

## Commission on a Way Forward moderators release New Year's message

By Emily Clemons, Director of Communications

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The Commission on a Way Forward moderators released a New Year's message on the morning of January 3, 2019. The message, signed by Bishops David Yemba and Sandra Steiner Ball, urges people to consider the commission's report in its entirety, as well as to pray daily for the delegates and the global United Methodist Church.

Read the full message below:

*WASHINGTON, D.C. - As we turn to the new year and the approaching February meeting of the called Special Session of General Conference, the moderators would like to encourage delegates to the General Conference, as well as all spiritual leaders in The United Methodist Church, to read and consider the report of the Commission in its entirety. There are key values which ground the report which can be found in both the theological and missional statements included in the report and we commend this work to you for study and reflection. The report includes an important narrative that sets the context for understanding the three plans included in the report, legislation for three different plans, and four appendices.*

*Following the release of the Commission's report in July, there have been focused conversations, articles, commentaries, and blogs in a variety of venues primarily about the One Church and Traditional plans. We would like to remind the church that there are three serious plans included in the report. The Commission on a Way Forward worked for more than a year on two of the plans - the One Church Plan and the Connectional Conference Plan. In consideration of the spiritual work and leadership of the Commission members, we encourage the church to wrestle seriously with the fact that God does make all things new and not set aside the Connectional Conference Plan as too complicated or too different. Instead, we invite the church to study and consider the Connectional Conference Plan, as well as the One Church Plan and the Traditional Plan, for what the Church might be able to learn from all that has been shared for consideration and discernment.*

*Additionally, we would invite the church to read the One Church Plan and the Traditional Plan alongside the Judicial Council ruling # 1366 on the constitutionality of these two Plans. The Judicial Council could not rule on the Connectional Conference Plan because the plan itself calls for constitutional amendments while the other two plans do not call for constitutional amendments. The Judicial Council rulings do not change any of the three plans, however, their rulings enable delegates to do their best work by helping delegates know where the plans potentially need to be amended and why.*

*Amid the reading and study of the entirety of the report and the judicial council rulings, we continue to invite you to daily prayer for each of the delegates and for the global United Methodist Church. Prayer connects us with God, who loves us so much that God sent Jesus so*

*that we all might have life through him. Prayer also connects us across the denomination, no matter how geographically far or close we live from each other. God's mission continues, and we can trust God to be God as we continue to pray for a new direction the triune God may have in store for The United Methodist Church.*

*Peace,*

*Bishops David Yemba and Sandra Steiner Ball  
Moderators, The Commission on a Way Forward*

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