

THE MISSION IS YET ALIVE

2018 | STATE OF THE CHURCH REPORT



...ent features and different parts of the world
and identity of their shared Wesleyan heritage and took
mission and ministry. Today, some 50 years later, our
iving, and the mission of The United Methodist Church is

It has done through the faithfulness and leadership of the
Church these last 50 years. Yet, as a leader of our church
standing at a pivotal point in the life of our connection.
Fully live into our identity as a worldwide church. We are
globally relevant through a General Book of Discipline, a
and a revised global Social Principles. And, we are seeking
differing cultural and theological understandings of
we seek to honor our worldwide covenant.

*unity and local freedom, we seek to proclaim and embody the
r specific cultural and social context while maintaining 'a vital*
”1

his covenant portends change, and we are uncertain

r times, God is still calling us to make disciples of Jesus
of the world. Despite the challenges we face, God is still
love of Jesus Christ to God's people everywhere. Despite
ppen, our central mission remains — to join in God's
e faithful steps to live as a worldwide church in mission to

18 State of the Church report is a story of our mission.
seeing growth and innovation across our worldwide
rit is bringing vitality to local congregations as the people
aring Christ's love in their communities by engaging our

n the poor,

ristian leaders and
d congregations.

ed of the love of Jesus Christ. For 50 years, The United
ffective witness of Christ's love. It is vitally important
to God's call to go into the world. Therefore, today and
live.



Michael McKee
H. Carter



Mission is yet rough the reas of Focus

ly April, the Connectional Table offered a message of hope to the
st Church. Acknowledging that the denomination is engaged in
a pastoral letter from the Table affirmed, “The mission is yet alive,

make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world.
join in God’s work in the world. No matter what, we are still
f God.

pps to live as a worldwide church in mission to the world.”

In the decade since they were introduced, the Four Areas of Focus have brought United Methodists together in mission and ministry to make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world. General Conference 2008 first adopted them with the hope the focus areas would offer a vision of ministry and mission and encourage United Methodists around the world to continue and increase what they do best.

For 10 years, the Council of Bishops, the Connectional Table and the general agencies have worked collaboratively to increase congregational vitality as they meet specific goals for each focus area. Together, they have developed and implemented strategies and plans and refined them to meet changing needs and contexts. The Connectional Table has fulfilled its role of discerning and articulating the vision for the church, being a

forum for collaboration among the key stakeholders. This quadrennium, the bishops who chair the Council’s leadership teams that correspond with the Four Areas of Focus have joined with the general secretaries of the focus-area convening agencies. Together with Connectional Table leadership, they serve as the Vital Congregations through Four Areas of Focus Strategic Team.

At the same time, local congregations and annual conferences have continued their mission and ministry in the focus areas. Many congregations and conferences – regardless of location or size – have begun or expanded their mission and ministry in one or more of the four areas and become more vital and vibrant. As we individually participate in these efforts, we live our identity as disciples of Jesus Christ.

Just how have congregations, conferences and general agencies been engaged in each of the



the effort to make the dream reality. The congregation was among those who contributed \$100,000, land and labor for the playground.

- ▶ The Abundant Health Project of the United Mission to Nepal (UMN) gives women confidence to raise their voices in their community and unites and empowers them to work and share their knowledge and skills with each other. Trained Female Community Health Volunteers (FCHV) hold mothers' health group meetings and lead discussions on safe motherhood practices, family planning, nutrition and sanitation.

DEVELOPING AND RENEWING CONGREGATIONS

- ▶ Erlöserkirche-München (United Methodist Church of the Redeemer), a thriving German congregation in Munich, is in a new building that also houses a Farsi-speaking congregation of immigrants. An indoor playground, a music school, taekwondo and ballet classes help bring 500 to 600 people to the building each week. The new building was part of a plan to reach people in the neighborhood. One mother of two – unchurched before she found the congregation – said it's uncommon for German churches to have a lot of

DEVELOPING AND RENEWING CONGREGATIONS: SEEING THE PEOPLE OF OKLAHOMA

Endless possibilities for ministry and discipleship surround every United Methodist church, but it can be a challenge to know how to begin exploring those opportunities. This challenge is one the Oklahoma Annual Conference has overcome through the #SeeAllthePeople initiative of Discipleship Ministries.

"We seek to create and strengthen discipleship offerings in local churches that serve the congregation and the community," said the Rev. Derrek Belase, Oklahoma Conference director of discipleship. "The questions we hope to answer are: How do we see people inside and outside of the church, and how do we help them grow?"

These questions have spurred a movement to refocus existing ministries to make them more community-centric, as well as to inspire creative approaches to establishing new ministry efforts. To make community discovery easier, the annual conference developed an interactive map that local churches can use to learn essential community information, such as demographics.

Partnerships with other organizations that already connect with people in the community have also been essential and are allowing for meaningful work in issues ranging from poverty relief to suicide prevention.

The work of seeing people in new ways is gaining momentum. "Our next conference-wide focus is on first responders. We'll resource churches so that they can offer special worship, discipleship and community building experiences just for them," said Belase.

Pictured above: United Methodists participate in interactive domestic violence awareness training through a partnership with the Oklahoma

the United States, where she studies at the Lydia Paterson Institute, a United Methodist-sponsored high school in El Paso, Texas.
Photo by Paul Jeffrey



Path 1 and Global Ministries piloted in Honduras a strategy for leveraging small groups to serve in congregational development among United Methodist Mission Initiatives. The initiatives plant and nurture a Wesleyan movement in parts of the world where there is no or a limited Wesleyan presence.

- ▶ In early 2017, Wilshire United Methodist Native American Fellowship in Portland, Oregon – the last Native ministry in the Oregon-Idaho Conference – faced closure. That summer a new pastor arrived, the Rev. Allen Buck, a member of the Cherokee Nation of Oklahoma. The congregation has doubled in size and focuses on connectedness, love, spirituality and tradition. Its doors are open to other Native organizations. The Mending Broken Hearts curriculum offers healing to help with grief, loss and intergenerational trauma.

▶ Spurred by the

Methodist connection are engaging people in their communities to form new relationships that can lead to disciple making. Discipleship Ministries has released a second book and study guide and a third short film to help lay leaders, clergy and annual conference leaders reach out to new people with intentional discipleship.

LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

- ▶ More than 19,000 Muslim and Christian youngsters attend the eight secondary, 50 primary and 24 United Methodist preschools in Côte d'Ivoire. While most of the schools' 900 staff members are United Methodist, only 20 percent of the student body is. More students are Muslim. Côte d'Ivoire Bishop Benjamin Boni said the schools have the potential to build peace. "When people work together and every day share the same realities, a feeling of brotherhood will



- ▶ The Academy for Clergy Young in Ministry is a pilot program to develop leadership of clergy and their local churches in the Mountain Sky Conference and Mountain Sky Area. The missional, church-based and integrated leadership development approach offers group and online community learning and individual coaching.
- ▶ The Arkansas Conference Center for Vitality coaches and mentors laity to demonstrate passion, boldness and excellence in faith sharing, servant ministry, stewardship and using their spiritual gifts. Leadership Unleashed conversations and Lay Leadership Cohorts bring together laity interested in making new disciples and leading new ministries.
- ▶ Faculty at United Methodist-related colleges and universities

- ▶ United Methodists in the Philippines provided relief — including prayers, food, medicine, bottled water and clothing — to wounded soldiers and people displaced because of violent conflicts in their country. Davao Area Bishop Rodolfo A. Juan led the two-day effort that began with a group of about 85 displaced Lumad families. On the second day, the Filipino United Methodists visited soldiers wounded in the fighting between the military and the Islamic State group or ISIS.
- ▶ The General Board of Church and Society has identified 62 relationship-based ministries

- ▶ After completing the Minnesota Conference's Missional Church Consultation Initiative, Christ United Methodist Church in Rochester was advised to collaborate in a downtown ministry to meet the needs of its community. Three years later, the congregation is poised to launch two new initiatives — a childcare center that will give scholarships to low-income families and a hospitality house for out-of-town visitors receiving care at the Mayo Clinic.
- Engaging in the ministry and mission encompassed in the Four Areas of Focus allows United Methodists to live our common identity as disciples of Jesus Christ.
- As the Connectional Table's pastoral letter concluded, "The world is in need of the saving love of Jesus Christ, and The United Methodist Church has always been an effective witness of Christ's love. It is vitally important that we continue to be so now. Therefore, today and every day, the mission is yet alive."

The stories of mission and ministry were excerpted from articles originally published on the denominational website, UMC.org, and on the websites of United Methodist News, UMNNews.org; Abundant Health, UMCAbundantHealth.org; the General Board of Church and Society, UMCjustice.org; Discipleship Ministries, UMCdiscipleship.org; the General Board of Global Ministries, UMCmission.org; the General Board of Higher Education and Ministry, UMCeducation.org; the Advance

MINISTRY WITH THE POOR

- ▶ At those institutions as recipients of the Cutting-Edge Curriculum Award and Exemplary Teacher Award of the Year for 2018.
- ▶ Metropolitan Memorial United Methodist Church in Washington, D.C. has a chef who turns surplus food from restaurants and grocery stores into made-from-scratch, healthy meals for the homeless and hungry. Metropolitan Memorial's Campus Kitchen partners with nearby American University, but volunteers come from all over the city and from within the congregation to pull in the food, prepare 1,300 meals a week and transport them throughout the city.

- ▶ Conduct in-depth interviews with pastors and conference leaders.
- ▶ After completing the Minnesota Conference's Missional Church Consultation Initiative, Christ United Methodist Church in Rochester was advised to collaborate in a downtown ministry to meet the needs of its community. Three years later, the congregation is poised to launch two new initiatives — a childcare center that will give scholarships to low-income families and a hospitality house for out-of-town visitors receiving care at the Mayo Clinic.

THE WORLD

is a professing membership of 12.6 million disciples over the last 10 years. While there has been a decline in church membership in Africa and Asia. This is seen in the annual conferences, clergy and churches.

MEMBERSHIP STATISTICS

	2006 Membership	2016 Membership	10-Yr Change	10-Yr % Change
World	374,090	623,138	249,048	67%
North America	1,216,257	2,999,242	1,782,985	147%
South America	1,462,457	1,779,958	317,501	22%
Europe	18,410	14,267	(4,143)	-23%
Asia	34,900	29,657	(5,243)	-15%
Africa	15,731	9,888	(5,843)	-37%
Oceania	201,309	207,190	5,881	3%
Other	7,931,733	6,951,278	(980,455)	-12%
Total	11,254,887	12,614,618	1,359,731	12%

MEMBERSHIP, CONGREGATIONS, CLERGY, CONFERENCES, BISHOPS

	2006				2016				
	Membership	Total Congregations	Total Ordained Clergy	Annual Conferences	Active Bishops	Total Congregations	Total Ordained Clergy	Annual Conferences	Active Bishops
World	1,733	34,378	44,710	63	50	31,873	44,387	56	46
North America	1,804	9,757	4,005	22	12	19,682	5,963	33	13
South America	309	1,654	798	21	3	1,836	619	26	3
Europe	241	1,601	1,228	19	4				
Total	4,887	47,390	50,741	125	69				

FUNDS

In 2017, U.S. churches paid more than 93% of requested apportionment funding. Work is underway to fulfill a 2016 General Conference decision to expand apportionment collection for the General Administration Fund and Episcopal Fund in the central conferences. While some have contributed apportionment funds in the past, it was not in a formalized collection process.

The General Council on Finance and Administration (GCFA) is constantly assessing the way in which data is collected from central conferences in an effort to make the process as efficient as possible. As planned, GCFA conducted Data Collection training in the central conferences in 2017. Comprehensive trainings on data collection were held in Africa and the Philippines in conjunction with annual conference extended cabinet meetings in each area. Approximately 50 trainees participated in each location.

Year

Total Funds Apportioned

1997	\$118,425,273
1998	\$118,431,010
1999	\$119,630,756
2000	\$121,999,757
2001	\$127,256,750
2002	\$127,860,750
2003	\$129,634,750
2004	\$132,656,250
2005	\$139,955,000
2006	\$142,849,627
2007	\$145,693,841
2008	\$150,973,581
2009	\$150,308,000
2010	\$150,232,058
2011	\$149,472,006
2012	\$147,268,131
2013	\$143,302,750
2014	\$143,132,984
2015	\$142,579,036
2016	\$143,115,210
2017	\$144,449,153

*Excludes the 25% of Ministerial Education funds that are retained by the churches.



MINISTRY WITH THE POOR: CHURCH PARTNERSHIP NURTURES EVANGELISM

A special partnership between an urban and a rural church in the Democratic Republic of Congo is bringing resources and the love of God to the people of Mvululu.

"As we reach out to this poor village, we are taking the good news through visible acts of love and compassion," said the Rev. Desire Tiriwepi, pastor of the 130-member United Methodist International English Church (UMIEC), located in Kinshasa.

The church is just 62 miles from Mvululu, home of Mvululu United Methodist Church and its 110 members. Three years ago, UMIEC members saw an opportunity to support the impoverished rural village. That has led to annual mission trips and a partnership with Mvululu UMC.

UMIEC members bring clothing, food, school supplies, household items and other goods; they also bring funds to help with construction of the Mvululu church's new chapel. The churches share in worship and invite people living around the church to join them for the family meal that follows.

"This is allowing us to make a deep evangelism, doing actions with visible impact in the villages," said the Mvululu pastor, the Rev. Georges Okitolenga. He will soon baptize eight youth and adults, a result of recent ministry efforts that he hopes will continue to thrive.

Pictured above: United Methodist International English Church supplied stones and concrete for the foundation of Mvululu United Methodist Church's new chapel.

Photo by Pierre T. Omadjela, UMNS.



worldwide discipline

Global church – a common thread – can make a difference in the lives of people in multiple nations shaped by the context

of the world. More than ever, the reality of global church thinking will shape the future of Disciplinary

that will be proposed to the assembly. General Conference will also respond to the increased role of central conferences in supporting general church apportionments.

The Connectional Table is working closely with the groups developing the various proposals as it supports the church living into its worldwide nature. Read more at umc.org/who-we-are/our-work-worldwide-nature-of-the-church.

GENERAL BOOK OF DISCIPLINE

The Book of Discipline 2016 states, “We are a worldwide denomination united by doctrine, discipline and mission through our connectional covenant. The General Book of Discipline expresses that unity. Each central conference may make changes and adaptations to the General Book of Discipline to more fruitfully accomplish our mission in various contexts.” ¶ 101, The Book of Discipline 2016) Parts of the Discipline not subject to adaptation and which can be revised only by General Conference are the “Constitution,” “General Book of Discipline,” “Doctrinal Standards and Our Theological Task,” “The Ministry of All Christians” and The Social Principles.

The Standing Committee is continuing work on its proposal to change the structure of the Discipline to divide the material now in Part VI, “General Organization and Administration” into two parts. The paragraphs in the revised Part VI would not be subject to change or adaptation by central conferences, while those in a new “Part VII, Additional Organization and Administration,” could be adapted. Major topics in Part VI of the 2016 Discipline are The Local Church (including church membership), Ministry of the Ordained (including

Consulting with the Standing Committee in its work are the Commission for the Study of Ministry, the Committee on Faith and Order and the Connectional Table, specifically its advisory group on U.S. Contextual Ministries. The advisory group is working with the Standing Committee to raise awareness of the need for a setting or means other than General Conference to consider matters affecting only United Methodists in the United States. Such a setting would be a place where the paragraphs that will be in the new Part VII of the Discipline could be adapted for the U.S. context just as they can for the central conferences in Africa, Europe and the Philippines.

Judi Kenaston, a member of the advisory group, notes that when



A New
A volunteer team from South Roanoke United Methodist Church



Conference in February 2019.

REVISION OF SOCIAL PRINCIPLES

Since early in the 2013-16 quadrennium, the General Board of Church and Society has led work to examine the denomination's Social Principles and prepare a draft of revised statements for the 2020 General Conference to consider.

During the first four years, listening consultations in Africa, Europe, the Philippines and the United States provided information as to how the Social Principles are actually practiced in the places where The United Methodist Church has members. Writing teams that included more than 60 people began work in early 2017 to fulfill the mandate of the 2016 General Conference to revise the statements to be more succinct, theologically grounded and globally relevant.

First revisions to all sections except those on human sexuality are complete. Writers will revise the remaining section after the called session of General Conference.

The draft document includes numerous citations of Scripture and quotes from John Wesley. The section previously titled "The Natural World" is now named "The Community of All Creation."

The revised document, website and a video, all produced in English, French, Portuguese and Swahili, are available at

umcjustice.org/es/2020

instructive and persuasive." The Social Principles "are a prayerful and thoughtful effort on the part of the General Conference to speak to the human issues in the contemporary world from a sound biblical and theological foundation." Although there have been numerous additions and other changes to the Social Principles since they were first adopted in 1972, there has been no comprehensive updating until now.

'WONDER, LOVE AND PRAISE'

Throughout 2017, The Committee on Faith and Order gathered impressions from throughout the church to its draft of "Wonder, Love and Praise: Sharing a Vision for the Church."

First developed during the 2013-16 quadrennium, "Wonder, Love and Praise" is a statement on United Methodist ecclesiology exploring how United Methodists understand what it means to be the church. General Conference 2016 commended the statement to the whole church for study and feedback. Leaders and members explored the document in small study groups and then submitted surveys expressing concerns and hopes related to the current draft and the potential shape a re-drafting might take. Others wrote blog posts, papers and detailed notes.

In its current form, one section of

APPORTIONMENTS

United Methodists in 2017 gave about \$133.2 million – about \$1.8 million more than in 2016 – to support connectional ministries around the world, reports the General Council on Finance and Administration.

The payout rate from annual conferences in the United States — that is, the percentage of requested apportionments collected — was 91.9 percent, an increase over 91.4 percent in 2016. The central conferences' payout rate was 65 percent overall — 298 percent from Europe, 36 percent from the Philippines and 17 percent from Africa.

Nine central conference episcopal areas — which encompass 32 of the 80 annual conferences in Africa, Europe and the Philippines — paid at least 100 percent apportionments. They are the Central and Southern Europe, East Congo, Eastern Angola, Eurasia, Germany, Liberia, Mozambique, Nordic-Baltic areas and the Davao area in the Philippines.

United Methodists in central conferences have long financially supported the work of bishops through the Episcopal Fund. Beginning in 2017, central conferences were asked to support both the Episcopal Fund and the operations of denomination-wide administrative bodies, including General Conference, through the General Administration Fund.



LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT: EMPOWERMENT TODAY, LEADERS TOMORROW

Less than 14 percent of Hispanics in the U.S. have a bachelor's degree. The University of Texas, Rio Grande Valley, has a student body that is 90 percent Hispanic. These statistics have led United Methodist Student Ministry leaders at the university to a central focus: Support students so they can thrive in college and earn their degrees.

Many of the ministry's students are Mexican-American and first-generation collegians who are seeking intentional relationships that will support them on their educational journey. The ministry's student center, located across the street from campus, is known as a safe, accepting space for students to connect through study, free meals, conversation and worship.

"This is a true community. The students treat each other in loving, affectionate ways. They take care of each other," said the Rev. David J. Moreno, campus minister.

The ministry also offers leadership training opportunities and experiences that garner real-life skills necessary for success. The ministry was recently awarded a grant from the General Board of Higher Education and Ministry to develop and implement a leadership retreat called *Adelintel*, meaning "move forward," to encourage students to take on deliberate leadership roles.

"[Students] own this ministry... They are the leaders of the church today and the leaders of the church tomorrow, and we are trying to make that real for them," said Moreno.

Pictured above: University of Texas, Rio Grande Valley, students participate in a



The Rev. Anthony Tabucar prays with his congregants at Amazing Grace United Methodist church in Manila, Philippines.

Photo by Janni Spider, United Methodist Communications.

Europe were actually asked to pay less than they had previously. With that in mind, European United Methodists pledged not to reduce giving and in 2017 gave nearly three times what the apportionment formula required. A record 29 of the 56 U.S. United Methodist conferences — 52 percent — paid 100 percent of their 2017 apportionments. They

Greater New Jersey, Illinois Great Rivers, Indiana, Iowa, Kentucky, Minnesota, New England, New York, North Carolina, Oklahoma Indian Missionary, Oregon-Idaho, Pacific Northwest, Peninsula Delaware, Red Bird Missionary, Rocky Mountain, Susquehanna, Tennessee, Upper New York, West Ohio, West Virginia, Western Pennsylvania, Wisconsin and Yellowstone.



Attendees at the United Methodist Council of Bishops meeting in Chicago join in the “Praying Our Way Forward” closing worship service.

Photo by Mike DuBose, UMNS.

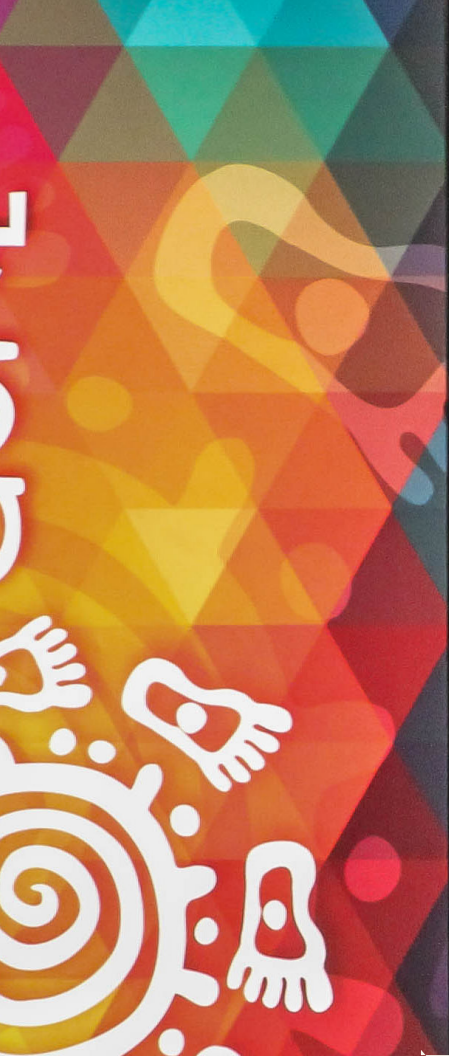
ward ward

denomination prepares for a called session of General Conference.

When General Conference convenes Feb. 23-26, 2019 in St. Louis, Missouri, USA, 864 delegates from around the world will receive and act upon a report from the Commission on a Way Forward based upon the recommendations of the Council of Bishops. Most of the delegates will have been part of the 2016 General Conference, which accepted the recommendation of the Council of Bishops to create the Commission to examine and possibly revise every paragraph of The Book of Discipline concerning

During the last week of April, the Council of Bishops formally received and discussed the Commission’s report. On May 4, the Council voted by an overwhelming majority to share the work done by the Commission and to recommend the One Church Plan for legislative action.

The One Church Plan removes the restrictive language of The Book of Discipline concerning ministry by and with LGBTQ people and adds assurances to pastors and conferences who, due to their theological convictions, cannot perform same-sex weddings or



The Grande Ronde Canoe Family plays the



PRAY DAILY

The Council of Bishops in partnership with The Upper Room has launched Phase 3 of "Praying Our Way Forward." It will continue through the special session of General Conference in February 2019. All United Methodists are invited to:

- 1. Engage in a weekly Wesleyan 24-hour fast from Thursday after dinner until Friday mid-afternoon. Those for whom food fasts are unadvisable might consider fasting from social media, e-mails or another daily activity.*
- 2. Pause and pray for the church's mission and way forward daily for three minutes from 2:23 through 2:26 a.m. or p.m. in their time zone or at another time. The suggested times correspond to the Feb. 23-26 dates of the called General Conference.*
- 3. Pray using a weekly prayer calendar posted on the UMCPrays.org website that runs through the end of February 2019.*

See the video, sign up for regular email prayer posts and download other resources at UMCPrays.org.

Pictured above: Bishop Tracy Smith Malone (left) offers Holy Communion to Bishop Debra Wallace-Padgett during the "Praying Our Way Forward" closing worship service at the denomination's Council of Bishops meeting in Chicago in May.

Photo by Mike DuBose, UMNS.

allows annual conferences to choose among three connectional conferences for affiliation based on theology or perspective on LGBTQ ministry – traditionalist, progressive or allowing for a variety of approaches. The plan would require multiple amendments to the constitution of The United Methodist Church.

The report the Commission is sending to General Conference includes a "conversation" around each plan with a summary of the plan, theological and biblical foundations, and its effect on various segments of the denomination, implementation plans and the petitions for disciplinary changes. The report also includes background information about the Commission's work.

The Judicial Council ruled in late June that organizations and individual United Methodists were also allowed to submit petitions to the called session provided they were in harmony with the Conference's purpose – receiving and acting on the report from the Commission. Other business is not permitted unless the General Conference determines by a two-thirds vote that it may be handled.

In early July, the bishops asked the Judicial Council for declaratory decisions on the constitutionality of the proposals related to each of the three plans that are included in the petitions to be considered by General Conference 2019. The

the three plans, and in service to and support of the delegations, who will do extremely important work in a very limited amount of time," said Carter.

When the Commission on a Way Forward submitted its report to the bishops in late April, it was nearing the end of a 17-month process during which the 32 members met nine times. The Commission reviewed many of the petitions regarding human sexuality presented to previous General Conferences and examined how other faith communities and denominations have responded to the inclusion of LGBTQ people. Members received documents, ideas, testimonies and feedback from individual laity and clergy, candidates for ministry and seminary students as well as from local churches, annual conferences and general church agencies.

The Commission members – named by the bishops – came from nine countries and included younger people, LGBTQ people, professors, administrators, pastors, youth pastors and campus ministers, lay leaders and individuals identified with renewal and advocacy groups.

"The key part of the early work was to build trust and intentional community among a group of people who had good reasons not to trust each other," said retired Bishop David Yemba from Democratic Republic of Congo, another co-moderator.

A key resource in the relationship

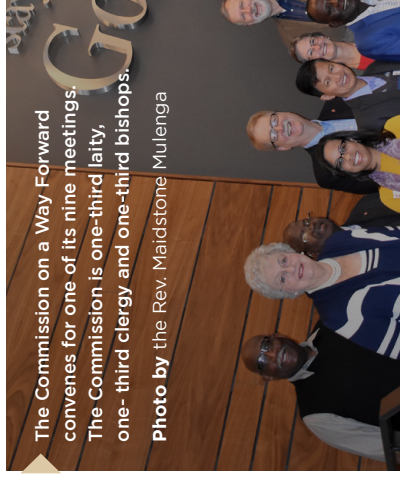
A number of delegations and other groups are also using the book as they prepare for the 2019 Special Session of the General Conference.

The Commission also wrote a covenant to guide its work and help build community and trust.


"The Commission's practice of voicing differing theological views and interpretations of scripture stands as a model for what kind of ministry we are both called and empowered by God to do," said Bishop Sandra Steiner Ball of the West Virginia Annual Conference, the third co-moderator.

Addressing the Connectional Table in April, Steiner Ball expressed hope that the 2019 General Conference delegates will come to General Conference recognizing that their fellow United Methodists have "the same love of God, the same love of Christ, the same love of the church, the same passion for making disciples, the same passion for wanting this world to be transformed."

She suggested United Methodists might help build relationships



The Commission on a Way Forward convenes for one of its nine meetings. The Commission is one-third laity, one-third clergy and one-third bishops. Photo by the Rev. Maidstone Mulenga



This report is a collaborative effort of The Connectional Table and United Methodist Communications with statistical data provided by the General Council on Finance and Administration. To view this report online, visit UMC.org/SOTC.

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