## Four Plans for A Way Forward for The United Methodist Church

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<th>Impacts</th>
<th>The Simple Plan</th>
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<td><strong>Brief Summary</strong></td>
<td>● Deletes all discriminatory language regarding LGBTQIA+ people, including the phrase &quot;self-avowed practicing homosexuals&quot; in the sections on Social Principles, Ordination, Funding, and Trials. (Paragraphs 161C and G, 304.3, 310.2d footnote 3, 341.6, 613.19, 806.9, 2702.1)</td>
<td>● The One Church Plan gives Central Conferences, Jurisdictions, annual conferences, congregations, and clergy greater flexibility to make decisions based on specific ministry contexts. This is the plan recommended by the Council of Bishops.</td>
<td>● This plan would replace the 5 U.S. jurisdictions with 3, non-geographical, connectional conferences: Traditional, Unity, and Progressive. ● These connectional conferences share doctrinal standards, joint support for mission and ministries outside of the U.S., and general church administrative infrastructure. ● The plan anticipates a 6-10-year transition - 3 General Conferences - to shift to the new structure.</td>
<td>● The Traditionalist Plan was prepared by a subgroup of the Council of Bishops. This plan would strengthen restrictions in the Book of Discipline, and implement stricter enforcement at every level of the United Methodist Church.</td>
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<td><strong>Impact on local congregations</strong></td>
<td>● Free of having to be concerned about the sexual orientation of their pastors or members.</td>
<td>● Allowed to decide whether to allow same-sex weddings or not. [USA] ● Permitted to indicate whether the congregation is open to receiving LGBTQ clergy or not. [USA] ● No provisions for “gracious exit” added to Discipline. Conference can utilize the current processes.</td>
<td>● May choose to align themselves with the connectional conference selected by their jurisdictional and/or annual conferences or they may vote by simple majority to join a different connectional conference altogether. ● Decisions on allowing or disallowing same-sex weddings will be determined by the policies of the connectional conference with which a local church chooses to affiliate.</td>
<td>● No local church will be required to vote. However, congregations that disagree with their annual conference decision to enforce the Discipline could vote to withdraw from the UMC or join a newly created autonomous-affiliated or concordat Church.</td>
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| **Impact on clergy**                                                    | ● Continue to use their professional judgment on what weddings they would do. ● Freed to be married if they choose to be, to a person regardless of their gender. Free to share appropriately their experience without having to hide the gender of the reference. ● Freed of fear of trials or end of trials against clergy for celebrating same-sex weddings. [USA] | ● End of trials against clergy for celebrating same-sex weddings. [USA] ● Free to decide whether they are willing to preside at same-sex weddings or not, based on individual conscience. [USA] ● Gracious exit permitted for those unable to continue serving in the UMC, including provisions for protecting individual pensions. | ● Clergy may affiliate with one or more connectional conferences but must meet specific qualifications and abide by the standards of conduct established by the connectional conference(s) to which they belong. ● Clergy choices regarding affiliation will become an important factor in the appointive process, which will still be led by the cabinet of each annual conference. | ● Urges clergy not willing to support disciplinary provisions around same-sex marriage and ordination to consider joining an autonomous-affiliate or concordat Church. ● Requires clergy found guilty of breaking current or future disciplinary provisions regarding the performance of same-sex marriages to surrender their credentials. ● Mandates that any just
charges related to their orientation or gender identity. In other words, freed to be fully in ministry with their whole selves.

**Impact on Annual Conference**

- End of charges and trials of “self-avowed homosexuals” and allies that choose to minister to/with the LGBTQIA+ community.
- No need to inquire about the sexual orientation of candidates or ministers.
- Free to study the range of sexuality, including gender and sexual orientation, using scientific, historical and biblical research, in the context of Wesleyan faith.
- No need to police funding for sexuality studies.

**Impact on Bishops**

- Council of Bishops will remain one body.
- Episcopal assignments will be made in a manner that considers each bishop’s personal convictions as well as the needs of the jurisdiction. [USA]
- Bishops will not be forced to ordain LGBTQ candidates; however, Jurisdiction bishops will make arrangements for another bishop to do the ordination, if needed. [USA]
- The Episcopal Fund will continue to support the salaries and expenses of bishops in the Central Conferences. Additionally, GCFA will develop a plan to ensure that each episcopal area in the U.S. covers the costs related to its

- Ordinations will be recognized jointly by all connectional conferences. However, fitness for service and ability to affiliate will be determined by each individual connectional conference.

- Clergy session will continue to work with their Board of Ordained Ministry to determine what qualifications to require for ordinations.
- Will use current disciplinary processes to facilitate the assignment, transfer, and/or gracious exit of candidates and/or ordained clergy as well as congregations.

- As previously noted, annual conferences may vote by simple majority to affiliate with a different connectional conference than the one selected by the jurisdictional conference.
- As deemed necessary, decisions about which connectional conference to affiliate with may be reconsidered after four years.

- Directs annual conferences to certify that they will enforce current and future disciplinary provisions related to LGBTQ issues.
- Encourages annual conferences with alternate views to current discipline to form autonomous-affiliated or concordat churches rather than stay connected to mainline United Methodism.
- Stipulates that annual conferences that do not certify their compliance with the Discipline by 2021 will no longer receive UM funds or use the UM name or logo.

- Council of Bishops remain one body.
- Freed of the need to deal with charges and trials based solely on a person's sexual orientation.
- Appointment criteria may be simplified slightly.
- Bishops may be asked to ordain LGBTQIA+ candidates and may need to consider asking another bishop to assist
- No change to Episcopal Fund

- Maintains the current Council of Bishops but reorganizes the various colleges of bishops so that they are directly affiliated with a connectional conference.
- The Council of Bishops would continue to provide leadership in ecumenical relations and in addition will serve as creative hub for learning and sharing best practices for innovative ministries.
- Similar to the current jurisdictional and central conference structures, each college of bishops would provide supervision and accountability for the bishops assigned to that particular connectional conference.
- U.S. bishops will be financially

- Mandates that both active and retired bishops must certify that they will uphold disciplinary restrictions by 2021 or lose the ability to be compensated for their expenses.
- Encourages those who do not certify compliance to join an autonomous-affiliated or Concordat Church.
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<th>Impact on Central Conference</th>
<th>bishop’s compensation package as well as each area’s apportioned share of the Episcopacy Fund.</th>
<th>supported by their assigned connectional conference, while bishops outside of the U.S. will be jointly funded by every connectional conference.</th>
<th>Central Conferences can choose to affiliate with a U.S.-based connectional conference or create up to five additional connectional conferences of their own.</th>
<th>Central Conferences who do not certify compliance will be encouraged to join an autonomous-affiliated or Concordat Church.</th>
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<td><strong>Same gender weddings may be conducted in conferences where civil law permits them, covenant services elsewhere.</strong></td>
<td><strong>Central Conferences will be able to act according to their beliefs and will expand their ability to adapt the Book of Discipline to fit their contexts, including language pertaining to human sexuality, marriage, and ordination.</strong></td>
<td><strong>Central Conferences can choose to affiliate with a U.S.-based connectional conference or create up to five additional connectional conferences of their own.</strong></td>
<td><strong>Central Conferences who do not certify compliance will be encouraged to join an autonomous-affiliated or Concordat Church.</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Book of Discipline may still be adapted as presently allowed.</strong></td>
<td><strong>General agencies will remain the same and maintain their relationship to all annual conferences, jurisdictions, central conferences, and the general church.</strong></td>
<td><strong>The following general administrative agencies would continue to exist and be jointly supported by all of the connectional conferences: Wespath, the Publishing House, General Council on Finance and Administration, Archives and History, and parts of GBGM.</strong></td>
<td><strong>The Traditionalist Plan does not detail the impact it will have on Global Church agencies. But, given the loyalty certification required of bishops, it is reasonable to expect similar loyalty certifications from employees and boards of directors. If they are unwilling to certify, they will then be subject to encouragement to join an autonomous-affiliated or Concordat Church, outside the United Methodist Church.</strong></td>
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<td><strong>No change to general agencies.</strong></td>
<td><strong>The general program boards and agencies would be reorganized based on future agreements of those connectional conferences which decide to utilize and financially support them.</strong></td>
<td><strong>Each connectional conference would adopt its own Book of Discipline and include the Articles of Religion, Confessions of Faith, and the General Rules.</strong></td>
<td><strong>The Judicial Council would be comprised of two representatives from each connectional conference and would still have ultimate authority over matters of church law. Additionally, each connectional conference will be free to organize their own judicial body to decide matters related to their Book of</strong></td>
<td><strong>The Traditionalist Plan does not detail the impact it will have on Global Church agencies. But, given the loyalty certification required of bishops, it is reasonable to expect similar loyalty certifications from employees and boards of directors. If they are unwilling to certify, they will then be subject to encouragement to join an autonomous-affiliated or Concordat Church, outside the United Methodist Church.</strong></td>
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A much shorter General Conference would still retain authority over the constitution as well as the shared administrative agencies and services. It would also provide opportunities to share best practices related to mission and ministry.

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**Pros**
- Minimal changes to text of BoD; frees LGBTQIA+ clergy for ministry and allies that choose to minister to/with the LGBTQIA+ community.
- Unity and holding us together
- Allows maximum contextualization
- Allows widely differing stances to stay connected
- The name stays the same: The United Methodist Church

**Cons**
- Too much for some
- Still allows discrimination
- Too much for some
- Segments the church
- Depends on Constitutional Amendments passing in whole church
- No-compromise and exclusionary
- LGBTQIA and affirming clergy, bishops and churches expelled