

## Connectional Table Celebrates Agency Innovations

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

November 15, 2018

ATLANTA, Georgia, U.S.A -- The Connectional Table, after launching a new agency evaluation process this quadrennium, offers its recommendations for strategic collaboration between the general agencies of The United Methodist Church in ministries involving the Four Areas of Focus:

1. The Strategic Team and the four lead agencies should take initiative to convene periodic gatherings (in-person and/or via video-conferencing) with all participating agencies in the area of focus they are leading. The lead agency could coordinate this gathering.
2. Continue to increase strategic collaboration around the categories and goals among the participating agencies for each areas of focus.
3. Continue analysis and deliberation by each agency on how its resources might be reallocated internally to generate more fruit-bearing initiatives when one or more agencies is already conducting similar, substantive ministry activities.
4. The team encourages agencies to feel the freedom to not list ministries in an area of focus unless the ministry activity is a comprehensive and substantial offering in that strategic area.
5. Continue using the logic model tool as a standard means for collecting agency outcomes in the Four Areas of Focus. Maintaining the same tool, with some negotiated refinements, will add even more benefit to the planning and evaluation process in the succeeding quadrennia.
6. The recommendations and the full agency evaluation report were presented to the Connectional Table board during its fall meeting, Oct. 31-Nov. 2, 2018, at the General Board of Global Ministries office in Atlanta, GA, U.S.A.

These recommendations come from an all-new agency evaluation process that featured the use of the logic model -- an evaluation tool that clearly articulates the outcomes and impacts for each agency by including data on planned activities, inputs, outputs and partnerships that are needed to achieve the stated impacts -- and was followed by learning dialogues.

The learning dialogues included a review of all agency ministry offerings for each area of focus and provided a full view of the scope and scale of ministry activities.

The Connectional Table, also called the CT, conducted this agency evaluation process under its disciplinary mandates outlined in paragraphs 904 and 905.5 in the Book of Discipline, which outline the CT's purpose and essential functions. One essential function is, "To review and evaluate the missional effectiveness of the general program-related agencies and connectional structures of the church as they collectively seek to aid annual conferences and the local church as they fulfill the mission."

With its disciplinary mandates in mind, the CT used an appreciative inquiry approach and was guided by four values in its evaluation process:

- Missional fruitfulness (outcome-based planning and evaluation);
- Continuous improvement (Increased evaluation capacity and data-driven decisions);
- Building partnerships (maximizing missional resources); and
- Telling the story (celebrating fruitfulness and stewarding the heart of the connection).

Viewing the full scope of the agencies' ministries in the Four Areas of Focus makes obvious the threads of innovation being woven in our church. The CT offers for celebration a few examples of such innovation:

- Discipleship Ministries' See All The People campaign works to form real relationships and develop systems of intentional discipleship in local churches.
- General Board of Global Ministries hosts global round tables to tackle key questions about what it means to be a global church.
- The Commission on the Status and Role of Women (COSROW) hosted a "Do No Harm" sexual ethics event, helping to create safe spaces for women in churches and ministries.

*The Connectional Table is where vision, ministry and money are brought to the same table to coordinate the mission, ministries and resources of The United Methodist Church. Follow us on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram @UMCCT.*

###

Media Contact: Emily Clemons  
Director of Communications -- The Connectional Table  
eclemons@umc.org  
773-714-1517 x6464 |  
www.connectionaltable.umc.org