

The 1GC2019 Delegate

February 2019
Issue 4

U.S. Delegates Support the One Church Plan

U.S. Delegates Support the One Church Plan

- 67% in Favor
- 7% Undecided
- 26% Not in Favor

Delegates from the United States overwhelmingly support the One Church Plan with more than two-thirds saying Yes! Months of outreach by several organizations, including Mainstream UMC, has yielded a clear choice in the U.S. The count includes at least a majority support in all five U.S. Jurisdictions. There is no question the U.S. church is ready for The Way Forward.

The outreach did not ask if delegates prefer another plan. This means support for the Connectional

Conference Plan, the Simple Plan, and the Modified Traditional Plan share the remaining 26%.

Not many people are buying into the never-going-to-pass CCP. It is clear, only a small percentage of delegates in the United States support the mean-spirited certifying, punishing, and evicting of all who disagree through the Modified Traditional Plan. And a smaller group still who support the Wesleyan Covenant Association's (WCA) divisive agenda to form a new denomination at the expense of the larger church.¹ And, fewer still who support WCA President, Rev. Keith Boyette's proposal to dissolve the denomination.²

Outreach to delegates outside the United States continues. There are many communication challenges to this task, including at least seven common languages in the UMC. Another challenge is the huge disparity in access to contact information for delegates around

the world. A common language in the U.S. and ready access to high-speed communications has fueled the vote count here. There is an ongoing need for local individuals to talk with delegates around the world and not simply have Americans presume to offer the answers.

It is important for delegates outside the U.S. to know that most of the push by U.S.-based advocacy groups for the Modified Traditional Plan comes from their desire to leave the denomination. They say they want to "unify" the church, but their "exit first" strategy betrays their true intentions. They are using homosexuality to drive a wedge between the U.S. churches and those around the globe.

Supporters of the One Church Plan are the ones who seek the interest of the global denomination and the value of staying together.

¹ tinyurl.com/yc5aav2r
² tinyurl.com/yclg4amc

If you are a delegate and would like to register your position on a plan, please email: info@MainstreamUMC.com.



Find out more at MainstreamUMC.com

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One Church Plan

- It is faithful to Scripture and the example of the Apostles in Acts 15 of allowing different practices in different mission fields.
- It honors Biblical Authority and recognizes changes in interpretation over time.
- It is gracious to both “conservatives” and “liberals”. It does not push anyone out of the church.
- It has been vetted by one of the most rigorous processes in our denomination’s history, a faithful, two-year study by the Commission on the Way Forward.
- It has been recommended by nearly two-thirds of all active UM Bishops.
- It has been unanimously upheld by the Judicial Council (see page 3 for minor changes).
- It has no impact on the Central Conferences outside of the U.S.
- It retains the global structure of the church and shared critical ministries.
- It removes most of the controversial and hurtful language about LGBTQ persons.
- It protects the conscience of individual bishops, conferences, pastors, members, and churches.
- It restates that marriage is “traditionally understood as between one man and one woman.”
- It states that same-sex marriages are NOT allowed in any church, without a vote by that church. This means no church needs to vote unless it wants to allow same sex marriages.
- It is financially faithful to pension commitments for active and retired pastors.
- It puts an end to church trials over human sexuality.
- It holds the denomination together so that we can focus on Making Disciples of Jesus Christ and the Transforming the World.

Supported
by **67%** of U.S.
Delegates

One Church Plan

Under the One Church Plan, ¶ 161.C) *Marriage* honors the traditional understanding of marriage between one man and one woman and protects the conscience of every pastor.

It will read: “We affirm the sanctity of the monogamous marriage covenant that is expressed in love, mutual support, personal commitment, and shared fidelity, traditionally understood as a union of one man and one woman. We believe that God’s blessing rests upon such marriage, whether or not there are children of the union. We reject social norms that assume different standards for women than for men in marriage. Where laws in civil society define marriage as union between two adults, no United Methodist clergy shall be required to celebrate or bless a same-sex union.”



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Modified Traditional Plan

Supported by fewer
than **26%** of U.S.
Delegates

- It was written for one splinter group. It is not a collaborative effort for church unity.
- It is mean-spirited in certifying, punishing, and evicting all who disagree.
- It is not the work of the Commission on the Way Forward, but a few anonymous bishops.
- It has not been vetted by Council of Bishops or Judicial Council.

- It codifies one interpretation of Scripture and punishes all others.
- It guarantees hundreds of church trials across the connection.
- It pays off departing conferences with OUR apportionment funds.
- It requires the remaining churches to pay back these undetermined apportionment funds in only four years.
- It is supported by those who are seeking to divide the church, some of whom have stated they will leave the UMC anyway.
- It uses homosexuality to drive a wedge between U.S. churches and those around the globe.
- It is not Wesleyan because "Grace" is absent.

Judicial Council Changes to the One Church Plan

This is not an ordinary General Conference. This is not ordinary legislation. We cannot go down the divisive legislative path of the last several decades. We should only change the three (3) sentences that Judicial Council Decision 1366 requires within the One Church Plan. The rest is constitutional. Those minor changes are:

- Petition 4 is constitutional, except for the 2nd sentence. Delete: ~~The bishop may choose to seek the non-binding advice of an annual conference session on standards relating to human sexuality for ordination to inform the Board of Ordained Ministry in its work.~~
- Petition 8 is constitutional, except for the 2nd sentence. There are two options to fix. The first is to delete the entire sentence: ~~Similarly, clergy who cannot in good conscience continue to serve a particular church based on unresolved disagreements over same-sex marriage as communicated by the pastor and Staff Parish~~

~~Relations Committee to the district superintendent, shall be reassigned.~~ This can also be fixed by changing the word "shall" to "may" in the last line.

- Petition 13 is constitutional, except for the 2nd sentence. Delete: ~~Provided, however, that any clergy session of an annual conference that votes on such matters shall not, without the consent of the presiding bishop, take up any subsequent motion on that issue during any called or special session of annual conference held within 30 full calendar months from the date of such vote regardless of the outcome.~~

Beyond these required changes, we should vote for the document as a whole. If we amend the One Church Plan to pick up five votes from the "left," we will lose ten votes from the "right." Conversely, if we amend the One Church Plan to pick up five votes from the "right," we will lose ten votes from the "left." The Commission on the Way Forward represented ALL of us. The balance they have struck is the balance that we must adopt. Going down the path of amendments is going down a path of division.

The One Church Plan does not require any changes in the Central Conferences concerning practices related to same sex marriage or standards for ordination.

Vote Yes
For the
One Church
Plan

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