



## The Commission on a Way Forward

### The Commission on a Way Forward's report includes:

- History of the Commission's work
- Key Foundational Ideas (Common Core, Need for Space, Global Church, Public vs. Private Mission, etc.)
- Missional and Theological Framework
- The Three Plans:
  - One Church
  - Connectional Conference
  - Traditional
- The Appendices include information about: the possibility of churches who desire to change their relationship with The United Methodist Church, the COB's recommendation and Wespath implications.

### The One Church Plan – Summary:

- Recognizes the diverse theological and scriptural understandings of our global church
- Provides generous unity for conferences, churches, and pastors
- Removes the restrictive language from our current *Book of Discipline*.
- Maintains the current structure of the denomination
- Does not require any annual conference, bishop, congregation, or pastor to act contrary to their convictions
- Allows congregations and pastors greater freedom to reach new people

### Connectional Conference Plan – Summary:

- Unified core that includes shared doctrine and services.
- Creates three values-based connectional conferences: traditional, unity, and progressive
- Allows for a Book of Discipline within each connectional conference
- Reduces General Boards and Agencies to a few shared services (Wespath, Publishing House, GCFA, GCAH, UMCOR, parts of Global Ministries)
- Current central conferences have the choice of becoming their own connectional conference or joining a values-based connectional conference.
- Council of Bishops is focused on shared learning and ecumenical relationships
- Episcopal oversight, accountability, elections, assignments, and funding occur within the College of Bishops of each connectional conference
- Jurisdictional Conferences choose their connectional conference
- Annual Conferences can choose a different connectional conference than Jurisdictional Conference.



- Local churches can choose a different connectional conference from their annual conference

#### **Traditional Plan – Summary:**

- Strengthens the current language of the *Book of Discipline* concerning human sexuality and increases accountability
- Asks Annual Conferences and Bishops to certify they will support *Discipline*
- Streamlines the process to enforce penalties for violations of the *Book of Discipline* related to marriage and ordination of self-avowed practicing homosexual persons
- Maintains the current structure of the church
- Continues all general agencies
- Designs process for those who cannot live within Discipline to change their relationship with the UMC.

#### **Timeline**

October 23-26 2018 - Judicial Council rules on constitutionality of plans

November 2018 – *Advanced Daily Christian Advocate* is released with all petitions

February 23-26, 2019 - Special Session of General Conference

*Implementation Note:* Legislation passed at a General Conference is effective January 1 following General Conference unless otherwise specified. One Church Plan suggests December 31, 2020 implementation. Connectional Conference Plan would have to wait for ratification of constitutional amendments by annual conferences.