TOTAL NUMBER OF PAGES: 1

SUGGESTED TITLE: Right to Appeal Membership Decision

*DISCIPLINE* PARAGRAPH: *Discipline ¶* 214

GENERAL CHURCH BUDGET IMPLICATION: None

GLOBAL IMPLICATIONS: None

ADD the following language to the end of ¶ **214**:

The decision about an individual’s readiness to affirm the vows of membership and to become a professing member of the United Methodist Church rests with the pastor in charge of the congregation or charge in which that individual seeks membership. However, in the event that the pastor deems that an individual is not ready to affirm the vows of membership, that person may appeal the pastor’s decision to the Pastor-Parish or Staff-Parish Relations Committee of the church or charge.

RATIONALE: There may be times when, for reasons of safety or integrity, membership in a church is appropriately denied or deferred. The ability to appeal the decision protects against the abuse or capricious use of pastoral authority. The right of appeal is enshrined in our Constitution (¶ 20). P/SPRC is the confidential body most suited to hear such appeals.