

| Summary | One Church Plan | Connectional Conference Plan | Traditionalist Plan |
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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> One Church Plan takes a relational and compatibilist approach to unity. The restrictions underlying current conflicts are deemed "non-essential matters" over which we can agree to disagree, and thus are removed from the Book of Discipline. This plan emphasizes our external mission by removing internal conflict. No change to structure of UMC. No division of the UMC. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Removes language stating that "practice of homosexuality is incompatible with Christian teaching." While this statement is removed, it is not replaced with any specific affirmation. Neutralizes language in Social Principles concerning civil marriage such that the UMC globally neither prohibits nor affirms same sex marriage. Removes prohibitions against ceremonies celebrating civil unions or same sex marriage. Removes prohibition against gay ordination. Rules may be set by Boards of Ordained Ministry and Clergy Session suitable to each Annual Conference. Our standard of Christian sexual ethics calling for "celibacy in singleness and faithfulness in marriage" will be applied equally to gay and straight clergy. <u>Intends no more trials.</u> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Connectional Conference Plan creates new structures to provide space between those who disagree about Christian ethics regarding same sex marriage and suitability for ordained ministry. Three overlapping "Connectional Conferences" defined by rules concerning same sex marriage will replace today's five Jurisdictional Conferences defined by distinct geography. These Connectional Conferences would be separate legal entities (501(c)3 organizations) but deemed part of one UMC. Each of the three new Connectional Conferences would make their own rules in this area (as well as certain other administrative areas). It is expected that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Traditional Conference similar to the new Traditionalist Plan, Unifying Conference would be similar to the new One Church Plan, and Progressive Plan would provide full affirmation of married gay Christians. Rules and trials would remain a possibility, but a sorting process would place Annual Conferences (ACs), Local Churches (LCs), Bishops and Clergy into a Connectional Conference that matches their belief and thus <u>intends to reduce the number of trials vs. our current situation.</u> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Traditionalist Plan retains, strengthens and enforces current prohibitions on same sex marriage and gay ordination. This plan both invites and forces Annual Conferences who are progressive on matters of same sex marriage to leave the UMC to create new denominations. This plan allows other Annual Conferences and/or Local Churches to leave and create new denomination(s) for any reason. These new "Self-Governing Methodist Churches" would be eligible for concordat relationship and token representation at General Conference. The UMC would continue to proclaim that "practice of homosexuality is incompatible with Christian teaching." Current definition of "self-avowed practicing homosexual" would be further detailed so as to tighten up enforcement. Minimum penalties established for pastors to be suspended for one year on first violation and expulsion for a second violation. Accountability for bishops would move from regional Jurisdictional College of Bishops to new global structures to enforce uniformity. Annual Conference (by vote), Bishops and members of Boards of Ordained Ministry would all certify that they support and enforce these rules relating to same sex marriage and gay ordination. Taken together, these rules will increase the number of trials. |
| <p>Rules regarding ministry with and by married persons</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Where legal civilly, UMC pastors would be allowed but not forced to celebrate civil unions or to conduct same sex wedding services. Annual Conference processes and bishops may ordain qualified gay candidates, but no one is forced to do so. Annual Conferences (i.e., equal lay and clergy voices) may make an advisory statement to inform any such new policies. Adds new provisions to protect freedom of conscience for United Methodists and to bar interference by bishops and district superintendents in the decisions of clergy and local congregations. Provides that same sex weddings will not be celebrated in church buildings unless the local congregation has voted for it. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> It is expected that freedom of conscience (specific to same sex marriage and gay ordination) would apply primarily to the Unifying Conference. In other words: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Traditional Connectional Conference would strictly enforce rules against same sex marriage and gay ordination (similar to the new Traditionalist Plan), Unifying Connectional Conference would operate very similar to the new One Church Model with explicit guarantees for freedom of conscience. Progressive Connectional Conference would expect that all annual conferences would willingly ordain qualified gay candidates, that all pastors would be expected to conduct gay weddings for qualified couples (i.e., on same basis as straight weddings), and that all local churches would willingly host gay weddings (i.e., on same basis as straight weddings). Central Conferences will have to vote and they may either (a) convert to a geographic Connectional Conference (new name, but all current rules in effect) or (b) join one of the ideologically-defined Connectional Conferences (Traditional, Unifying or Progressive) arising from the US context. This legislation does create new options for individual Annual Conferences or even Local Churches to opt out of the choice made by their Central Conference. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Annual Conference (by vote), Bishops and members of Boards of Ordained Ministry will be required to certify that they support and enforce these rules relating to same sex marriage and gay ordination. Annual Conference must certify that Bishop and Boards of Ordained Ministry are following through. Bishops who dissent or who fail to lead their Annual Conference (AC) to follow through may be reported for disciplinary proceedings. General Conference on Finance and Administration (GCF/A) to track and enforce this requirement on Annual Conferences including withholding funds and barring use of UMC name and cross-and-flame logo. |
| <p>Freedom of Conscience</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> No change regarding same sex marriage or ordination is forced on a Central Conference by this legislation. No change in practice is expected in Africa, Philippines or Eastern Europe. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> This plan envisions three annual conferences – one per connectional conference – overlaying all US geography. Borders would be re-mapped for full coverage.. Annual Conferences would have the option of agreeing or disagreeing with the alignment of their former Jurisdictional Conference with a specific new Connectional Conference. It is anticipated that most annual conferences would opt to join the Unifying Conference. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> No change to structure; however, it is anticipated that 10 or more Annual Conferences would either opt out or be forced out of the UMC. It is further anticipated that each Annual Conference would need to cope with some number of Local Churches opting out the AC's alignment – some churches would opt to go back to the UMC and others would opt to leave altogether to join a new Self-Governing Methodist Church. |
| <p>Impact on Annual Conferences (AC)</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> No change to structure. Boards of Ordained Ministry and Clergy Session of each Annual Conference would have option but no requirement to address standards for ordained ministry of qualified married gay candidates. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> This plan envisions three annual conferences – one per connectional conference – overlaying all US geography. Borders would be re-mapped for full coverage.. Annual Conferences would have the option of agreeing or disagreeing with the alignment of their former Jurisdictional Conference with a specific new Connectional Conference. It is anticipated that most annual conferences would opt to join the Unifying Conference. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> No change to structure; however, it is anticipated that 10 or more Annual Conferences would either opt out or be forced out of the UMC. It is further anticipated that each Annual Conference would need to cope with some number of Local Churches opting out the AC's alignment – some churches would opt to go back to the UMC and others would opt to leave altogether to join a new Self-Governing Methodist Church. |