

Connectional Table Board Orientation Manual



Connectional Table
The United Methodist Church

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I. Welcome

Dear Connectional Table Board Member,

Grace and peace to you!

Welcome to the Board of the Connectional Table of The United Methodist Church!

The Connectional Table discerns and articulates the vision for the church, and stewards the mission, ministries and resources of our connection in line with the mandates of the General Conference and in consultation with the Council of Bishops. As a CT board member, you will help further the work of the board, on behalf of the whole United Methodist Church. Throughout your time on the board, we will ask you to use your gifts and skills to serve the work of the board in a variety of ways. We are grateful for the gifts and perspectives that you bring to the Connectional Table and look forward to working together on behalf of The United Methodist Church.

In the following pages, you will find a guide to serving on the Connectional Table board. From expectations and resources to contextual information on The United Methodist Church and current and recurring work of the CT, this manual provides a wealth of information for getting started on the CT.

Peace in Christ,



Bishop Christian Alsted, Connectional Table Chair



Rev. Kennetha Bigham-Tsai, Chief Connectional Ministries Officer



Rev. Grace Killian, Board Engagement Coordinator

I. Orientation

A. Our Mission, Purpose, Objectives and History

● Our Mission

The Connectional Table's (CT) mission is the same as The United Methodist Church (UMC) – to make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world. The CT is amenable to the General Conference.

● Our Purpose

The CT discerns and articulates the vision for the church, and stewards the mission, ministries and resources of our connection in line with the mandates of the General Conference and in consultation with the Council of Bishops. We continue to live into what it means to be a worldwide church. Our worldwide connection is one of the ways we carry out our missional calling.

According to the 2016 Book of Discipline (§905), the CT:

- ❖ Provides a forum for understanding and implementing the vision, mission and ministries of The UMC in consultation with the Council of Bishops and consistent with the actions of General Conference;
- ❖ Enables the flow of information and communication;
- ❖ Coordinates the program life of the church with the mandates of the Gospel, The UMC's mission and global needs;
- ❖ Evaluates the missional effectiveness of program agencies and connectional structures and recommends changes for denominational effectiveness;
- ❖ Provides leadership in planning and research to evaluate needs and plan strategies;
- ❖ Collaborates with the General Council on Finance and Administration (GCFA) to prepare budgets for the apportioned funds in §806.1 and §810.1.
- ❖ Reviews general agency budgets and approves special offerings and church-wide appeals.

● Our History

The CT was created at the 2004 General Conference as the successor body to the General Council on Ministries (GCOM). Historically, GCOM was responsible for research, oversight, evaluation and coordination to prevent duplication; by 2000 its focus was on the structure of the denomination. In 2004, General Conference voted to eliminate GCOM and create the CT to carry the vision of the UMC.

The CT has not continued the mandates and ethos of GCOM: its purpose is vision-directed– to discern and articulate the vision of the UMC and to steward the mission, ministries, and resources of the denomination. The CT works collaboratively to strengthen, connect, and foster relationships across the connection. It is where creativity is encouraged, nurtured and supported for the

sake of the mission.

Chairs of the CT have included bishops John Hopkins, Bruce Ough, Christian Alsted, and Mande Muyombo. Bishop Alsted was the first central conference chair. Bishop Mande Muyombo is the first chair of the CT from the African central conferences.

The CT and its predecessor organization have been led by executive officers David Lundquist, Bishop Sharon Rader, Mary Brook Cassad, Rev. Dr. Amy Valdez Barker, and Rev. Kennetha Bigham-Tsai.

B. What You Will Do as a Board Member

- Support the work of the board. You will serve as an ambassador throughout the connection on behalf of the mission, vision and ministries stewarded by the CT. Attend board and committee meetings regularly. Typically, we will hold one board meeting annually in person, circumstances allowing, and other board meetings online. We sometimes hold as many as three virtual full meetings of the board a year. In addition, there will be other virtual meetings of smaller committees. **According to the Board Member Covenant, missing two consecutive full board meetings is reason for removal from the board.**
- Spend additional time related to board work, including reading, research, phone calls, outreach to communities, etc.
- Abide by the terms of the CT Bylaws, Members' Covenant, Code of Ethics, Confidentiality policy, Conflict of Interest policy and other policies. These are detailed in the appendix of this document.
- Inherent to your role are the fiduciary responsibilities of the duties of loyalty and care on behalf of the CT and The United Methodist Church.
- Serve the work of the CT, on behalf of the whole UMC. Though members are sent to the CT from central conferences, jurisdictions, agencies, etc., as relates to their CT service, they serve the needs of the whole denomination, not their sending organizations.

C. Meetings & Quorum

- The CT meets at least semi-annually, and at other times as necessary. Meetings are called by the CT chairperson or from a written request of one-fifth of its members. More than one half of the voting membership constitutes a quorum.
- The CT meets typically face-to-face at least once a year. The purpose of face-to-face meetings is to build community, engage theological reflection and stay focused on collaborative thinking regarding the CT board's role in leadership, governance and stewardship. All meetings include time for worship and devotions.
- Most CT meetings are held in the United States except for one meeting per quadrennia held in one of the central conferences.

- In order to be good stewards of denominational resources, the CT will regularly use online meeting forums throughout the quadrennium. These meetings will be designed to help keep CT Members informed, engaged and accountable to the on-going tasks of the CT as directed by General Conference.
- As per the Book of Discipline ¶722, all full board meetings are open meetings. The dates and times are listed in the newsletters and on the CT website. Most virtual meetings are recorded with prior notification for the purpose of minutes.

Meeting Preparation

You will receive an official call-to-meeting letter from the CT chair one month in advance of online meetings and three months in advance of in-person meetings. This letter will include important details about the meeting, such as meeting documents, committee meeting schedules (if applicable), travel details, and other logistical information. Board members who must travel internationally to meetings, will receive official letters of invitation from the CT office to assist with their visas and other required documentation for international travel. Prior to an in-person meeting, you will be queried about accessibility and dietary concerns.

CT meetings are conducted in English. However, we provide limited translation and interpretation for the meeting.

For in-person meetings, the CT covers expenses for travel, lodging, and food for jurisdictional, central conference and caucus representatives per the CT's travel policies.

D. Resources for Board Members

1. Getting Started:

When you join the CT Board, you'll receive:

- A copy of this document
- Access to online CT files on the password-protected CT board member portal
- Access to the CT's internal newsletter, The Beacon
- Information about traveling to in-person meetings, should those occur.
- Information about how to access virtual meetings
- A chance to participate in a full orientation meeting

2. Photo Directory

New members must send a head shot photo to the CT staff for inclusion in the internal directory. Please ensure that your photo conforms to the following parameters:

- ◆ Width: 1500 – 2500 px

- ◆ File Types: .jpg, .gif, .png
- ◆ File Size: no more than 20 MB per image
- ◆ File Names: Only use letters, numbers, underscores and hyphens
- ◆ Resolution: limit of 60 MP
- ◆ Color Mode: RGB
- ◆ Color profile: sRGB

3. Communications

i. Internal Documents

All meeting documents will be available in the password-protected board portal found at <https://www.umcct.org/board-login>. Here you will also find bylaws, policies, spending reports, and minutes. The password to access the board portal will be provided by the staff and changed annually.

ii. Website

The CT's website is the best place to find news and information related to the CT's work. There you will find more information about the vision, history, and ongoing projects of the CT as well as resources such as blogs, promotional materials for CT-sponsored legislation, and reports. You will also find promotional materials for CT projects and legislation. The CT's website is found at www.umcct.org.

iii. Newsletters

The CT has two newsletters: *The Beacon* and *Table Talk*.

- *The Beacon* is a monthly internal CT newsletter created for board members. Each issue contains upcoming meeting dates, important updates on committee work, and other relevant board information. You can access previous issues of *The Beacon* on the CT board member website toward the bottom of the page at <https://www.umcct.org/board-login>.
- *Table Talk* is the CT's external newsletter, which shares the work of the CT with a broader audience outside of board members. Subscribers sign up for *Table Talk* through our website. You can access previous issues of *Table Talk* on the CT website: <https://www.umcct.org/newslettertabletalk>.

iv. State of the Church Report

The annual State of the Church Report is a resource that celebrates the momentum of our mission to make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world, and identifies opportunities and challenges as we move forward in ministry. The CT produces the report in collaboration with the Council of Bishops, United Methodist Communications, and GCFA.

v. Social Media

You can keep up to date with the CT by following its social media accounts:

- Facebook: @UMCCT
- Twitter: @UMCCT
- Instagram: @umcct
- YouTube: @connectionaltable

You can also find the Emerging forum, one of the CT's projects, at:

- Instagram: @emergingmethodism
- Twitter: @emergingproject

4. Connectional Table Staff

The CT Board is supported by three full-time staff members.

- **Chief Connectional Ministries Officer** – The Chief Connectional Ministries Officer (CCMO) provides leadership and support to the work of the CT in collaboration with the CT chair. The CCMO is the primary liaison between the CT and connectional partners, represents the CT during a variety of denominational meetings, and travels the connection to further the work of the CT. The CCMO also supervises and directs the work of the staff and board members to plan and execute meetings, oversee CT finances, facilitate internal and external communications, and help to guide the process of evaluation of the missional effectiveness of the general agencies and other connectional structures. The CCMO also works jointly with the GCFA on quadrennial budgeting process.
 - Rev. Kennetha Bigham-Tsai - kbigamtsai@umc.org
- **Operations Manager/ Executive Assistant** - The Operations Manager/Executive Assistant serves as the primary administrator for CT, under the direction of the CCMO. The Operation Manager/Executive Assistant serves as project manager to support various CT initiatives, coordinate schedules and travel, including scheduling and arranging travel for the Chief Connectional Ministries Officer, and care for administrative processes related to technology support, human resource management, payroll, and meeting planning. The Operation Manager/Executive Assistant also works with GCFA staff and agency and annual conference treasurers, and CT board members to support the annual review of agency spending plans, and manage internal budgeting and other financial processes for the CT.
 - Frances Roberts – francesroberts@umc.org
- **Board Engagement Coordinator** - The Board Engagement Coordinator leads board engagement processes, including recruitment and deployment of board members, interest surveys and onboarding, board spiritual development, community building, and planning for worship and activities at board meetings. The Board Engagement Coordinator serves as volunteer manager for board of directors and advisory committees as assigned, providing strategic direction in conversation with the CCMO. The Board Engagement Coordinator works to build organizational culture through board and staff training and related efforts in conversation with the CCMO.

The Board Engagement Coordinator handles some administrative and communications tasks related to the board under the direction of the CCMO.

- Rev. Grace Killian – gkillian@umc.org

5. Consultants

From time to time, the CT will rely on the work of consultants to assist with specific tasks or projects. For instance, we regularly use a communications consultant.

E. Connectional Table's Membership

● Members of the Connectional Table Board

The structure and organization of the CT reflects the desire to ensure that diverse voices are heard in the conversation about the mission and ministry of the church. According to the Book of Discipline (§906), all members are professing members of the UMC, persons of genuine Christian character who love the Church, are morally disciplined and loyal to the ethical standards of The United Methodist Church as set forth in the Social Principles, and are otherwise competent to serve.

Members of the CT Board include:

- A. One member from each of the racial/ethnic causes as elected by the CT upon nomination from Black Methodists for Church Renewal, Methodists Associated to Represent Hispanic Nations, Native American international Caucus, National Federation of Asian American United Methodists and Pacific Islanders National Caucus United Methodist.
- B. One youth and one young adult elected by the CT upon nomination by the membership of the Division on Ministries with Young People.
- C. An effective bishop, selected by the Council of Bishops, serves as the chair of the CT
- D. Presidents of the following agencies: General Board of Church and Society, General Board of Discipleship, General Board of Global Ministries, General Board of Higher Education and Ministry, General Commission on Religion and Race, General Commission on Status and Role of Women, General Commission on United Methodist Men, General Commission on Communication, General Council on Finance and Administration and General Commission on Archives and History,
- E. The general secretaries of the above-named agencies and Wespath, United Women in Faith, the publisher of The United Methodist Publishing House, and the secretary of General Conference have voice but no vote
- F. One representative from each Central Conference,

- G. The chair of the Commission on the General Conference,
- H. The chair of the Standing Committee on Central Conference Matters,
- I. The ecumenical officer of the Council of Bishops
- J. 21 people nominated through jurisdictional conferences. These members are elected by the jurisdictional nomination process. This includes one person from each jurisdiction. The balance of the jurisdictional members is allocated by the Secretary of the General Conference to ensure that members represent the proportionate members of the jurisdictions based on the combined clergy and lay membership.

Officers: Officers for the CT include the chair, the vice chair, the secretary and treasurer. Except for the CT chair, the officers are elected from the CT and serve for a quadrennium, or until their successors are duly elected.

Removal from the Board

A board member's absence from two consecutive meetings within the quadrennium without reasonable cause will result in withdrawal from the CT. In addition, the CT board has the power and authority to remove and dismiss any member who becomes incapacitated and cannot perform official duties, who is guilty of immoral conduct or breach of trust, who fails to perform the duties of the office or for other misconduct that the CT may deem sufficient to warrant such dismissal or removal.

Replacing Vacancies

In between General Conferences, an episcopal vacancy will be filled by nomination by the Council of Bishops; a jurisdictional or central conference vacancy will be filled by nomination by the corresponding College of Bishops. The replacement must be a member of the same annual conference of the person being replaced. Vacancies from other groups are managed by nominations by their respective organizations. Prospective members are then elected by the CT.

F. Connectional Table Structure

- CT Internal, Administrative Committees- Members will be elected to CT internal committees during our organizing meeting or at other intervals by nomination by Leadership Discernment and Community Life. All committees will have a chair and secretary.
 - **The Executive Committee (EC)**
 - ◆ Comprised of a chair, a vice chair, secretary, young person at large, the General Secretaries Table convener, committee chairs and at-large members.
 - ◆ This committee coordinates the work of the CT between full meetings of the board and is a place for vision- and mission-focused work. It handles World Service Contingency Fund requests

before they go to the full board.

- **Leadership Discernment and Community Life (LDCL)**

This committee nominates members for teams and committees, encourages community cohesion and assists with staff evaluation, support and hiring. LDCL reports to the UMC.

- **Internal Finance and Evaluation (IFE)**

This committee assists with preparing the CT's internal spending plan and the evaluation of the CT meetings and internal functions. This group, which reports to the Executive Committee, is responsible for reviewing and setting the CT's operating budget, and conducting the internal evaluation of the CT Board policies and procedures. In addition, IFE regularly evaluates the effectiveness of CT meetings.

- **World Service Contingency Fund Committee (WSCF)**

This committee receives and reviews applications to the WSCF for ministry projects in the World Service Fund areas, and works with the General Secretaries Table to assess applications. The committee also reviews reports on the use of funds. This committee reports to the EC.

- **Quadrennial Budget Work Groups**

- **Budget Advisory Team**

- ◆ This is a joint committee of GCFA and the CT that works collaboratively to prepare the general church budget, in particular making the proposal to set the base percentage rate.

- ◆ CT members on this committee include the CT Chair, the CCMO, the CT treasurer, and others as designated by LDCL.

- **Budget Allocation Committee**

- ◆ This team prepares the proposal for allocations of the following apportioned funds:

- World Service Fund
- World Service Contingency Fund
- Black College Fund
- Ministerial Education Fund
- Africa University
- Interdenominational Cooperation Fund

- ◆ Members include the CT Chair, CT treasurer, an Economic Advisory Committee representative, a

representative of the General Secretaries Table, the CCMO and others as designated by LDCL.

- **Economic Advisory Committee**
 - ◆ EAC is a committee of GCFA that works to provide on economic forecasts.
 - ◆ The CT elects one representative to serve on this group.

Apportioned Funds

The UMC budget supports seven general church apportioned funds. Funds allocated by the CT:

- ◆ *The Africa University Fund*, established by the General Conference in 1972, supports education efforts on the continent of Africa with global reach because of the work of graduates and instructors.

- ◆ *The Black College Fund* supports 11 historically black colleges and universities in the United States, developing leaders for the church and community.

- ◆ *The Interdenominational Cooperation Fund* aids the church in being in ecumenical relationship with other faiths.

- ◆ *The Ministerial Education Fund* prepares principled Christian leaders for work throughout the connection of United Methodists.

- ◆ *The World Service Contingency Fund (WSCF)* - Supports the great diversity of Christian mission throughout the denomination. This fund is a way to expand ministry beyond what has been anticipated and to address emerging missional priorities. Find out more about the WSCF on page 13.

Funds allocated by GCFA:

- ◆ *The Episcopal Fund* supports active and retired bishops in their episcopal leadership for the denomination.

- ◆ *The General Administration Fund* supports administrative and collaborative processes throughout the denomination.

Other CT Work Groups

The CT forms other work groups as necessary to carry out its work, including any mandates from the General Conference. Such groups have recently included a Working Group on the Worldwide Nature of the Church and a Working Group on Vital Congregations. Under these categories, subgroups have carried out agency evaluation, developed legislation for a US regional conference, and other work of the CT.

II. Work of the Connectional Table

1. Discerning and Articulating Vision

- a. **Identity, Vision, Connectionalism, and Mission** - At its Spring 2021 meeting, the CT approved a proposal to use the following year to host conversations about the future UMC, including how articulating identity and vision might impact issues of connectionalism and mission. In line with its essential functions, the CT acted as a connecting point to bring together various groups and others who are committed to staying within the UMC for conversation. The focus of such conversations was not the development of legislation. Instead, it was to engage United Methodists across the global connection in clarifying identity and shaping vision for the future of the UMC. Part of this work included the Tuesdays at the Table series. This video series featured discussions with United Methodist theologians and leaders to help United Methodists better understand our faith, our church, and ourselves.
- b. **Covid-19 Vaccine Equity** – In response to the global Covid-19 pandemic, the CT voted to make Covid-19 vaccine equity a missional priority for the UMC at their fall 2021 board meeting. A taskforce was assembled in 2021 to guide the UMC in addressing the inequities of Covid-19 vaccine access and education. The COB and the agencies have joined the CT in this work.

2. Enabling the Flow of Communications

- a. **Emerging** - At the Spring 2019 meeting of the CT, leaders of the CT called for reflection on United Methodist history, polity, theology, missiology and ecclesiology to help inform United Methodists as they grappled with the outcome of the 2019 Special Session of the General Conference. The Emerging forum curated and crowdsourced our best thinking about theology, ecclesiology, missiology, polity, history and leadership. The website was a venue for conversation including voices from a multiplicity of viewpoints. This was not a forum for debate or for proposals about structure, but a space to invite critical thinking and reflection on what is emerging in United Methodism. It can continue to lead us to forge a compelling consensus toward what to teach, how we teach, who we are and how we will continue to live together in ministry.

3. General Conference (GC)

- a. **Planning General Conference**
 - i. **Survey for General Conference Delegates** - In order to gather descriptive information about the delegates, and their organization, the CT creates delegate surveys for General Conference. The CT and the Commission on the General Conference conduct this survey. All individual responses are confidential and results are reported in summary fashion only.
 - ii. **Working with the Commission on General Conference and UMCOM** - CT staff collaborate as needed with the Commission on some preparations for GC. The CT also works with UMCOM on preparations for the pre-General Conference Briefing.

- iii. **CT Report to the General Conference**—The CT works with UMCOM to produce its Report to the General Conference, which is published in the Advanced Daily Christian Advocate (ADCA). The CT also works with the Commission on the General Conference to get time on the General Conference agenda and with UMCOM to prepare and deliver a verbal report to the General Conference.
- b. **Legislation** - The CT both submits legislation to and responds to legislative direction from the GC.
- i. **Creating a U.S. Regional Conference** - With the goal of easing the burden of U.S. legislation on the General Conference and giving churches in the U.S. parity with the central conferences, the CT approved bringing a legislative proposal to the 2020 General Conference to create a United States Regional Conference. Such a conference would comprise the current U.S. jurisdictional conferences and the geographical boundaries congruent with the territory of U.S. annual conferences. Creating a U.S. Regional Conference provides an organizational structure for the U.S. to have parity with existing central conferences for doing work on the adaptable portions of the Book of Discipline. Equally important, a regional conference will offer the U.S. the opportunity to develop missional strategies for the church in the U.S. context. Creating the U.S. Regional Conference will be done in two stages. Stage I forms a committee of the General Conference, with legislative function, to deal with U.S. region-adaptable disciplinary provisions, U.S.-related resolutions, and non-disciplinary petitions concerning U.S. matters. Stage II forms the U.S. Regional Conference, after which the Stage I committee will end.
 - ii. **Supporting the Christmas Covenant** - At the Fall 2020 board meeting, the CT voted to affirm the Christmas Covenant legislation as a vehicle for providing global regionalism in the UMC, including the creation of the U.S. as a regional conference. This decision affirms the CT's continuing support of its own U.S. Regional Conference legislation as a contextual U.S. expression of the need for regionalism. The decision brings institutional partnership to the efforts of the Christmas Covenant Central Conference Outreach Team.
 - iii. **Budget** - The CT prepares and submits the budget legislation for the quadrennium to GC, in collaboration with GCFA. The proposal for the quadrennial budget includes the values-based budget allocations proposed by the CT for the World Service Fund, the Black College Fund, Africa University, the Interdenominational Cooperation Fund and the Ministerial Education Fund.
 - iv. **CT Board Makeup** - The CT is preparing legislation to submit to GC 2024 to revise the makeup of the CT board.
- c. **Supporting General Conference** - CT board members attend GC to support CT legislation and to work with GCFA to make any necessary changes to the budget. The CCMO and Chair also give a verbal report to the GC.

4. Missional Effectiveness, Budgeting and Grant Making

- a. **Evaluation of External Agencies** - According to the Book of Discipline, the CT works to, “review and evaluate the missional effectiveness of general program-related agencies and connectional structures of the church...” (§905.4) The CT evaluates the general agencies each quadrennia. The agency evaluation report from the 2012-2016 quadrennium is available on the CT website.
- b. **World Service Contingency Fund** - The World Service Contingency Fund (WSCF) is a way to expand ministry beyond what has been anticipated and to address emerging missional priorities. This fund has provided needed ministry to address global migration, poverty, domestic violence prevention, global health and a variety of other ministry areas. The CT cannot itself seek monies from this fund. The World Service Contingency Fund mandates are explained in the Book of Discipline (§ 806.3d).

In the 2016-2020 quadrennium, ministries supported by this fund include:

- The collaborative work of the Council of Bishop’s Immigration Task Force to address the global migration/immigration crisis;
 - General Commission on United Methodist Men's creation and launching of a curriculum to engage men in ending domestic violence;
 - The Global AIDS Task Force of the General Board of Church and Society;
 - General Commission on the Status and Role of Women’s boundaries training “Do No Harm” events and leadership development training in Central Conferences including production of the award-winning, “Whispers with Stones” videos on sexual misconduct;
 - Seed money grants for racial justice ministry projects initiated and led by young people;
 - Support for a project between the General Commission on Religion and Race and the General Commission on Archives and History to fund research, training and creation of historical resources. This project honored the 50th anniversary of The UMC, focusing on the end of the Central Jurisdiction and institutionalized segregation in the denomination, and promoting conversations about diversity in the church today;
 - Ministry in the Democratic Republic of Congo to support civic elections with work done by the General Board of Church and Society and the General Board of Global Ministries; and
 - A pre-general conference briefing hosted by all the general agencies and the Council of Bishops for all Central Conference delegates.
- c. **Spending Plan Review Process** - Annually, GCFA and the CT are tasked by the Book of Discipline to review the upcoming year’s spending plan for, “all treasuries that receive church funds” (BOD §806.4). This means that program agencies, commissions, educational funds, and national plans all are part of this process. The Book of Discipline clarifies that United Methodist Women, the United Methodist Publishing House, and Wespeth are not included as an agency or treasuries because they do not

receive support in whole or part from General Church funds (BOD ¶810.2). The spending plan meetings usually take place in September or October, and must occur one month before the GCFA meeting at which they are approved.

The process involves receiving financial statements and creating a spending plan narrative. The CT develops the criteria for these materials, and includes evaluation elements related to missional effectiveness of general program-related agencies and connectional structures of the church. The review process is also a time to gain insight on the CT's third objective: to "determine the most effective, cooperative and efficient way to provide for optimum stewardship of ministries, personnel, and resources" (BOD ¶905.3).

- d. **Allocation Process** - The CT, in concert with GCFA, makes recommendations for allocations for five apportioned General Church funds. The partnership between GCFA and the CT in this work is laid out in The 2016 Book of Discipline ¶ 806.1, 810.1 and 905.7. GCFA is tasked with establishing an estimated amount available for the five funds the CT allocates. The CT then reviews the program priorities, missional priorities, and evaluative data of these entities. Based on this review, the CT determines the amounts to distribute to each of the five funds (World Service Fund, Ministerial Education Fund, Black College Fund, Africa University Fund, and Interdenominational Cooperation Fund). When GCFA and the CT agree, these allocations and the total sum will be included in the World Service budget, recommended to the General Conference by GCFA.

The CT establishes its own process for how to arrive at its recommendation for the allocation of funds. In 2019, for the first time in two quadrennia, the CT implemented a new values-based and missionally focused process to allocate the denomination's budget. This process was designed to create a budget that could better focus our work as a global church, help us maintain our core mission, and thrive. It stressed a holistic focus on the mission of the UMC, the agency's core mission, missional priorities, emerging missional priorities, stewardship, transparency, and justice.

The report on allocation recommendations from the CT is available for board members to review to learn more about the previous quadrennium's process.

III. Bylaws, Policies, and Procedures

a. CT Bylaws

ARTICLE I - OFFICES AND REGISTERED AGENT

A. **Registered Office and Agent.** The Corporation shall have and continuously maintain in the State of Missouri a registered office and a registered agent whose office is identical with such registered office, as required by law. The registered office may be, but need not be, identical

with the principal office, and the name of the registered agent and the address of the registered office may be changed from time to time by the Board of Directors. (As described in more detail in Article II.A below, the term “Board of Directors,” as used herein, refers to the “members” of the Connectional Table as set forth in the then current *Book of Discipline* of The United Methodist Church (the “Book of Discipline”).)

B. Principal Office. The principal office of the Corporation shall be at such place as the Board of Directors may from time to time determine. The Corporation may have such other office(s) as the Board of Directors may determine or as the affairs of the Corporation may require from time to time.

ARTICLE II - BOARD OF DIRECTORS

A. Qualifications and Number. Subject to the limitations set out in these Bylaws and the Articles of Incorporation, the business and property of the Corporation shall be managed and controlled by a Board of Directors. The voting Directors on the Board of Directors shall consist of those “members” of the Connectional Table as identified and elected, appointed or serving *ex officio* as set forth in the Book of Discipline. The Board of Directors shall also include non-voting Directors consisting of such other “members” of the Connectional Table, with voice but not vote, as set forth in the Book of Discipline. All voting Directors, except those serving *ex-officio*, shall be selected through the Book of Discipline mandate and chosen for their expertise, knowledge and Christian stewardship. The Board of Directors may provide for additional non-voting Director(s) or committee members to ensure inclusiveness and/or to provide expertise or experience. Such additional Directors are to be elected in such manner and for such terms as determined by the Board of Directors.

B. Election. Subject to the provisions of Section A of this Article III, at least quadrennially, with respect to each voting Director to be filled by election by the Corporation as specified in the Book of Discipline, the body or bodies as specified by Book of Discipline shall nominate one or more candidates, and the Board of Directors of the Corporation shall then elect such voting Director(s), from the candidates so nominated, by a majority of the votes cast at any duly called and convened meeting which a quorum is present. The voting Directors elected pursuant to this Section B shall be sometimes hereinafter referred to as “Elected Voting Directors.”

C. **Term of Office.** Each Elected Voting Director shall serve a term beginning with the first meeting of the Board of Directors occurring on or after such Director's election and continuing until his or her successor is elected.

D. **Resignation.** Any Director, except those serving *ex-officio*, may resign at any time by giving written notice of such resignation to the Board of Directors, the Chairperson or the Chief Connectional Ministries Officer of the Corporation, stating the effective date of such resignation.

E. **Removal.** A Director may be removed only by the body or person that elected or appointed such Director, as set forth in the Book of Discipline.

F. **Semi-Annual Meetings.** Semi-annual meetings of the Board of Directors shall be held during such months as selected by the Board of Directors, at such place and time and on a date as designated by the Chairperson of the Corporation.

G. **Regular and Special Meetings.** Additional regular meetings of the Board of Directors may be held with notice at such times and places as may be fixed by resolution of the Board of Directors. Special meetings of the Board of Directors may be called by the Chairperson of the Corporation, and must be called by the Chairperson upon the written request of not less than one-fifth (1/5) of the members of the Board of Directors then in office.

H. **Notice of Meetings.** Except as otherwise herein provided, notice of all meetings of the Board of Directors shall be given by mailing the same at least ten (10) days or by telegraphing, telecopying or transmitting the same via facsimile, e-mail or other form of electronic communication at least five (5) days (but, in either case, not more than sixty (60) days) before the meeting to the usual business or residence address of each Director, provided, however, that a minimum notice of twenty-five (25) days shall be required for any meeting at which action is to be taken to amend the Articles of Incorporation or these Bylaws. Such notice may be waived by any Director in writing, signed by the Director entitled to the notice, and filed with the minutes or the corporate records. A Director's attendance at or participation in a meeting will be deemed a waiver of any required notice of the meeting unless the Director, upon arriving at the meeting or prior to the vote on a matter not noticed in conformity with these Bylaws or the laws of the State of Missouri, objects to the lack of notice and does not vote for or assent to the objected-to action. Any business may be transacted in any meeting of the Board of Directors.

I. **Quorum.** At all meetings of the Board of Directors, and unless otherwise specifically provided by statute or by these Bylaws, a majority of the voting Directors then in office, present either in person or by telephone conference call, or online web-based meeting, shall be necessary and sufficient to constitute a quorum for the transaction of business. The act of the majority of the voting Directors present either in person or by telephone conference call, or online web-based meeting at any meeting at which a quorum is present shall be the act of the Board of Directors, except as may be otherwise specifically provided by statute or by these Bylaws. If at any meeting less than a quorum is present, a majority of those voting Directors present may adjourn the meeting from time to time without further notice to any absent Directors.

J. **Action by Consent.** Any action of the voting Directors may be taken without a meeting if a written consent to such action by each duly elected, qualified, and acting voting Director assigned and returned to the Chief Connectional Ministries Officer. Signatures may be obtained by counterpart and (i) any such written consent may be delivered to voting Directors by facsimile transmission or as an electronic record (e.g., by email or other electronic form) and (ii) written consents may be signed and returned by facsimile transmission or as an electronic record, and may be signed through the use of an electronic signature. The provisions of this Section shall similarly apply to actions of members of committees established pursuant to Article V, which exercise authority of the Board of Directors.

K. **Compensation.** Directors shall not receive any stated salary for their services as such. A reasonable sum for expenses, if any, shall be allowed for attendance at each regular or special meeting of the Board of Directors. All travel by members of the Board of Directors and staff shall be in accordance with the then applicable travel policy of the General Council on Finance and Administration of The United Methodist Church (“GCFA”).

L. **Power and Delegation.** Subject to the limitations set out in these Bylaws and in the Articles of Incorporation, all of the corporate powers, including those otherwise provided for in these Bylaws and in the laws of the State of Missouri, shall be and are hereby vested in and shall be exercised by the Board of Directors. The Board of Directors may, by general resolution, delegate certain of their powers to committees subject to the provisions of Article V of the Bylaws.

M. Duties of Directors. It shall be the duty of each person on the Board of Directors to:

1. Become conversant with the Articles of Incorporation and Bylaws and the policies and procedures of the Corporation and with the polity, *Book of Discipline of The United Methodist Church* and structure of the United Methodist denomination.
2. Participate in meetings of the Board of Directors.
3. Develop and maintain a working knowledge of the program, services and mandates of the Corporation, as specified in the Book of Discipline, and participate in establishing policies to ensure that the Corporation remains sound in administration and program.

ARTICLE III - OFFICERS OF THE CORPORATION

A. Election or Appointment. The Board of Directors shall elect the officers of the Corporation from a slate of nominations prepared by a nominating committee in established by the Board of Directors pursuant to Article V or from nominations from the floor. Such election, except with respect to the Chairperson, shall regularly take place at the quadrennial organizational meeting of the Board of Directors provided, however, that the election or appointment of officers may be held at any other meeting of the Board of Directors. The Council of Bishops as specified in the Book of Discipline shall select the Chairperson. The officers of the Corporation shall be Chairperson, Vice-Chairperson, and Treasurer. The Corporation shall also have a Chief Connectional Ministries Officer who shall be appointed by the Chairperson on recommendation of the Personnel Committee through a hiring process determined by the Chairperson of the Corporation. Only a voting member of the Board of Directors may serve as Chairperson, Vice-Chairperson, or Treasurer. The Board of Directors may appoint such other officers, agents or managing employees as it shall deem necessary, who shall have such authority to perform such duties as may be prescribed from time to time by the Board of Directors or by the Chairperson. The same person may hold any two offices, except those of Chairperson and Treasurer.

B. Vacancy. In case any office of the Corporation becomes vacant by death, resignation, retirement, disqualification, or any other cause, the majority of the voting Directors then in office may, subject to the conditions in Section A of this Article, elect an officer to fill such vacancy,

and the officer so elected shall hold office and serve until the election and qualification of a successor.

C. Term of Office. Each elected officer, other than the Chairperson, shall serve for a term of four years, and each elected officer, including the Chairperson, shall serve until his or her successor shall be elected and qualified, unless otherwise herein specified.

D. Duties of Chairperson. The Chairperson shall preside at all meetings of the Board of Directors. This person shall be an *ex-officio* member, with voice and vote, of all committees. He or she shall do and perform such other duties as may be assigned to him or her by the Board of Directors.

E. Duties of Vice Chairperson. The Vice Chairperson shall, in the absence or inability of the Chairperson, perform the duties and exercise the powers of the Chairperson and perform such other duties as may be assigned to him or her by the Chairperson or the Board of Directors.

F. Duties of Treasurer. The Treasurer shall attend all meetings of the Board of Directors. The Treasurer shall have general oversight of the property, funds and securities of the Corporation in accordance with the policies and procedures determined by the Board of Directors. The Treasurer shall be an *ex-officio* member, with voice and vote, of all committees. The Treasurer shall arrange for deposit of funds in such depositories as the Board of Directors shall approve. He or she shall, in general, perform all the duties incident to the office of Treasurer subject to the control of the Board of Directors and shall do and perform such other duties as may be assigned to him or her by the Board of Directors.

G. Duties of Secretary. The secretary shall attend all meeting of the Board of Directors. The secretary shall record minutes of the meeting in books kept for this purpose. This person shall ensure all rules and bylaws of the organization are adhered to by the board during meetings and the implementation of board decisions. The secretary is also in charge of all of the records and documentation for the organization. He or She shall do and perform such other duties as may be assigned to him or her by the Board of Directors.

H. Duties of Chief Connectional Ministries Officer. The Chief Connectional Ministries Officer shall be responsible for the day-to-day operations, affairs and activities of the Corporation,

and shall perform such other duties as may be assigned to him or her by the Chairperson or the Board of Directors. The Chief Connectional Ministries Officer shall be an *ex-officio* member, with voice, of all committees and task forces. The Chief Connectional Ministries Officer shall also have general charge and supervision of the affairs and activities of the Corporation, and shall see that all resolutions of the Board of Directors are carried into effect. The Chief Connectional Ministries Officer shall be responsible for the hiring, supervision and termination of staff. The Chief Connectional Ministries Officer shall be United Methodist. The Chief Connectional Ministries Officer shall attend all meetings of the Board of Directors and shall keep minutes of the meetings in books to be kept for that purpose.

I. Removal by Board of Directors. Any officer shall be subject to removal by majority vote of the Board of Directors at any meeting duly called and convened.

ARTICLE IV - COMMITTEES

A. Executive Committee. In order to allow decisions with respect to policy and management of the Corporation to be made when the Board of Directors is not meeting, the Board of Directors shall elect an Executive Committee, the voting members of which shall consist of four (4) or more voting Directors on the Board of Directors as the Board may from time to time appoint by a vote of a majority of all of the voting Directors then in office. The Executive Committee shall have and exercise the authority of the Board of Directors in the management of the Corporation including, but not by way of limitation, the authority to approve sales of assets and to empower officers of the Corporation to execute deeds and other instruments affecting title to real and personal property. However, the Executive Committee shall not have the authority of the Board of Directors in reference to the following: amending, altering or repealing the Bylaws; electing, appointing or removing any member of such Committee or any Director; adopting a plan of merger or adopting a plan of consolidation with another corporation; authorizing the sale, lease, exchange or mortgage of all or substantially all of the property or assets of the Corporation; authorizing the voluntary dissolution of the Corporation or revoking proceedings therefore; adopting a plan for the distribution of the assets of the Corporation; or amending, altering or repealing any resolution of the Board of Directors, which, by its terms provides that it shall not be amended, altered or repealed by the Executive Committee. The election of the Executive Committee and the delegation of authority shall not operate to relieve the Board of Directors, or

any individual Director, of any responsibility imposed upon it, him or her by law. The Board of Directors shall have the authority to discontinue the Executive Committee or remove from it at any time, with or without cause, any person appointed to it. The Executive Committee shall receive reports from the Personnel Committee on behalf of the full Board.

B. Standing or Special Committees. The Board of Directors may establish and appoint, by resolution, one or more standing or special committees in addition to the Executive Committee. Except with respect to any committee which is established to be advisory only and will not have or exercise any authority of the Board of Directors, the following provisions shall apply with respect to any standing or special committee:

(i) a resolution adopted by vote of a majority of all of the voting Directors then in office shall be required for (a) the establishment of any standing or special committee and (b) the appointment from time to time of the voting members thereof;

(ii) any such standing or special committee shall have three (3) or more voting members and may have such other non-voting members as provided in or permitted by said resolution;

(iii) only a voting Director on the Board of Directors may serve as a voting member on any such standing or special committee; and

(iv) any such standing or special committee, to the extent provided in said resolution, shall have and exercise the authority of the Board of Directors in the management of the Corporation.

However, no standing or special committee shall have the authority of the Board of Directors in reference to the following: Amending, altering or repealing the Bylaws; electing, appointing or removing any member of such committee or any Director; adopting a plan of merger or adopting a plan of consolidation with another Corporation; authorizing the sale, lease, exchange or mortgage of all or substantially all of the property or assets of the Corporation; authorizing the voluntary dissolution of the Corporation or revoking proceedings therefore; adopting a plan for

the distribution of the assets of the Corporation; or amending, altering or repealing any resolution of the Board of Directors, which, by its terms, provides that it shall not be amended, altered or repealed by such committee. The designation and appointment of any such committee and the delegation thereto of authority shall not operate to relieve the Board of Directors, or any individual director, of any responsibility imposed upon it, him or her by law. The Board of Directors shall have the authority to discontinue such committee or remove from it at any time, with or without cause, any person appointed to it.

C. Advisory/Working Groups. Advisory/working groups not having and exercising the authority of the Board of Directors in the management of the Corporation may be established by the Chairperson or by a resolution of the Board of Directors. Except as otherwise provided in such resolution, the members of advisory/working groups need not be Directors of the Corporation and shall be appointed by the Chairperson. Any member thereof may be removed by the person or persons authorized to appoint such member whenever in the judgment of such person or persons the best interest of the Corporation shall be served by such removal.

D. Terms. Each member of each advisory/working groups shall continue as such until his or her successor is appointed in accordance with the resolution establishing the group, unless the group shall be terminated sooner, unless such member be removed from such group, or unless such member shall cease to qualify as a member thereof.

E. Chair. One member of each group shall be appointed Chair (or Group Leader) by the person or persons authorized to appoint the members thereof.

F. Vacancy. Vacancies in the membership of any group may be filled by appointments made in the same manner as provided in the case of the original appointments.

G. Quorum. Unless a greater number is required by a resolution of the Board of Directors designating a group, a majority of those members of the group having voting rights shall constitute a quorum and the act of a majority of the voting members present at a meeting at which a quorum is present shall be the act of the group.

H. Rules. Each group may adopt rules for its own governance not inconsistent with these Bylaws or with the rules adopted by the Board of Directors or with the Articles of Incorporation.

I. **Expenses.** Group members shall not receive any stated salary for their services as such, but all group members' expenses, if any, shall be paid or reimbursed for attendance at each group meeting. All travel by members of the Board of Directors and staff shall be in accordance with the then applicable travel policy of the GCFA.

ARTICLE V - INDEMNIFICATION OF DIRECTORS, OFFICERS AND CERTAIN OTHERS

A. **Right of Indemnity.** The Corporation shall, to the fullest extent to which it is empowered to do so under Missouri law or any other applicable laws as from time to time may be in effect, indemnify any person who was or is a party, or is threatened to be made a party to any threatened, pending or completed action, suit or proceeding, whether civil, criminal, administrative or investigative, by reason of the fact that he or she is or was a Director, officer, agent or employee of the Corporation, or is or was serving at the request of the Corporation as a Director, officer, agent or employee of another entity, against all expenses (including attorney's fees), judgments, fines and amounts paid in settlement actually and reasonably incurred by him or her in connection with such action, suit or proceeding. Notwithstanding anything herein to the contrary, unless required under the Act or ordered by a court, any such indemnification shall be made only upon a determination made in accordance with the Act that indemnification is proper in the circumstances.

B. **Expenses and Advances.** Expenses incurred in defending a civil, criminal or administrative action, suit or proceeding shall be paid by the Corporation in advance of the final disposition of such action, suit or proceeding upon receipt of an undertaking, by or on behalf of the Director, officer or employee, to repay such amount unless it shall ultimately be determined, as provided in Article VI.A above, that he or she is entitled to be indemnified by the Corporation as authorized in these Bylaws or otherwise. All expenses and advances will be in conformity with GCFA's policies.

C. **Other Rights.** The indemnification provided in this Article VI shall not be deemed exclusive of any other rights to which those seeking indemnification may be entitled under any Bylaw, agreement, vote of the disinterested Directors or otherwise, both as to actions in his or her official capacity and as to actions in another capacity while holding such office, and shall continue as to a person who has ceased to be a Director, officer or employee and shall inure to

the benefit of the heirs, executors, and administrators of such person. The provisions of this Article VI shall be deemed a contract between the Corporation and any person entitled to indemnification hereunder; provided, however, that nothing herein contained shall prohibit the Corporation from entering into or require the Corporation to enter into individual indemnification agreements with any person entitled to indemnification hereunder.

D. Insurance. The Corporation shall have the power to purchase and maintain insurance on behalf of any person who is or was a Director, officer or employee of the Corporation or is or was serving at the request of the Corporation as a Director, officer or employee of another corporation, partnership, joint venture, trust or other enterprise against any liability asserted against him or her or incurred by him or her in any such capacity or arising out of his or her status as such, whether or not the Corporation would have the power to indemnify him or her against such liability under this Article V.

ARTICLE VI - CONTRACTS, CHECKS, DEPOSITS AND FUNDS

A. Scope of Authority. The Board of Directors may authorize any officer or officers, agent or agents or management employee or employees of the Corporation to enter into any contract or execute and deliver any instrument in the name of and on behalf of the Corporation. Such authority may be general or confined to specific instances, not incompatible with the Articles of Incorporation or Bylaws.

B. Signatures. All checks, drafts or orders for the payment of money, notes or other evidences of indebtedness issued in the name of the Corporation, shall be signed by such officer or officers, agent or agents of the Corporation or managing employee or employees and in such manner as shall from time to time be determined by resolution of the Board of Directors. In the absence of such determination of the Board of Directors, such instruments shall be signed by the Treasurer.

C. Deposits. Funds of the Corporation shall be deposited from time to time to the credit of the Corporation in such banks, trust companies or other depositories as the Board of Directors may select.

D. **Bonding.** Officers and employees, as determined by the Board of Directors, shall be bonded by a surety company for the safeguarding of funds, securities, and records.

ARTICLE VII - INVESTMENTS

All monies, securities, and real or personal properties received by the Corporation shall be held and invested subject to the general policies and procedures of the Board of Directors, and may be managed by an investment advisor selected by the Board of Directors. These monies, securities, or properties shall be invested, re-invested or otherwise held for the benefit of the Corporation.

ARTICLE VIII - FINANCIAL REPORTS

The Treasurer must submit an audited financial report, at least annually, to the Board of Directors of the Corporation and, quadrennially, to the General Conference of The United Methodist Church.

ARTICLE IX - DISPOSITION OR ENCUMBERING OF ASSETS

Prior to the merger or dissolution of the Corporation, the sale or disposition of all or substantially all of the assets, whether such assets are real or personal, tangible or intangible, of the Corporation or the mortgaging or encumbering of the assets of the Corporation, the Board of Directors must obtain the approval of the General Conference of The United Methodist Church.

ARTICLE X - CONFLICT OF INTEREST

It is the policy of the Corporation that any employee, Director, officer or other person having a fiduciary relationship with the Corporation who is or may be interested in an individual capacity, directly or indirectly, in any contract or other transaction involving or in any manner relating to the Corporation or its operations, shall fully disclose to the Board of Directors, in writing, any such interests. The Board of Directors, upon such disclosure, may take such action as it shall deem appropriate.

ARTICLE XI - FISCAL YEAR

The fiscal year of the Corporation shall begin on January 1 and end on December 31, or shall begin and end on such other dates as established by the Board of Directors in a duly adopted resolution.

ARTICLE XII - NO SEAL

The Corporation shall not have a corporate seal.

ARTICLE XIII - WAIVER OF NOTICE

Whenever any notice is required to be given by law or under the provisions of the Bylaws of the Corporation, a waiver thereof in writing signed by the person or persons entitled to such notice, whether before or after the time stated therein, shall be deemed equivalent to the giving of such notice. Attendance at a meeting shall also constitute a waiver of notice, except as specified herein.

ARTICLE XIV - AMENDMENTS

Amendments to these Bylaws must be approved by the Board of Directors.

Kennetha J. Bigham-Tsai

Chief Connectional Ministries Officer, The Connectional Table of The United Methodist Church

b. CT Board Member Covenant

**Connectional Table Members Covenant
(Adopted during the 2021-2024 Quadrennium)**

Affirmed by LDCL, 09/09/2022

The LORD our God made a covenant with us at Mount Horeb. The LORD didn't make this covenant with our ancestors but with us—all of us who are here and alive right now.
Deuteronomy 5:2-3 (CEB)

We are a covenant people. Therefore, as members of the Connectional Table of The United Methodist Church, we promise to

- Faithfully live into the membership vows of The United Methodist Church, recognizing our responsibility to the whole denomination in faithfulness to its mission.
- Though we bring viewpoints from our own electing and appointing bodies to enrich the work of the CT, we serve on behalf of the whole denomination as servant leaders.
- Attend meetings¹, come prepared, and participate fully with this group of servant leaders, recognizing that being present (in-person or virtually) is critical to building relationships and trust.
- Encourage others, through words of love and affirmation, and engage in Christian conferencing as a way of listening with open hearts and minds while honoring diverse perspectives.
- Seek to maintain focus on our mission while moving the Connectional Table and The United Methodist Church toward common goals that are observable on the local level, thereby accepting our responsibility to make this community both connectional and directional.
- Foster an atmosphere of honor, respect, and trust so that all participants feel safe to speak the truth in love.
- Honor different ways of communicating and learning and create safe spaces where everyone has the opportunity and time to process information and share freely.
- Do all in our power to live as faithful witnesses to the work of God in and through The United Methodist Church, recognizing that board members must exercise the fiduciary duties of loyalty and care with respect to the Connectional Table and The United Methodist Church.
- Give thanks to God for the blessings that allow us all to partake in this world-transforming work through the Connectional Table. In gratitude, we will celebrate our God-given diversity.

¹ As part of this covenant, absence from two (2) consecutive meetings without reasonable cause will result in voluntary withdrawal from this Table.

Faithful disciples across the globe entrust us with their resources, their hopes, and their dreams for a church that gives witness to the love of Jesus Christ for our world today. Therefore, we commit to holding one another accountable, individually and corporately, to these promises. If there is a break in covenant, we will take time to examine our own attitudes and actions so that healing may take place and wholeness be restored for the sake of community and our covenant with God through The United Methodist Church.

NAME

DATE

- c. [CT Board Member Code of Ethics Policy](#)
- d. [CT Confidentiality Policy](#)
- e. [CT Conflict of Interest Policy](#)
- f. [CT Indemnification Policy](#)
- g. [CT Nepotism Policy](#)
- h. [CT Recording of Meetings Policy](#)
- i. [CT Whistleblower Protection Policy](#)
- j. [CT Travel policies](#)
- k. [CT Record Retention Policy](#)

IV. Appendix

A. Background - The United Methodist Church

1. The United Methodist Church is comprised of conferences:

◆ **A General Conference**, which is an international body of nearly 1,000 delegates that meets every four years. Delegates for General Conference are elected by annual conferences and represent all annual conferences around the world. Half of the delegates are laity; half are clergy. In 2016 there were 864 total delegates.

◆ **Jurisdictional Conferences:** In the United States of America, the UMC is divided into five areas, or jurisdictions: Northeastern, Southeastern, North Central, South Central and Western. Jurisdictions provide some program and leadership training events to support annual conferences. Jurisdictional conferences meet every four years to elect new bishops and select members of general boards and agencies. Currently, the UMC in the United States has 46 Episcopal areas in jurisdictions and 57 annual conferences in jurisdictions.

◆ **Central Conferences:** On the continents of Africa, Asia and Europe, annual conferences are organized in seven central conferences, which are composed of equal numbers of lay and clergy members. These conferences connect annual conferences for common ministry, adapt regulations as the conditions in the respective regions may require, elect bishops, and fix bishops' tenures. Central Conferences are located in Africa, Congo, West Africa, Central and Southern Europe, Germany, Northern Europe and Eurasia, and the Philippines. There 74 annual

conferences in these central conferences.

2. Primary Connectional Relationships

By Discipline, the CT has been charged by General Conference to work in collaboration with several bodies within the connection.

- **Council of Bishops** - The CT works in consultation with the Council of Bishops (COB). The collaboration between the CT and the COB is cemented by the COB's appointment of the CT's chair. As well, the ecumenical officer of the COB serves on the CT. The CT Chair serves on the Executive Committee of the COB.
- **The Standing Committee on Central Conference Matters** - The CT works closely with the Standing Committee on Central Conference Matters as it seeks to develop the General Book of Discipline. The Standing Committee also partners with the Faith and Order and the Ministry Study Committees in this work to determine which parts of the Book of Discipline truly apply around the globe.
- **The Agencies, Boards and Commissions** - The General Secretaries of each program-related general board, agency and commission, as well as the general secretaries of United Methodist Women, Wespath, and the General Council on Finance and Administration, and the president and publisher of the United Methodist Publishing House, are members of the CT with voice but no vote. The presidents of the World Service funded boards and agencies serve on the CT and have vote. The CT also works closely with the general secretaries to ensure a collaborative relationship around issues of effectiveness and budget.
- **The General Council on Finance and Administration (GCFA)** - The CT works closely with GCFA in setting the quadrennial budget and in making allocations to various apportioned funds. CT and GCFA members serve on the collaborative Budget Advisory Team that makes recommendations for the base percentage rate—a deciding factor that determines apportionments. The CT and GCFA must agree on the budget allocations submitted to General Conference.
- **Commission on the General Conference** - The secretary of the General Conference and the chair of the Commission on the General Conference are members of the CT. CT staff attend Commission meetings and collaborate as needed with the Commission on various issues related to General Conference.
- **Other Key Partners** - The CT works closely with many other partners throughout the connection, including the annual conferences, the National Plans, Africa University, the Black College Fund, Young People's Ministries, and the ethnic caucuses. Such collaborations help the CT "...enable the flow of information and communication" and are part of its role in providing "...a forum for the understanding and implementation of the vision, mission, and ministries of the global church." (Book of Discipline 905). We support the denomination's ecumenical relationships through partnerships with the COB's Ecumenical Office, the British Methodist Church, and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

3. Agencies and Commissions

United Methodist agencies provide resources and services that equip local congregations and provide a connection for ministry throughout the world. These organizations (councils, boards, commissions, committees, divisions or other units) can be found at all levels of the connection.

- ◆ **Archives and History** gathers, preserves, and disseminates materials on the history of The United Methodist Church and its antecedents.

- ◆ **Church and Society** challenges United Methodists to work in areas of important social concern and develops resources to inform, motivate, and train United Methodists on issues of social justice in the society. This agency also supports the Social Principles of the UMC.

- ◆ **United Methodist Communications** shows how the work United Methodists do together transforms the world. Provides local churches, annual conferences, agencies and other connectional structures with tools, resources and training to equip them for communications ministry.

- ◆ **Discipleship Ministries** provides resources and services that assist clergy and laity leaders in annual conferences and local churches as they seek to make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world. Discipleship Ministries also manages and produces The Upper Room, a daily devotional guide and a wide range of other resources.

- ◆ **Finance and Administration** manages the finances and operational needs of the denomination and serves as the general treasurer of the denomination.

- ◆ **Global Ministries** connects the church in worldwide mission. Global Ministries also selects, trains, and sends missionaries from everywhere to everywhere. The United Methodist Committee on Relief is a division of Global Ministries that provides disaster relief in the US and around the world.

- ◆ **Higher Education & Ministry** prepares Christian leaders for ordained ministry and provides general oversight for campus ministries and institutions of higher education.

- ◆ **Religion and Race** works for the full and equal participation of racial and ethnic constituencies in the church and society through advocacy and by reviewing and monitoring the practices of the denomination.

- ◆ **The Status and Role of Women** advocates for, and on behalf of, women by seeking to eliminate inequities, providing training and resources, and monitoring the general agencies, institutions, and connectional structures to ensure the inclusion of women.

- ◆ **United Methodist Men** involves men in a growing relationship to Jesus Christ and his church, and provides resources and support for programs of evangelism, stewardship and the needs of men.

- ◆ **The United Methodist Publishing House** is a publisher and distributor to Christian clergy and laity, with primary responsibilities for the publishing and distribution for the UMC. The retail and customer service arm of The United Methodist Publishing House is Cokesbury.

- ◆ **United Women in Faith** (formerly United Methodist Women) is the largest

denominational faith organization for women, with approximately 800,000 members whose mission is fostering spiritual growth, developing leaders and advocating for justice.

◆ **Wespath (Pension and Health Benefits)** supervises and administers the pension and benefits programs, plans and funds of the UMC. It administers and disburses the retirement and benefit funds of the various annual conferences.

4. Caucuses

In the UMC, a number of caucuses have been formed. These are groups of persons joining together to create policies and positions appropriate to the concerns of the group, and who jointly act to advocate for that group, and seek to influence larger entities to respond to their requests and issues. UMC caucus groups are both denomination-wide and in Annual Conferences. These are unofficial bodies in that they have not been established through action by the General Conference or the Annual Conference and are not accountable to those bodies. Among the oldest and most prominent caucuses are the five which have formed to relate to the issues and concerns of five racial and ethnic groups in America:

- ◆ Black Methodists for Church Renewal (BMCR)
- ◆ Methodists Associated Representing the Cause of Hispanic Americans(MARCHA)
- ◆ Native American International Caucus (NAIC)
- ◆ National Federation of Asian American United Methodists (NFAAUM)
- ◆ Pacific Islanders National Caucus United Methodist (PINCUM).

B. Acronym Guide

- BAC - Budget Allocations Committee
- BAT - Budget Advisory Team
- COB – Council of Bishops
- COSROW – Committee on the Status and Role of Women
- CT – Connectional Table
- CWF - Commission on a Way Forward
- EC - Executive Committee
- GBCS – General Board of Church and Society
- GBGM – General Board of Global Ministries
- GBHEM – General Board on Higher Education and Ministry
- GCC - General Church Council
- GCFA – General Council on Finance and Administration
- GCORR- General Committee on Religion and Race
- IFE - Internal Finance & Evaluation
- LDCL - Leadership Discernment & Community Life
- UMCOM – United Methodist Communications
- USCM - U.S. Contextual Ministries
- UWF - United Women in Faith

- C. 2020 General Conference
 - [CT's Report to 2020 General Conference](#)
 - [US Regional Conference Petition](#)
 - [Budget Allocations Report](#)
- D. [2021 State of the Church Report](#)
- E. [World Service Contingency Fund Guidelines](#)