

Commission on the Way Forward

1. **THE ONE CHURCH PLAN:** The essence of this plan would be to allow local decision making on matters about ordination of gay clergy and about marriage of gay or lesbian people in UMC congregations. To do this, the general conference would rescind the present universally restrictive language about homosexual practice from the Discipline, and thus:
 - a. Decisions about ordaining gay and lesbian people would be made by each annual conference's clergy session; and
 - b. Decisions about whether marriage of same-gender couples could be held in UMC church buildings would be made by each congregation.
 - c. This plan does not require any annual conference, bishop, congregation, or pastor to act contrary to their convictions. It protects religious liberty.
 - d. Because we are a global church, UM's in Central conferences in Asia, Africa & Europe would still have the authority to adapt the Book of Discipline.
2. **THE CONNECTIONAL CONFERENCE PLAN:** This plan would divide the denomination, at least within the U.S., into 3 overlapping "connectional conferences", replacing the existing jurisdictional conferences in the U.S. These connectional conferences would be organized according to attitudes towards the presently divisive issues regarding homosexual practice rather than geography:
 - a. 3 New Conferences
 - i. A connectional conference consisting of those congregations who take a consistently traditional view of the issues regarding homosexual practice;
 - ii. A connectional conference consisting of those congregations who take a consistently progressive view of the issues regarding homosexual practice;
 - iii. A connectional conference consisting of those congregations that value the unity of their congregations over any stance on the issue of homosexual practice.
 - b. This plan would hold the church together with a very thin umbrella Book of Discipline shared by all 3 Connectional Conferences. But each Conference would have its own more detailed and involved Book of Discipline. In this plan Central Conferences (non-U.S.) would have their choice of becoming their own Connectional Conference.
3. **THE TRADITIONAL PLAN:** This plan would keep in place all of the current restrictions against homosexual practice, and would add stronger enforcement of the existing restrictions, in the effort to bring about greater clarity and increased accountability.
4. **ACCESS TO FULL REPORT:** <https://www.tnumc.org/general-conference-2019/>
5. **OTHER PROPOSALS:** A host of other proposals are coming to the general conference of 2019 from individuals and groups in the UMC. As many as 61 different resolutions may be considered.
6. **FEB 2019 GENERAL CONFERENCE DELEGATES LISTENING SESSIONS, Sunday's 3:00-5:00pm**
 - a. October 14 - Manchester First UMC
 - b. October 21 – Cookeville First UMC; Donaldson Heights UMC
 - c. October 28 – Martin College
 - d. November 4 – Clark Memorial UMC
 - e. November 11 - Madison Street UMC
7. **TENNESSEE CONFERENCE DELEGATES**
 - a. Laity: Jim Allen, Holly Neal, Connie Clark, George Brown
 - b. Clergy: Harriet Bryan, Jacob Armstrong, Stephen Handy, Jackson Henry
 - c. Contact Email for Delegates: COWF@tnumc.org
8. **CONTACT BUMC LEAD TEAM:** WayForward@BUMC.net