



Connectional Table Regular Meeting Minutes DRAFT

October 29, 2020

9-11 AM CDT (US)

ZOOM

Attendance:

Aguila, Pete V
Alsted, Christian V Belles, Sarah V
Bergquist, Greg
Birch, Ole V
Boigegrain, Barbara Brady, Brad V
Brown, Shareka V Burton, M. Garlinda Cleaver, III Emanuel V Coles, Amy V
Day, Fred
DeVine, Jerome V Dharmaraj, Jacob V Dotson, Junius
Fernandes, Roland Francisco, Ciriaco V Gatdula, Venus Mae V Graves, Gary
Hanke, Gilbert
Hare, Dawn Wiggins Henry-Crowe, Susan Hettmann, Michelle V Jones, Beverly V
Jung, Hee-Soo V
Kenaston, Judi V
Kitete, Prosper V McAlilly, William V
McKee, Michael V
Meekins, William V
Milford, Brian
Moore-Koikoi, Cynthia V Nelson, Ken V
Niesen, Marianne V
Nuckols, Dave V
Oglesby, Dennis V
Olson, Harriett
Park, Jeremiah V
Penicela, Benedita Nhambiu V

Perez, Lyssette V
Prudente, Karen V
Sermonia, Jovito (Jun) V Scott, Robin V
Simpson, Kim V
Slaughter, Mike V
Swanson, James V
Tuitahi, Monalisa V
Webb, Mark V

Regrets:

Deere, Josephine V
Jen, Mike Dio V

Dyck, Sally V
Evans, Cashar V
Jung, Markus V
Kent, Cynthia V
Krause, Dan
Kumar, Moses
Malone, Tracy V
Murphy, Tonya V
Postell, Lathem V
Zurcher, Stefan V
Watson, Michael V
Wilbourn, Miller V

Guests:

Berger, Isabelle (Interpreter) Clark, Krysta
(Meeting planner)
Gable, Dena (ELCA)
Hotchkiss, Sara
(Commission on GC)
Jones, Dale (Wespath)
King, Rick (GCFA)
Mainprize, Sally
(Meeting planner)
Swanney, Doug
(British Methodist Church)

CT Staff:

Bigham-Tsai, Kennetha Birkhahn-Rommelfanger, Rachel
Killian, Grace
Stricker, Adrienne

Summary of Actions Taken

Included in the minutes below according to Roman numerals indicated. Note also that documents related to these actions may be found in the materials distributed prior to the meeting.

III. b. Nominations for committee assignments (additions and changes) was approved. **III. c.** 2021 Cost of living adjustment for staff was approved.

III. d. 2021 Staff housing designations were approved.

III. e. Staff Work from Home Policy was approved.

V. The motion to affirm the Christmas Covenant according to the document presented was approved.

VI. a. The 2019 CT Audit Report was adopted.

VI. b. The CT Reserves Policy was approved.

VI. c. The CT 2021 Spending Plan was adopted.

VII. WSCF - The grant proposal from the GCAH was approved.

VIII. a. Affirmation of a fixed charges approach to budget allocations for smaller agencies, commissions and racial/ethnic ministry plans was affirmed.

VIII.b. Proposed CT collaboration with GCFA on a survey about projected giving patterns was approved.

X. Future meeting dates and times were approved.

I. Call to Order and Opening Devotional

Bishop Christian Alstead, Connectional Table (CT) chair called the meeting to order at 9:04am and welcomed all to the meeting. He then invited Chief Connectional Ministries Officer (CCMO) Kennetha Bigham-Tsai to offer the devotional. CCMO Bigham-Tsai offered reflections on Matthew 28:19-20 inviting us to consider how “the mission is yet alive.”

II. Opening Business

Chair Alsted again welcomed all to the meeting and acknowledged that the meeting would be recorded for assistance in writing the minutes.

- a. CCMO Bigham-Tsai reported that a quorum of at least 31 voting members had been established.
- b. The agenda was reviewed and approved.
- c. Technology and voting instructions were given verbally by Rachel Birkhan Rommelfanger.
- d. The April 23, 2020 CT Meeting Minutes were approved by the raise of hand function on Zoom.

III. Leadership Discernment and Community Life (LDCL) Report

- a. LDCL chair Ken Nelson welcomed new CT members: M. Garlinda Burton, Interim General Secretary of GCORR; Roland Fernandes, General Secretary of GBGM and Bishop Cynthia Moore-Koikoi, President of GCORR.
- b. Chair Nelson then presented the following nominations for committee assignments:
 - Burton, M. Garlinda – Chapter 5
 - Junius Dotson - Executive Committee; (removed from Connectional Assessment)
 - Roland Fernandes, - Budget Advisory Team; Budget Allocations Committee and World Service Contingency Fund
 - Cynthia Moore-Koikoi - Chapter 5
 - Kim Simpson (previously unassigned) - U.S. Contextual Ministries
 - Shareka Brown - LDCL
 - Emmanuel Cleaver III - LDCL
 - Cynthia Kent - LDCL
 - Marianne Niesen - LDCL

Motion: Chair Nelson moved the approval of the above nominations for committee assignments.

Call for Vote: Bishop Alsted called for a vote by raise of hand function. **Action:** Motion approved.

c. 2021 Cost of Living Adjustment

Motion: Chair Nelson moved the approval of a 1.6% cost of living adjustment for all staff.

Call for Vote: Bishop Alstead called for a vote by raise of hand function. **Action:** Motion approved.

d. 2021 Staff Housing Designations

Motion: Chair Nelson moved on behalf of LDCL the approval of a housing allowance designation for each staff person in the amount requested by the staff person.

Call for Vote: Bishop Alsted called for a vote by raise of hand function. **Action:** Motion approved.

- e. Work from Home Policy (included in documents previously distributed) Chair Nelson referred the CT to the document *CT Work from Home Policy Draft*. It was suggested by Ole Birch that in the document under “Conditions of Employment” that the language be revised to include non-U.S. employees. Nelson said this was a welcome revision.

Motion: Chair Nelson moved on behalf of the LDCL the adoption of the Work from Home policy.

Call for Vote: Bishop Alsted called for a vote by raise of hand function. **Action:** Motion approved.

Chair Nelson closed his report by thanking the staff for all their work during challenging times.

IV. Executive Committee (EC) Report

CCMO Bigham-Tsai reported that the Executive Committee has asked LDCL to nominate a Task Force to look at the make up of the CT in light to historic and current racism and colonialism in the church. She then referred the CT to the

CCMO Update materials included in the meeting documents for more information. Bigham-Tsai also noted that the EC also discussed budget allocations and the collaboration between US Contextual Ministries and Christmas Covenant leaders. Both will be discussed later in the agenda. She closed her report by stating that the actions of these groups were supported by the Executive Committee.

V. US Contextual Ministries (USCM) & Christmas Covenant (CC) Collaboration

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USCM Chair Judy Keniston walked us through a PowerPoint presentation reviewing the Christmas Covenant in relationship with the US Regional Legislation (USRL). Keniston shared about the meetings held between the two groups. She then explained that we would be moving into small breakout groups to facilitate discussion and feedback around the following two questions:

- How do you see the Christmas Covenant Legislation helping to achieve the goals of the USRC legislation by creating a level structure (structural equity and parity) and regional self-determinism?
- How do you see the idea of partnership in the CT's relationship with the Christmas Covenant? What benefits does it have for the CT goal of living more fully into the worldwide connection?

After the breakout groups reconvened Beverly Jones made the following motion (displayed on the screen) on behalf of the Executive Committee:

Motion: The Executive Committee moves that the Connectional Table affirms the Christmas Covenant legislation as a vehicle for providing global regionalism in The United Methodist Church, including the creation of the U.S. as a regional conference. In affirming this legislation, the CT brings institutional partnership to the efforts of the Christmas Covenant Central Conference Outreach Team to create a U.S. regional conference with equal legislative authority and adaptability that the Christmas Covenant seeks to give central conferences.

This affirmation of support does the following:

- 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 CT's legislation provides for the institution of a U.S. regional committee in preparation for passage of constitutional amendments necessary for a U.S. regional conference.
- We recognize that the Christmas Covenant Central Conference Outreach Team will take the lead on the Christmas Covenant legislation and we support this as an expression of our commitment to institutional equity and to dismantling historic, systemic colonialism.

Chair Alsted invited feedback from the CT on the motion. Amendments to the motion were made and discussed. The amendments failed.

Call for Vote: Bishop Alsted called for a vote by raise of hand function.
Action: Motion approved.

VI. Internal Finance & Evaluation (IFE)

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Treasurer Dave Nuchols and Assistant Connectional Ministries Officer (ACMO) Rachel Birkhan-Rommelfanger introduced the three motions being presented by the committee on Internal Finance and Evaluation and referred the CT to the related documents distributed prior to the meeting.

a. **CT 2019 Audit** (previously distributed)

Chair Alsted asked if there were questions about the audit report. None were raised.

Motion: IFE recommends the 2019 CT audit report be adopted.

Call for Vote: Chair Alsted called for a vote by the raise of hand function. **Action:** Motion approved.

b. **CT Reserves Policy** (previously distributed)

Chair Alsted asked if there were questions about the audit report. None were raised.

Motion: IFE recommends the reserve policy be adopted.

Call for Motion: Chair Alsted called for a vote by the raise of hand function. **Action:** Motion approved.

c. **CT 2021 Spending Plan** (previously distributed)

Nuchols shared that the figures here are 100,000.00 less than in 2020. Money not used as part of the 2020 budget will be moved to reserves in conformity to the Reserves Policy. ACMO Birkhan-Rommelfanger pointed out that the Spending Plan prioritizes communications.

Motion: IFE recommends the CT 2021 Spending Plan be adopted.

Call for Vote: Chair Alsted called for a vote by the raise of hand function. **Action:** Motion approved.

VII. World Service Contingency Fund (WSCF)

CCMO Bigham-Tsai referred the CT to the grant proposal from the General Commission on Archives and History (GCAH) in their documents received prior to the meeting. She noted that regular reports are received on

grants given. She then called upon GCAH General Secretary Fred Day to introduce the purposes of the grant request.

Motion: I move that the CT approves a World Service Contingency Fund grant in the amount of \$15,000 to the General Commission on Archives and History to host a virtual summit for Ethnic Minority United Methodists as described in the grant request.

Call for Vote: Chair Alsted called for a vote by the raise of hand function. **Action:** Motion approved.

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CCMO Bigham-Tsai shared that GS Day was retiring and that this would be his last meeting with the CT and invited him to share a few words. Day shared his thanksgiving for time together with the CT followed by Chair Alsted eloquently thanking Day for his service.

Bigham-Tsai noted that completed grants are available for review online.

VIII. Allocations Report

a. Affirmation of fixed charges approach

Treas. Dave Nuchols discussed how the budget allocation needs for the smaller agencies are such that using the on-ratio approach to allocations, which has been the regular practice, would substantially affect the smallest groups given the decrease in apportionment giving. These groups including the General Commission on Religion and Race (GCORR), the Commission on the Status and Role of Women (COSRW), United Methodist Men (UMM) and the Racial/Ethnic Ministry Plans. Nuchols shared the desire to deal equitably in allocations and that the Allocations Team therefore decided that a fixed charge approach would be the better approach for supporting these groups.

Request; Dave Nuchols requested that an affirmation of this approach be made by the CT.

Call for Affirmation: Chair Alsted asked for the CT to indicate affirmation by raise of hand.

Action: Request was affirmed.

b. Proposed Collaboration with GCFA

Treas. Dave Nuchols introduced and then made the following motion:

Motion: The Allocation Team requests the affirmation that - in light of the Connectional Table's role in stewarding the mission, ministries and resources of our denomination - the CT survey annual conference bishops and treasurers about projected giving patterns and invite GCFA and others to collaborate in this work. We are inviting GCFA to add this invitation to collaboration to their agenda for their November 19-20, 2020 board meeting and respond to the Connectional Table by December 1, 2020 about whether or not GCFA is willing to partner with the CT in this effort.

Chair Alsted asked if there were any questions or comments. Bishop McKee shared that GCFA is working on financial questions and is compiling the data.

Call for Vote: Chair Alsted called for a vote by the raise of hand function.
Action: Motion approved.

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IX. CCMO Update

CCMO Bigham-Tsai referred the CT to her written report found in documents sent prior the meeting. She highlighted the Emerging Project and is working with UMCOM to make it a part of their Resources page. She also thanked the staff for their steadfast work done under the conditions of the pandemic and subsequent impact over these past months.

X. Future Meetings

Motion: Secretary Beverly Jones moved on behalf of the Executive Committee the adoption of the following future meeting dates:

- a. February 4, 2021 9-10:30am CST (US)
- b. April 22, 2021 9-11:00am CST (US)
- c. May 13, 2021 9-10:00am CST (US), Joint Meeting with GCFA **Call for**

Vote: Chair Alsted called for a vote by the raise of hand function. **XI. Closing**

Prayer

Everyone was reminded to please complete the October 29, 2020 CT Meeting Evaluation to be sent out by email.

