

Connectional Table
Minutes
October 27, 2022
7-9:45am (CST- US)
Zoom

Attendance

Alsted Christian V
Arnold Greg
Arroyo Giovanni
Belles Sarah V
Bergquist Greg
Birch Ole V
Boggan Dreff Ashley
Brown Shareka V
Calentine Raggatha V
Campbell Jeffrey
Cleaver III Emanuel V
Coles Amy V
Deere Josephine V
DeVine Jerome V
Dyck Sally V
Fernandes Roland
Graves Gary
Hare Dawn Wiggins
Hendren, Andrew
Henry-Crowe Susan
Jones Beverly V
Jung Hee-Soo V
Jung Markus V
Kenaston Judi V
Kitete Prosper V
Kumar Moses
McKee Michael V
Milford Brian
Moore-Koikoi Cynthia V
Muyombo Mande
Nelson Ken V
Norwood Regina V
Nuckols Dave V

Penicela Benedita Nhambiu V
Perez Lysette V
Prudente Karen V
Rooks Jessica V
Simpson Kim V
Slaughter Mike V
Tuitahi Monalisa V
Webb Mark V
Zurcher Stefan V

Regrets:

Dharmaraj Jacob V
Malone Tracy V
Swanney Doug (British Methodist Church)

Guests:

Arez Isaura (Interpreter)
Boulos Linda (Interpreter)
Degnan Diane (UMCOM)
Hahn Heather (UM News)
Jones Dale (Wespath)
Klees Jason (Virtual Meeting Planner/ Tech Support)
Lee Sung-ok (UWF)
Socha Matthew (Cherry Bekaert)
Vance Richard (UMM)

CT Staff:

Bigham-Tsai Kennetha
Hopkins Kacie
Killian Grace
Roberts Frances

Summary Actions

- A motion was approved to accept the Connectional Table (CT) Executive and World Service Contingency Fund (WSCF) Committees' recommendations to grant the General Commission on Archives and History(GCAH) and Gulfside Assembly \$60,000 for the 100th Anniversary History and Advocacy Initiative.
- A motion was approved to accept housing allowances for the Rev. Kennetha Bigham-Tsai and the Rev. Grace Killian per LDCL recommendation.
- A motion was approved to accept the CT Executive Committee recommendation to adopt the CT spending plan as presented for 2023.
- A motion was approved that the CT, in fulfilling its mandate in *The Book of Discipline* paragraph 905.7a. "to collaborate with the GCFA in the preparation of budgets for the apportioned funds as provided for in paragraph 806.1 and 810.1, we recommend an 18% reduction in the Base percentage rate for 2025-2028 quadrennium, and that this recommendation be included in the budget reports to the General Conference. We direct CT members of our Budget Advisory Team to present this recommendation to GCFA for consideration at their full board meeting in November.

Minutes

- I. Bishop Christian Alsted called the meeting to order at 7:14am and offered a devotional with reflections on his recent visit to Ukraine and the power of the very personal effects of war. He then opened the meeting in prayer.
- II. **Opening Business**
 - a. Recording of the meeting was announced.
 - b. The quorum for the meeting was established with 29 voting members present.
 - c. The agenda was reviewed and approved by vote with no changes.
 - d. The used of Zoom technology and voting instructions were reviewed.
 - e. Zoom guidelines for participated were reviewed.
 - f. The minutes of the February 23, 2022 meeting were presented and approved by vote using the raise of hand function.
- III. **Audit Report**

The Audit Report was presented by Mr. Matthew Socha of Cherry Bekaert Accounting LLP. After reviewing highlights of the report, he asked for questions. There were none.
- IV. **World Service Contingency Fund (WSCF)**

Chief Connectional Ministries Officer (CCMO) Kennetha Bighmam-Tsai presented background information on Gulfside Assembly and the desire to grant the request of the

General Commission on Archives and History (GCAH) as an expression of support for this historical organization and property in Mississippi. She then presented the following motion:

Motion: We move to accept the CT Executive and WSCF Committees recommendation to grant the GCAH and Gulfside Assembly \$60,000 for the 100th Anniversary History and Advocacy Initiative.

Review and Call for Vote: Bishop Alsted invited questions and comments related to the request and then called for the vote by using the raise of hand function.

Action: Approved by 100% of the voting members.

V. Leadership Discernment and Community Life (LDCL)

- a. New Board Members were introduced and welcomed by LDCL Chair Ken Nelson:
 - i. Ragghi Calentine (Native American Caucus)
 - ii. Jessica Rooks (replacement, Western Jurisdiction, Mountain Sky)
 - iii. Regina Norwood (replacement, South Central Jurisdiction, Arkansas)

- b. A Board Covenant document was presented by Chair Nelson who then made the following motion on behalf of the LDCL per LDCL recommendation:

Motion: We move the acceptance of the Board Covenant Document.

Review and Call for Vote: Chair Alsted called for a vote by raise of hand function.

Action: Approved.

It was noted that the document would be sent out for CT members to sign and approve.

- c. A new Connectional Table Orientation Manual was presented by Grace Killian.
- d. Clergy Housing Allowances the Rev. Kennetha Bigham-Tsai and the Rev. Grace Killian were presented by Chair Nelson on behalf of the LDCL.

Motion: We move to accept the housing allowances for the Rev. Kennetha Bigham-Tsai and the Rev. Grace Killian per LDCL recommendation.

Review and Call for Vote: Chair Alsted called for a vote by raise of hand function.

Action: Approved.

- e. Chair Nelson noted that Bishop Mande Muyombo will become CT Chair as Bishop Alsted concludes his service with the CT next month.

VI. Report on the Connectional Table Make Up Proposal

- a. Rev. Amy Coles summarized that the Task Force began in 2021 to draft legislation related to the CT make up that includes design changes based of CT feedback:
 - i. An increase in Central Conferences representation for a more global representation;
 - ii. Decrease in total size of membership;

- iii. U.S. concerns for ethnic diversity.
- b. Amy presented changes to the proposal and noted the report was presented online. The final proposal will be presented at the February 2023 meeting. Comments can be sent to either or both Rev. Coles and Bishop Swanson.

VII. 10 Minute Break

VIII. **The Connectional Table Spending Plan and Agency Spending Plan** were presented by Dave Nuckols and CCMO Bighm-Tsai, with input from Frances Roberts. The following motion was made:

Motion: We move to accept the CT Executive Committee recommendation to adopt the CT Spending Plan as presented for 2023.

Review and Call for Vote: Chair Alsted asked for questions. There were none. He then called for a vote by raise of hand function.

Action: Approved.

IX. **Report of the Budget Advisory Team and Vote on Base Percentage Rate**

Dave Nuckols presented the report and invited conversation, questions and concerns. He raised the question: *What share of the pie do we want to ask for?* CCMO Bigham-Tsai then spoke to the Connectional Table's purpose to

- Discern and articulate the vision of the church
- Steward the mission ministries and resources of the church
- Ask questions of reactivity, vision and identity from those who are staying with the UMC
- Include our values along with the numbers, noting that we are a connectional church and we seek to claim our connectionalism as we face a new era. A values, vision and mission approach to financial decisions includes the following:
 - UMC Mission
 - Agencies Core Mission
 - Missional Priorities
 - Emerging Missional Priorities
 - Transparency
 - Fairness and Justice
 - Stewardship
 - Continue to ask where God is calling us so that our vision is driven by saying "no" to narratives of decline and scarcity.

Chair Alsted asked if there were any questions. There were none.

Dave Nuckols made the following motion:

Motion: We move that the CT, in fulfilling its mandate in *The Book of Discipline* paragraph 905.7a. "to collaborate with the General Council on Finance and Administration in the preparation of budgets for the apportioned funds as provided for in paragraph 806.1 and 810.1, we recommend an 18% reduction in the Base Percentage

Rate for 2025-2028 quadrennium, and that this recommendation be included in the budget reports to the General Conference. We direct CT members of our Budget Advisory Team to present this recommendation to GCFA for consideration at their full board meeting in November.

Review and Call for Vote: Chair Altsed called for a vote by the raise of hand function.

Action: Approved.

X. Budget Allocations Committee Report

CCMO Bigham-Tsai reviewed the CT Allocations Process which includes World Service. She noted that we will be dealing with less money, but will continue the conversations and update financial analyses. GCFA will provide bottom line accounting at the upcoming November meeting. The CT Allocations Team will meet in mid-December and January with allocation recommendations being made at the February 22-28, 2023 meeting. The CT and GCFA will then agree on allocations at the May 17, 2023 meeting in Nashville.

XI. Chief Connectional Ministries Officer Report

- a. CCMO Bigham-Tsai noted that the February 2023 meeting of the CT will include:
 - i. A report on the vision, mission and connectionalism that will lift up the work on regionalism, the agencies, mission strategy and stewardship of mission, ministry and resources in a changing church.
 - ii. Report on the CT membership make up.
 - iii. Budget allocations.

XII. Future CT Meeting Dates

- a. The February 23-28, 2023 meeting will be an in-person meeting in Atlanta, Georgia, USA at the General Board of Global Ministries (GBGM) with lodging at the Crowne Plaza Midtown.
- b. The May 17-18, 2023 will be a hybrid meeting with the GCFA (in-person Nashville).

XIII. Recognition and Announcements

- a. LDCL Chair Ken Nelson recognized that this would be Bishop Alsted's last meeting as CT Chair with words of thanks for his presence and leadership. Nelson then shared a video that recognized Bishop Alsted's ministry with and contributions to the Connectional Table followed by words of thanks and a prayer. Bishop Alsted shared words of appreciation for the Connectional Table and staff. He then help up the labyrinth sculpture presented to him by the CT honoring his service with us.
- b. Bishop Muyombo now takes the baton to serve as chair of the CT going forward. Bishop Muyombo offered remarks of thanksgiving for the United Methodist Church that seeks to serve the needs of people around the world and his hope for the future of the UMC in advancing God's Kingdom.

XIV. The closing prayer was offered by Bishop Muyombo and the blessing by Bishop Alsted.

The meeting adjourned at 9:45am.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Beverly J. Jones".

Beverly J. Jones, secretary