

Whereas,

The 2009-2012 Study Committee on the Worldwide Nature of The United Methodist Church made several recommendations to the 2012 General Conference regarding next steps toward becoming a more authentic worldwide United Methodist connection;

Whereas,

The Connectional Table, as the body with responsibility for evaluating needs and planning strategies to carry out the mission and ministry of the church (§905.6), convened several key groups actively working to accomplish results toward the Study Committee's recommendations;

Whereas,

In light of the ongoing development of a General Book of Discipline by the Standing Committee on Central Conference Matters (StCCCM) and the Committee on Faith and Order (CFO), which together will present to the 2016 General Conference a petition to deliberate on Part VI, and chapters 5 and 7 during the 2017-2020 quadrennium;

Whereas,

In 2015, the Connectional Table began a visioning process for a General Church Council for The United Methodist Church that resulted in the following guiding vision and principles:

Vision for a General Church Council:

A General Church Council would be a geographically representative, intergenerational body exemplifying the diversity of our worldwide connection.

Principles for a General Church Council:

A General Church Council shall seek to live out the focus and spirit of the following principles:

- 1) Build Trust: In Three Primary Relationships
 - General Conference: Partnership with Commission on General Conference
 - Annual Conferences: Active Bishops & Directors of Connectional Ministry

- General Agencies
 - o Program-related agencies through World Service stewardship
 - o Administrative agencies through stewardship of mission and vision alignment
- 2) Guide: A Uniquely Wesleyan/Spiritual Connection
- 3) Create: An Open Handed/Permission Giving Culture
 - Enable innovation by fostering creativity and enhancing ministry at all levels of the church
 - Give up the need to control or micromanage, set people free to create mission and ministry

Therefore, Be It Resolved:

That the Connectional Table maintain its current structure in the next quadrennium (2017-2020) so that the attention, energy and resources can be focused on developing a General Church Council structure that will model our worldwide connection more faithfully.

The Connectional Table in partnership with the Council of Bishops will create a Missional Collaboration Group made up of CT and COB Members from our global church. This group will be tasked with establishing and recommending a model for a General Church Council to align with the work of the StCCCM and CFO for a General Book of Discipline. The Missional Collaboration Group will be tasked with:

- 1) Providing a forum for conversations with key constituents within our primary partnerships so that we foster wide investment of a “General Church Council” concept.
- 2) Developing legislation to create a General Church Council replacing the Connectional Table in 2020 to accompany the General Book of Discipline legislation. The General Church Council legislation will:
 - Address the membership of the General Church Council.
 - Name the essential functions.
 - Set a timeline for implementation.

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Suggested Title: General Church Council Process Proposal

Financial Implications: None

Global Implications: Yes

Rationale

This proposal offers a process that helps our denomination achieve its mission in an increasingly interconnected, diverse, worldwide context. The CT's work this quadrennium has begun to raise these issues. Allowing the CT to continue to build trust among key partners will strengthen the outcome for the worldwide mission.

Date: *June 16, 2015*

Signature of the Petitioner:

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Amy R. Valdez Barker".

The United Methodist Connectional Table

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