

May 4, 2018

Dear Sisters and Brothers of the Texas Annual Conference,

The Council of Bishops has just concluded its Spring meeting. We engaged in many hours of honest conversation, authentic worship and careful deliberation. The entire meeting was bathed in prayer. The Council has issued a press release as its official communication which you can find in the attachment. It is important to understand that three official actions were taken as part of the one formal motion and rationale that was adopted concerning the report of the Commission on the Way Forward.

First, the Council of Bishops is forwarding three complete plans as part of its report to the General Conference: the Traditionalist Plan, the One Church Plan and the Connectional Conference Plan. This means the General Conference will have all three plans in front of them for consideration, and has the right to adopt, amend or reject any of them.

Second, a majority of active bishops on the Council voted to recommended one plan to the General Conference and for that recommendation to be the One Church Plan. There was significant support for the other two Plans as well.

Third, the Council is going to share the full body of the Commission and Council's work for the delegates to have the resources they need as they decide the best way forward for the United Methodist Church. It will include theological and missional frameworks and a historical narrative of how the plans were shaped.

Ultimately it is the General Conference – and not the Council of Bishops – that will chart the way forward for our Church next February 23-26, 2019 in St. Louis. Between now and then I will be in conversation with laity and clergy across our conference to help all of us come to a deeper understanding of the issues and proposed solutions. Some of the supportive material has yet to be finalized and The Traditional Plan needs more elaboration. The Council will publish its report when they are completed and translated into the official languages of the General Conference. The projected date for release is after June 15.

Please continue to pray our way forward, asking for the Holy Spirit's wisdom to be poured out upon all delegates and especially our own. You are also welcome to participate in our LiveStream on this topic May 12 at 10:00 a.m. at St. Luke's United Methodist Church or go to [www.txcumc.org/bishoplivevideo](http://www.txcumc.org/bishoplivevideo).

Grace and peace,

Scott J. JonesScott J. Jones