may be helpful:

- Does the proposed document faithfully express the historic doctrine of Methodism?
- Does it fulfill the mandate given by the Convening General Conference?
- Does it provide greater clarity for future generations of Global Methodists?
- Are the revisions to the language on Scripture, humanity, and other doctrines improvements over the current standards?
- Will a single doctrinal statement strengthen the church's witness and unity?

Whatever one's position, Petition 1441 represents an important conversation about the theological identity of the Global Methodist Church and how we articulate our faith for future generations.

Originally published on DavidDonnan.com on June 11, 2026. This PDF version has been prepared for distribution to delegates, church leaders, and interested readers seeking to better understand the proposed Articles of Faith legislation before the 2026 General Conference of the Global Methodist Church.

Original article: <https://daviddonnan.com/2026/06/11/general-conference-briefing-proposed-articles-of-faith/>