

# Realignment of Discipleship Ministries- May 2018

Greetings in the name of the One who makes us one. There is no better place to be than beneath the cross. It is here that healing and common ground is found. It is here where our hope rises to meet God’s promises. It is here that we experience Oneness in the midst of our differences.

Our United Methodist heritage includes a particular understanding of discipleship beneath the cross formed by the both-and nature of our theology of grace: Loving God and Neighbor through Communal and Individual practices. As United Methodists, we understand that in order to deepen in discipleship, one must practice the means of grace which forms us to a particular definition of discipleship: *To witness to Jesus Christ in the world, and to follow his teachings through acts of compassion, justice, worship, and devotion under the guidance of the Holy Spirit.*

### Loving God (Works of Piety)

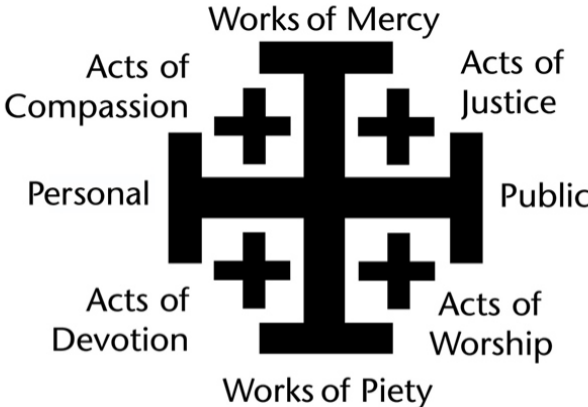
*Individual Practices* (Acts of Devotion): reading, meditating and studying the scriptures, prayer, fasting, regularly attending worship, healthy living, and sharing our faith with others.

*Communal Practices* (Acts of Worship): regularly share in the sacraments, Christian conferencing (accountability to one another), and Bible study.

### Loving Neighbor (Works of Mercy)

*Individual Practices* (Acts of Compassion): doing good works, visiting the sick, visiting those in prison, feeding the hungry, and giving generously to the needs of others.

*Communal Practices* (Acts of Justice): seeking justice, ending oppression and discrimination, and addressing the needs of the poor.



The General Rule of Discipleship is an adaptation of Wesley’s General Rules. (The Book of Discipline of The United Methodist Church—2012, ¶ 1117.2)

This holistic work of forming disciples in the Wesleyan spirit happens in local faith communities. This isn’t a check list of activities but rather should be a shared understanding of what it looks like to mature as a disciple of Jesus along these dimensions and how the church supports that maturation process.

Resources and examples may be found at <http://www.bwcumc.org/discipleship-development/>.

### Staffing Changes

Together, including staff and conference leaders, we collaborate to deepen discipleship, develop vibrant communities of faith and dare persons to co-create with God for the flourishing of all.

Connectional Ministries staff portfolios have been refocused on helping the Baltimore-Washington Conference make collective progress on abundant health, advocacy and action, young people’s ministries and a variety of projects that deepen discipleship, develop leaders, promote missional innovation, and build relationships and partnerships so that more people, more diverse people and more younger people love as Jesus loves. Each staff person is responsible for inspiring and equipping

servant leaders and local faith communities to better develop disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world.

A part of our realignment work included the following title changes:

- Cheryl Cook from Associate Director, Information Resourcing Ministry to Coordinator of Young People and Special Projects
- Stacey Cole Wilson from Director of Congregational Excellence to Executive Minister of Justice and Service
- John Nupp from Director of the Center for Clergy Excellence to Executive Minister of Call and Clergy Care

## Missional Innovation

At the heart of it, missional innovation is simply partnering with God to do a new thing in a way that it hasn't been done before for the flourishing of lives and communities. The Rev. Dr. Kenda Creasy Dean of Ministry Incubators talks about it this way: "A sustainable new ministry that embodies Christ to solve a community problem in a way that is aligned spiritually, relationally and financially."

## Tools

Connectional Ministries staff and servant leaders are available to facilitate the use of these tools for districts and/or clusters of churches.

- **Mission Possible** is a game with a purpose: to teach design thinking for social change. Design thinking is an iterative process of building, measuring, testing and improving that is helpful in situations where solutions need to be developed for things that aren't already known to work. After playing a round, there are templates available for leaders/congregations to develop their own plan using the same proven thought process.
- **Good Brunches** is a series of conversations that create community across lines of difference using kingdom principles while eating out.

## Current Projects

- **The Change Maker's Project** supports young adults in hearing God's call to innovative ministry through mentoring, missional immersions, entrepreneurial community engagement, and vocational conversations. Learn more at: <https://www.thechangemakersproject.com/>.
- **Hatch-a-Thon** is a 48 hour retreat where teams come to incubate their seed of an idea into a fully hatched, pitchable plan with help from Ministry Incubators. There is a huge distance between a good idea and a fully formed, fundable plan. This is a proven process for covering that divide in a short amount of time. We will be holding the first of these November 8-10, 2018 at Camp Manidokan.

## Evaluation of Existing Discipleship Agencies

In addition to improving the Nominations process, the DCM was tasked with evaluating the state of our existing discipleship committees and to discern opportunities for streamlining and improving our mission-critical tasks. As the DCM began interviewing chair persons, there were some agencies that may simply need re-focusing and others that were ready for re-imagining. A vast majority of persons interviewed:

- Stated that the current approach isn't working for a variety of reasons

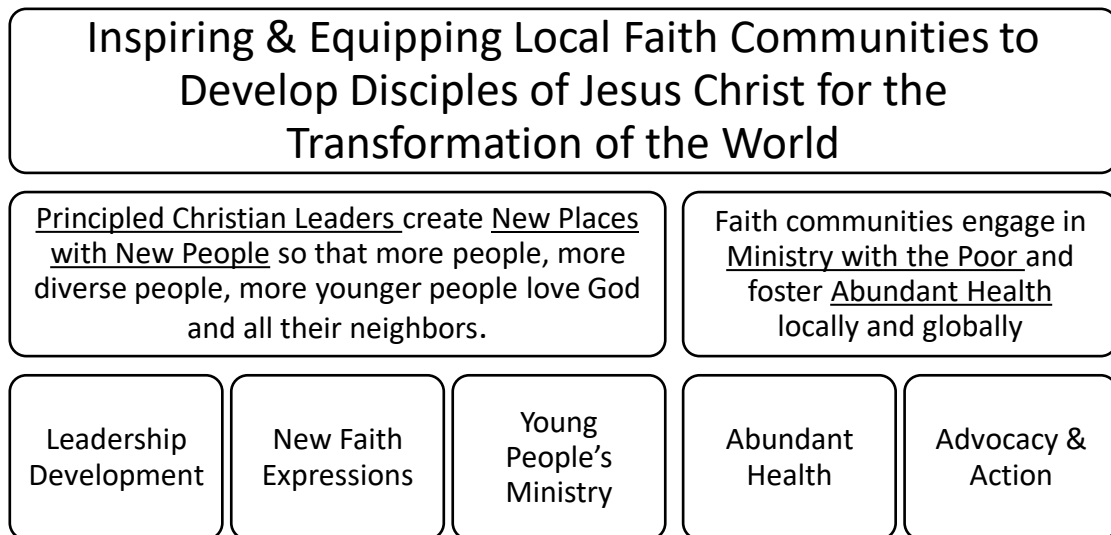
- Wanted to have impact and were open to trying new ways of being in ministry together; saw value in ongoing, intentional collaboration
- Named the large chasm between the agencies, districts and local churches and that a lack of organizing at the district level was a significant obstacle to achieving greater impact

As of July 2017, only two of the 17 were fully functional (making progress toward fulfilling their purpose), half only met to write the report for Annual Conference and the remainder were meeting but not fully functional (e.g., meeting but little action/impact, not full participation, etc.) Some major committees hadn't been functional for years. This was due to several factors which are most easily addressed within a context of a simplified, purpose-driven structure.

## Refocusing and Realignment Work

As a result of the interviews with Discipleship Agency chairs, the following steps were taken:

1. Consulted the Book of Discipline and verified that it gives an annual conference permission to reconfigure its agencies as long as certain agencies are maintained (§1610).
2. Consulted with other Annual Conferences who were in the process of streamlining their agencies or who had done so recently. (We are not alone in seeking better ways of doing ministry together!)
3. Refocused on our denominational mission and foci. Since 2006, the Council of Bishops, the Connectional Table and the general program agencies have been affirming and strengthening United Methodist missional priorities in the Four Areas of Focus (underlined below). These broad areas have emerged from thriving ministries across the church to represent the key connectional ministries that lead to thriving faith communities, as well as thriving conference-wide and general church ministries. In 2016, The UMC embraced specific goals in each of the four areas, and are working together to accomplish great things for God.

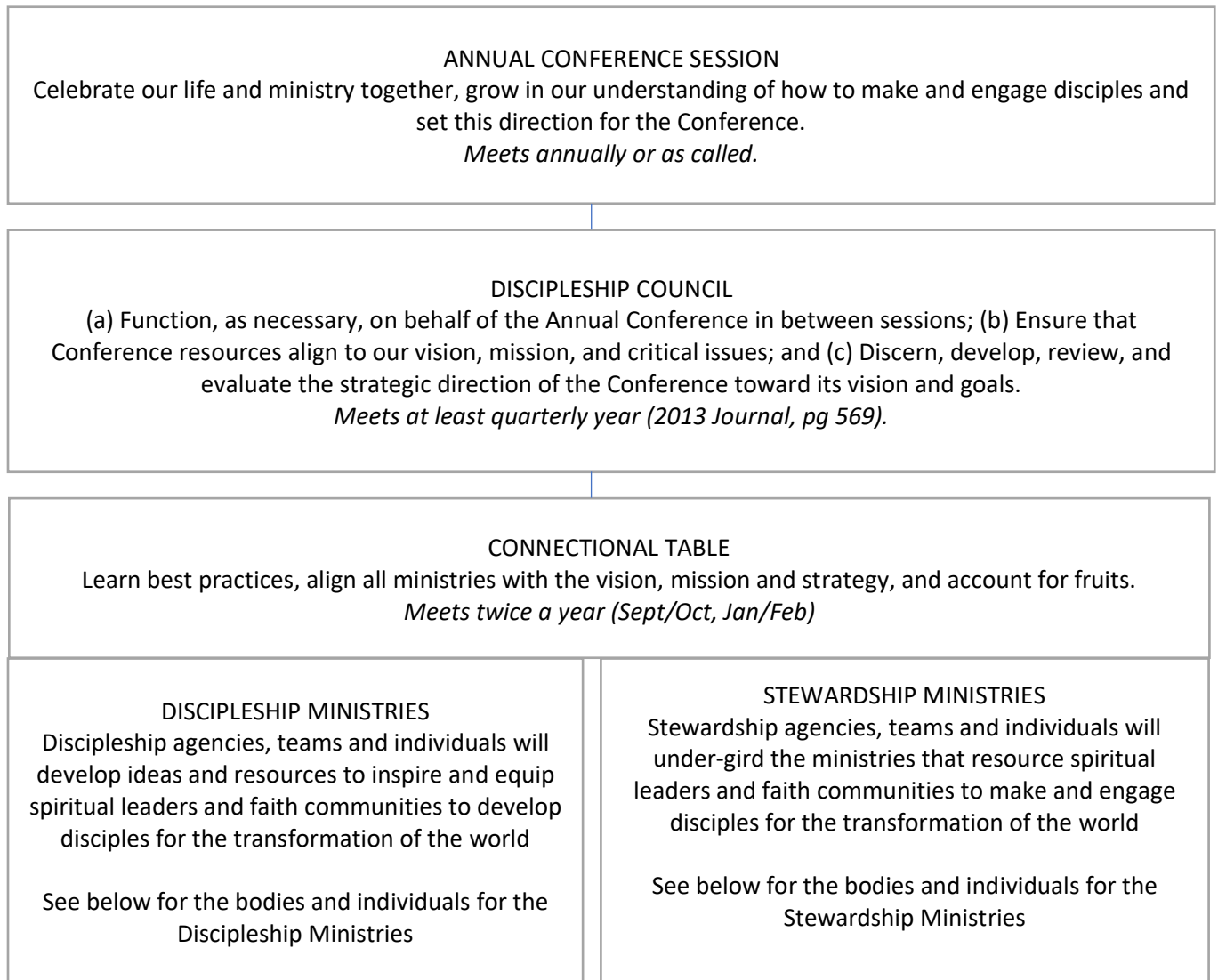


4. Brought the findings and ideas for consolidating the non-required agencies down to five networks to the Nominations Committee, Discipleship Council and Connectional Table to explore further. Connectional Table leaders helped check initial thinking about which agencies work might best fit in which area by checking the functions from the Book of Discipline against

the purpose of the network. The Discipleship Council assigned four listening partners to accompany the DCM in her work of listening and discerning: Ms. Carol Travis, Rev. Bonnie Scott, Mr. Moorosi Mokuena and Rev. Steve Larsen.

5. Convened stakeholders to dream and input on three of the networks most impacted by the change: Young People’s Ministry, Advocacy & Action and Abundant Health. Changes to the area name, purpose statement, the make-up of the new agency and initial approaches to reorganizing have been made as a result of those conversations. More details may be found in their reports.
6. Submitted the 2019 budget to CFA with these five areas as the framework and with a vision of pooling money that was formally assigned to particular line items into purpose-driven grants that ministries and leaders may apply for through a new granting process. This process will enable more collaborative leadership, visibility, flexibility, accountability and sharing of best practices. Additionally, we will supplement mission shares giving with grant funding as a strategy for ministry growth (see CFA’s report for details).
7. Continued conversations with Annual Conference leadership – including the Rules Committee – about the intention to test before making changes to the structure. Waiting until 2019 to bring any needed resolutions will also allow us to take into account any decisions made at the Special Called Session of General Conference.

As a reminder, the following is a functional chart of our structure. This first appeared in the 2006 Journal, page 480. (Subsequent modifications have been noted.)



In the 2006 Journal, there was a specific configuration of agencies underneath the Discipleship Ministries area that were aligned with the Discipleship Adventure and that were never fully implemented. As of July 2017, there was no grouping of agency work. Additionally, Communications and Archives and History had shifted from Stewardship to Discipleship.

What follows is the realignment of Discipleship Ministries we are testing this year before bringing finalized recommendations to the 2019 Annual Conference session for a vote. During this testing period, the current way in which the Connectional Table is populated will be maintained to minimize disruption. The entities with an asterisk are populated through our Nominations Committee. The functions of the entities in parentheses will be cared for by the networked area. The items listed without parentheses are there to show where synergy exists. Groups may be considered as working groups or other entities that help translate the work done by the network (e.g., strategy, priorities, goals) to their constituency group. Individuals listed would be a part of the Network.

**Leadership Development Network:** develops disciples by maturing Jesus followers who know their purpose and use their gifts to build up the body of Christ for the transformation of the world.

- (¶ 629. Board of Discipleship\*)
- ¶ 603.9. Conference Lay Leader
- ¶ 631. Conference Board of Laity

**New Faith Expressions Network:** develops disciples by encouraging evangelism and the creation of diverse, multicultural third places with and for people who aren't currently connected to any faith community.

- Under development
- Missional Innovation
- Aspects of ¶ 632. Conference Committee on Ethnic Local Church Concerns\*, ¶ 645. Conference Commission on the Small Membership Church\*, ¶ 653. Committee on Disability Concerns\*, ¶ 655. Committee on Hispanic/Latino Ministries

**Young People's Ministry Network:** develops disciples by inviting, inspiring and strengthening youth and young adult servant leaders in local churches, campuses, camps, projects and mission fields of the annual conference.

- (¶ 634. Board of Higher Education and Ministries\*)
- ¶ 649. Conference Council on Youth Ministry
- ¶ 650. Young Adult Council
- Retreat and Camping Ministries
- ROCK

**Abundant Health Network:** develops disciples by fostering spiritual, physical and mental health for all and promoting an understanding of the interconnectedness of all aspects of health both locally and globally.

- ¶ 633. Conference Board of Global Ministries\*)
- Volunteers in Mission and Emergency Response Teams
- Quality of Life Retreats; HIV/AIDS Ministry

**Advocacy & Action Network:** develops disciples by partnering with communities so that we join in advocating to transform systems which disenfranchise, marginalize, and oppress and to create a BWC presence on urgent policy matters at local, state and national levels.

- Racial Justice Team
  - ¶ 643. Commission on Religion and Race\*
  - NEJ Call to Action for Racial Justice
- Immigration Rights Team
  - Justice for Our Neighbors
- Gender Equity Team
  - (¶ 644. Commission on the Status and Role of Women\*)
- Wealth Equity Team
- Creation Care Team
- (¶ 629. Board of Church and Society\*)
- (¶ 642. Christian Unity and Interreligious Relationships\*)

The following entities function across multiple areas—including New Faith Expressions—but are budgetarily housed in Advocacy and Action:

- (¶ 632. Conference Committee on Ethnic Local Church Concerns\*)
- (¶ 645. Conference Commission on the Small Membership Church\*)
- ¶ 653. Committee on Disability Concerns\*
- (¶ 654. Committee on Native American Ministry\*)
- ¶ 655. Committee on Hispanic/Latino Ministries

Other:

- ¶ 641. Commission on Archives and History\* used to be listed under Stewardship
- ¶ 646. Commission on Communication\* used to be listed under Stewardship
- ¶ 647. United Methodist Women
- ¶ 648. United Methodist Men

The benefits we seek include:

- Improved focus, collaboration and impact.
- Greater shared leadership for strategy and resource alignment by people who are actually engaged in the work.
- Easier to get messages and engagement to and from districts, local churches and leaders.
- More time spent on getting the work done.
- More people engaged and supported in ministry that happens on the ground.
- More aligned with connectional goals and funding.

The reports in the pages that follow have been organized in the order of these five focus areas.

Submitted by: Rev. Steve Larsen, Mr. Moorosi Mokuena, Rev. Bonnie Scott and Ms. Carol Travis, Discipleship Council assigned listeners, Rev. Dr. Stacey Cole Wilson, Executive Minister of Justice and Service, and Ms. Christie Latona, Director of Connectional Ministries

# Discipleship Ministries Agencies & Groups

## Leader Development

Purpose: to develop mature Jesus followers who know their purpose and use their gifts to build up the body of Christ for the transformation of the world.

Leadership development is rooted in Discipleship development. It is our expectation that every leader across the Annual Conference is maturing in their discipleship and as such has spiritual fruit to show for it. An interim board of Leader Development is being formed to help define and synchronize expectations of what it means and takes to develop leaders – lay and clergy – across a continuum of leadership impact from novice to mastery that helps inspire and equip local faith expressions to do the same.

This interim board is comprised of:

- Chair of BOOM
- Conference Lay Leader
- Conference Director of Lay Servant Ministries
- Up to 6 people with specific skills and demonstrated fruitfulness in discipleship and leadership development (3 lay, 3 clergy)
- Staff Representative, Director of Leadership and Congregational Development

## New Faith Expressions

Purpose: to encourage evangelism and the creation of diverse, multicultural "third places" with and for people who aren't currently connected to any faith community. Home and work are first and second spaces, "third spaces" are the gathering places in between. In a post-Christendom society, the church building isn't viewed as the natural third space it once was. Instead coffee shops, gyms and studios have emerged and persons being the church need to be intentional about showing up in those. New faith expressions are not tied to a physical building (or even to keeping a church alive) but to a building of community for a purpose: to engage people in a life-giving relationship with Jesus.

This interim board is comprised of:

- At least one person per district with experience in launching new faith expressions, in start-up enterprises, or with other capacities deemed valueable to the task of supporting new faith expressions (no more than 12 persons in all)
- Staff person(s) responsible for New Faith Expressions

## Young People's Ministry

Purpose: Grows disciples by inspiring and strengthening youth and young adult servant leaders in local churches, campuses, camps, projects and mission fields of the annual conference.

Our conference has continued its faithful commitment to young people through Campus Ministry, Conference Council on Youth Ministry (CCYM), Retreat & Camping Ministry, ROCK, and Young Adult Council (YAC). In January 2018 about 45 persons from across these ministries gathered to explore hopes and concerns for the totality of young people's ministry and to provide input on the model of having a consolidated board with working groups. CCYM and the YAC provided input on the process of identifying the interim Young People's Ministry Board and the composition of this board. (NOTE: CCYM and YAC are both populated by districts, not the work of the Nominations Committee.) These names will be brought before the Nominations Committee and added to the leadership report voted on at Annual Conference. This interim board will also care for the functions of the Conference Board of Higher Education and Ministry.

- 4 youth (not a current senior)
  - CCYM nominates 4 and 2 are seated
  - ROCK nominates 4 and 2 are seated
- 6 young adults (35 or under)
  - YAC nominates 4 and 2 are seated
  - RCM nominates 4 and 2 are seated
  - Campus Ministry nominates 4 and 2 are seated
- 2 people that can be over 35
  - one with fruitful youth ministry
  - one with fruitful young adult ministry
- Staff Representative: Matthew Surber

We will be testing this configuration and will be bringing any needed resolutions to the 2019 Annual Conference Session as a result of our learning and the comprehensive assessment and strategic plan for Young People's Ministry that will be completed by March of 2019. The key outcomes of the plan include:

- Strategy that clarifies the conference's most effective role in supporting, connecting and vitalizing Young People's Ministry in the annual conference
- Clearly defined, updated, and integrated structure for the conference's efforts related to Young People's Ministries
- Well-Equipped, spiritually grounded leaders for Young People's Ministry, including local faith community, district and conference-level leadership. Leadership – both staff and servant leaders – that is recruited and trained to excel in the roles within that structure
- Communication that effectively engages young people and ties together the strategy, structure and leadership for Young People's Ministries across all levels of the Baltimore-Washington Conference

In the meantime we are working toward a. unifying our youth ministry; b. increasing the number and quality of well trained, Christ-centered leaders; c. developing cultural competency for youth and young adults and those who work with them; d. helping people find their place to serve in their area of giftedness and greatest impact; e. improving two-way communication between the Annual Conference and local church; and f. transforming the prevalent view of young people as a commodity in our local churches to the view of young people as fully capable change makers for Jesus.

## Abundant Health (formerly the Conference Board of Global Ministries)

### **Mission:**



*Abundant Health* grows disciples by inspiring and equipping faith communities to foster spiritual, physical and mental health for all and promote an understanding of the interconnectedness of all aspects of health both locally and globally.

## Advocacy and Action

Purpose: *Advocacy & Action* partners with communities so that we join in advocating to transform systems which disenfranchise, marginalize, and oppress and to create a BWC presence on urgent policy matters at local, state and national levels.

## Other

Some agencies' work spans the five tables. These include The Commission on Archives and History/Historical Society, Strawbridge Shrine, Deaf Ministries, Global Partnerships with Zimbabwe, South Korea, Puerto Rico and Eurasia, United Methodist Men and United Methodist Women.