

## **Minutes of the 2016 Post-Conference World Methodist Council Meeting**

### **4-5 September, 2016 – Houston, Texas**

Sunday – 4 September, 2016

I. Address of the New President

New President J.C. Park – challenged Council to turn the world through preaching the gospel and exercising with peace with justice.

II. Authorized substitutes:

A. AME Church substitutes Rev. Taylor Thompson for Amy Davis

B. CME Church substitutes Rev. James Dunbar for Willie Boyd (permanent)

C. MC Nigeria will retain M. Stephen, but requests that YYA named representative (Adeoson Adesola) steps down.

III. Appointment of Parliamentarian

A. J.C. Park appointed Bishop Michael Watson as parliamentarian. Bishop Watson is not on the 2016-21 Council, but is willing to serve in this role.

Action 1: Bishop C.R. Opoko moved that Bishop Michael Watson serve as at-large member of the Council. Seconded, Approved.

B. John Thomas asked for clarity on the process of how to fill the vacant youth/young adult at-large Council Member position due to the original nominee being deemed ineligible by MC Nigeria. It was explained that because this position is “at-large” the name is brought by the Youth and Young Adult committee to the Nominating Committee who would put it before the Council. It was suggested that the member church of nominee should be allowed to vet nominees/appointees before approval.

Action 2: Maidstone Malinga moved that the United Methodist Church should be listed as single denomination. Seconded. Bishops Patrick Streiff and Eduard Khegay stated that separation is to recognize that UMC is in different parts of the world. Needs more discussion among UMC representation. Motion Rescinded.

Action 3: Matthew Lafferty moved to nominate 6 members of nominating committee and elect those persons tomorrow so that they can begin the work assigned to them.

Nominations for the Nominating Committee were called for from the floor. The following were nominated:

Sir Francis Foluso Aremu, Methodist Church Nigeria

Rev. Peter Benzie, Wesleyan Methodist Church of New Zealand

Rev. Megan Dean, The United Methodist Church USA.

Isabel Thomas Dobson, Uniting Church in Australia

Rev. Dr. Piotr Gasiorowski, The Wesleyan Church in Poland

The Rev. Matthew A. Laferty, United Methodist Church of Vienna, Austria

Bishop João Carlos Lopes, Methodist Church in Brazil

Bishop Phillip S. Masih, Methodist Church in India

Katherine NG, Methodist Church, Hong Kong

Dr. Arapera Ngaha, Methodist Church of New Zealand

The Most Rev. Titus Pratt, Methodist Church of Ghana.

Bishop Lawrence Reddick, Christian Methodist Episcopal Church

Yvette Richards The United Methodist Church, USA

Paloma Rodriguez is from the Methodist Church in Puerto Rico.

Bishop Ziphozihle D. Siwa, The Methodist Church of Southern Africa

Doug Sawney, Methodist Church in Britain

Discussion:

☒ New Council Members need orientation on what Council is meant to be doing, how it should work or what agenda is. Space should be given in agenda for Steering Committee to report on matters before the Council.

☒ The YYA committee should bring forward the name of a new person to the Council, since the work of the Nominating Committee is over.

☐ The process was explained for replacing persons who are not able or deemed ineligible by their member church to serve as an officer/committee chair or at-large member on the Council. The member church does not name the officer/chair or at-large member, rather it would go back to the nominating committee. To abide by the credentials procedure brought by the Nominating Committee at the last Council Meeting, the member church should be consulted and endorse person to avoid problems of eligibility.

☐ A plea was made to recognize the unique place historically black Methodist Churches have in the Council

#### IV. New Patterns of Working

Rev. David Bush presented the New Patterns of Working document (2016b NOM 02 Patterns of Working – revised) and explained that the Council would adopt 3 themes for the quinquennium. It was clarified that the Standing Program Committees would remain, but would use themes as guide for work for the quinquennium. Standing Committees could determine which topics most pertain to them, then the Chairs determine which top 3 topics would pertain to the whole Council.

Action 4: Bishop Teresa Snorton proposed adoption of the New Patterns of Working. Seconded by Bishop C.R. Opoko. Approved.

The chairs of the Standing Program Committees were introduced and directed to their meeting rooms.

Monday – 5 September, 2016

The Youth and Young Adult Committee led worship and reminded the Council that “We are here to praise God and the our actions and words should reflect that.”

The Standing Committees then met to continue the work which was begun the previous day. Committees were asked to identify top themes and ways of working together remotely over the quinquennium.

#### V. General Housekeeping / Matters Arising

Rev. David Bush clarified that the intention of the task group was to look at bylaws mentioned in the New Patterns of Working document was that Steering Committee would bring suggestions for changes to bylaws to the next Council meeting. It was not the intention to elect a new group, but to build on the work of the existing group (chaired by Rev. Bush).

Action 5: Bishop Sudarshana Devadhar moved that the World Methodist Council meeting at Houston, Texas, send a letter of congratulations and our expressions of joy to the Missionaries of Charity in Kolkata, India, that their founder is canonized by Pope Francis as “Saint Teresa of Calcutta.” I further move we request Bishop Phillip S. Masih of Methodist Church in India to relay this message on our behalf in person to the Missionaries of Charity in Kolkata, India. Seconded, Approved.

VI. Vote for nominating committee

The voting procedure/process was explained and the bar was set. A valid ballot has between 1 and 6 persons identified. If more than 6 persons are voted for, the ballot becomes invalid. Those 6 names with the highest number of votes will be named to committee.

Ballots were distributed. It was noted that 13 out of the 17 persons on the ballot are from member churches who already have representatives in WMC leadership. Six positions are open.

- A. Scrutineers/Tellers were named: David Friswell, Robin Lim, Musi Losaba, Shaila John Wesley, and 2 other young persons (names not given to Council) substituted for Samuel Murillo, Talwo Odejayi.
- B. The nominees were asked to stand and introduce themselves to the Council.

VII. Ecumenical Relationships – Rev. Dr. Tim Macquiban

- A. Thirty-three persons gathered in committee meeting and outlined present work with WMC-Roman Catholic, Baptist, and Anglican dialogues.
- B. An effort is being made to bring new members on dialogue team and identify theologically trained lay people (under age 35).
- C. Church leaders talked of local/denominational ecumenical engagements to share and learn from one another, as well as to facilitate intra-Methodist relations and conversations
- D. Reference group to support chair should be developed representing different regions of world, keeping contact with other committee members in the region, feeding information about ecumenical involvement back to WMC for wider distribution.
- E. Other tasks in addition to dialogue
  - 1. Improving the reception of reports and distribution to grassroots: Translation, resources to make formal reports more accessible to local level, pastors and academics on dialogues, develop document on who various WMC churches receive official reports (task group will be formed)
  - 2. Explore commonalities/differences across WMC churches possibly through working group on Faith and Order, fostering intra-Methodist/Wesleyan ecumenism locally and regionally, providing resources on ecumenical collaboration life/work issues such as migration and religious freedom issues
- F. Celebrations will occur in 2017 on the 500th anniversary of the Reformation in Germany and 50th anniversary of WMC-RCC dialogue in Rome.
- G. Macquiban asked that the Council receive the WMC-Baptist Dialogue as an interim report until a final report is presented at the next Council meeting.

H. The chair then invited members of the Council to come and visit the office in Rome and showed a video <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rAf3A7ZOUA4>.

Action 6: Dr. Macquiban Moved that Council record its thanks to outgoing chair of the Ecumenical Relationships Committee, Rev. Prof. Robert Gribben, who served with distinction and dedication over the last two quinquennium. A letter will be sent by the chair and secretary. Thanks were also extended to members of the dialogue teams, and acknowledgement of officers of WMC for support of Ecumenical Relations. Seconded. Carried.

VIII. Education Committee Report – Rev. Dr. Amos Nascimento

A. The chair recognized the Education Committee members

B. The themes identified by the committee include:

1. Racism

2. Economic issues with member churches

C. The purpose of the committee is to be a reference in terms of leadership development which is fundamental to carrying out the themes.

D. Proposal for Best Practices of meetings of the WMC

1. Allocate time to introduce committees

2. Introduce procedures and prepare members for effective participation in the work of the Council

3. Create committee on resolutions, gather resolutions ahead of time.

4. Provide more and structure for discussion on history and current status of pending issues

5. Gather group of experts on parliamentary issues to oversee parliamentary procedures and handle issues that may arise.

E. The chair reaffirmed structure and suggested committee divide into two subcommittees

1. Formal education beyond local church (higher education institutions)

2. Broader Christian education, discipleship, and spiritual formation.

F. Asked for support in connecting boards of education in member churches to the committee.

IX. Evangelism Committee – Bishop Debra Wallace-Padgett

- A. The committee met and shared about a recent time they shared their faith and ideas for committee.
- B. World Methodist Evangelism director, Rev. Dr. Kim Reisman, shared ideas with committee, and the relationship between the committee and WME.
- C. The committee identified three themes:
  - 1. Migration,
  - 2. Trafficking/modern slavery
  - 3. Poverty & inequality
- D. The chair introduced the Vice-chair – Bishop Sharma Lewis; Secretary – Yvette Richards.
- E. Dr. Reisman shared that a web-based communication system will be put in place to enable/foster communications across the region.
- X. Family Life Committee – Bishop Teresa Snorton
  - A. The committee recommends that the council adopt the following themes:
    - 1. Health and well-being
    - 2. Poverty and inequality
    - 3. Evangelism and missions
  - B. The committee recommended that December 2017 (when God joined the “human family” as Jesus) be declared “World Methodist Council Family Life Month.” The committee will create a devotional resource. The proposed name of the devotional is “The World Methodist Council: One Family in Prayer for the World.” The devotionals would each have a theme relating to family, and the deadline for submissions is January 1, 2017. The committee’s goal is to complete the resource by June 2017.
  - C. The committee will use Facebook, email, and Dropbox to collaborate on their work.
- XI. Inter-Religious Relationships Committee – Rev. Leão Neto
  - A. Rev. Neto stated that Jesus sets the example for us in relationship with other religions and that inter-religious relationships vary depending on context.
  - B. The committee chose themes:
    - 1. War/peace (peace & justice)
    - 2. Religious intolerance (inter-religious engagement)

3. Migration

4. Environment & climate change.

C. General Themes were suggested that all committees' themes could fall under: globalization (human rights, freedom, dignity), migration (hospitality, climate change, refugees), race/human relations

D. The chair suggested that once per year, the First Friday letter focus on inter-religious relationships.

## XII. Results of the Nominating Committee Election

David Friswell reported that 194 ballots were returned, 1 was void. A total of 1,158 votes were possible, and 1,088 votes were cast. The persons elected to the Nominating Committee for 2016-21 are:

- Rev. Megan Dean (UMC, USA)
- Rev. Matthew Lafferty (UMC, Vienna)
- Bishop Joao Carlos Lopes (MC Brazil)
- Ms. Katherine Ng (MC Hong Kong)
- Ms. Yvette Richards (UMC, USA)
- Ms. Isabel Thomas (Uniting Church in Australia)

## XIII. Report from the World Federation of Methodist & Uniting Church Women

The new president, Ms. Allison Judd, reported on the 13th World Assembly of the WFM&UCW and explained the structure of the organization. She reported that the 14th World Assembly will be held in or near Sweden the week before the World Methodist Conference.

Following the break, the Youth and Young Adult Committee led a devotional

## XIV. Report from the World Methodist Historical Society

Dr. Ulrike Schuler (past president) introduced the new president, Rev. Dr. Richard Waugh, and stated the purpose of the organization is to connect all those doing research, creating archives, and collecting memories of the churches. Twice a year a "Bulletin" is circulated by email to share what is happening worldwide in Methodist History. (to be placed on the email list contact [mmerkel@gcah.org](mailto:mmerkel@gcah.org)).

## XV. Report from the International Association of Methodist Schools, Colleges, & Universities (IAMSCU)

Dr. Amos Nascimento noted that it is the 25th anniversary of both the WMC Education Committee, and also IAMSCU which will be celebrated with a series of publications.

XVI. Report from the Theological Education Committee

A. Rev. Jim Humphrey reported that 15 new persons joined the committee. He described the purpose of the committee as focusing on training persons for ministry based on basic Christian beliefs and distinctive emphasis from the Wesleyan tradition with consideration of global awareness and lifting expectations for theological education, educators, curriculum and students. Theological education should be flexible, adaptable.

B. Bishop Marvin Thomas elected as vice-chair in the absence of the chair (Dr. Paul Swarup).

C. Three themes (in the theological context) were identified:

1. how to be a community in a digital/technological age
2. poverty and inequality
3. living out reconciliation of communities in a diverse world

D. Dr. David Field reported on Globe Theo Lib, a free online theological library. A Methodist-Wesleyan collection is part of that library. The resource can be accessed at [www.methodist-studies.org](http://www.methodist-studies.org).

XVII. Report from the Worship and Liturgy Committee

A. Rev. David Bush chaired the committee in the absence of elected chair Amelia Koh-Butler. He reported that the committee chose 2 themes, leaving one available to respond to the themes identified by the whole Council:

1. Climate change and environmental issues
2. Migration – ways of worshipping in diverse community and struggle to find ways to be together in worship with dislocated persons. Extensive conversations were had about being “inter-cultural” and involving more languages, cultural worship practices.

B. A blog has been introduced, which will be the means by which the group will work.

C. Rev. Bush will share this report with the chair, Rev. Koh-Butler.

D. Worship & Liturgy committee will work with Family Life committee to provide liturgical resources for the planned devotional.

XVIII. Report of the Social & International Affairs Committee

Bishop C. Raphael Opoko introduced members of the committee. Many issues exist globally that affect human rights. The World Methodist Council can be a voice of hope.

A. The three themes that the committee identified are:

1. Migration/human trafficking/modern slavery
2. Climate justice
3. Inequality/discrimination/exclusion

B. The committee will work to be informers virtually by WhatsApp , email, take photos and events all over the world in order to prepare statements/responses to be given to the General Secretary for approval and dissemination.

C. It was noted that the topic of climate justice is particularly timely. There are individuals who will be the first “climate refugees” due to loss of land from climate change and rising oceans

XIX. Youth and Young Adult Committee

A. Ms. Lissa Belle Ramos Brown introduced the members of the committee. The report can be found in Appendix 1.

1. The committee plans to develop a platform for sharing, building community.
2. Simultaneous activities (international prayer day, forums, social exposures etc.) will be planned across regions, and regional events are planned.
3. The committee will seek continuity of leadership by involving more young people in committees/subcommittees of WMC
4. The committee will support the central themes identified by the Council.

B. Action 7: The YYA committee proposed adoption of the following:

To further express our investment and empowerment to the youth and young adults, we recommend that:

1. \*At least 10% of each denomination’s delegation be given to the youth and young adults;
2. \*At least one slot be reserved for the youth and young adults in each standing committee of the council; and

3. A program of leadership mentoring be developed to serve as preparation and exposure for the youth and young adults.

Moved that the report be received and recommendations be adopted by the Council. Seconded. Adopted.

\* relates to the quinquennium starting in 2021

Discussion:

- Recommended that distinction be made between age groups: 18-25, 26-35; and that regional events be held every 2-3 years. The chair responded that there are challenges in participation if age groups are segmented. The committee envisions gatherings between Council meetings and Conferences.
- It was noted that the committees each are resourced with \$2,000 USD annually. The Youth and Young Adult Committee has a separate \$8,000 USD operation budget. Additional funds can be requested by committees by submitting proposal to treasurer.
- Suggested that committee pages on website be updated, and committees should utilize technology to connect between council meetings.

XX. Areas of Concern Identified by the Council

A. Report given by Rev. Christine Elliott and Rev. David Bush.

B. The areas of concern identified by the Council may be found in Appendix 2. Standing committees have worked to develop themes; significant overlap exists. Council should acknowledge overlap, but be intentional.

Action 8: David Bush proposed that Council endorses areas of focus identified by standing committees as focus of the Council's work in this quinquennium. Endorsed.

Discussion:

- It was suggested that a committee be formed on Justice and Peace that would follow daily activities and how improvements are being made, making reports to the General Secretary, so that churches may own best practices at the local level. Also suggested that SIA committee add sexual abuse as focus.
- The Family Life committee could add prayers/write prayers for December for way of addressing sexual abuse within families.

- World Federation of Methodist & Uniting Church Women have links to the United Nations which has declared May 15 as International Day of Families. The Family Life committee will be working with WFM&UCW and UM General Board of Church and Society.

- Point of clarification: Recommendations by youth and young adult committee have been moved, seconded, and voted on. Recommendation regarding delegation from member churches are strong recommendations, since each church determines delegates. These recommendations would be for quinquennium beginning 2021.

C. David Bush proposed that group tasked to carry the New Patterns of Working forward be made up of existing members of subcommittee and others appointed by the Steering Committee (ref #6 on New Patterns of Working report). This would deal with aspects of bylaws that would need to be adjusted due to new way of working – as it relates to work of committee, themes. No vote was taken.

Discussion:

- Necessary for bylaws to be looked at by legal entity and any recommendations for change coming back to next Council meeting.
- This group would not be the group to review bylaws to “iron out” inconsistencies. They would refer any suggested changes to the bylaw review committee.
- Any changes to bylaws would be brought to next Council Meeting.
- Questions regarding version of bylaws and “amendment” by steering committee in 2013. Council in Durban (2011) referred unfinished adjustments to bylaws to steering committee to complete.

XXI. Bylaws committee:

A. Members:

1. Dr. Vukile Mehana – South Africa (human resource expert)
2. Mr. Kim Seah – Singapore (attorney)
3. Rev. David Bush – New Zealand
4. Mr. Joshua Rathnam - India

Discussion:

- Council wants to ensure that the process has transparency and integrity.
- Terms of reference should be published as soon as possible, to define ways of working including consultative process allowing anyone to make contributions to their work.
- Revisions on bylaws need to come back to Council for approval.

- Go back to minutes of Durban 2011 Council Meeting and determine changes to bylaws which were tasked to the Steering Committee. Understood that revisions to bylaws made in Rio de Janeiro (Steering Committee 2013); adopted by Council in London 2013 (not documented in the minutes).

ACTION: Bishop Christian Alsted moved that bylaws be approved in their current form as presented in 2016 Book of Reports. Seconded. Approved.

#### XXII. Dates of Future Meetings

- A. Next Council Meeting: discussions have taken place with Methodist Church in India and Korean Methodist Church to meet in August of 2018 or 2019. Leadership changes are taking place in both churches in November this year.
- B. August 12-19 2018, are the dates for the next Oxford Institute.
- C. Steering Committee - 18-21 October 2017 in Rome (coincides with 50th anniversary of RCC-WMC dialogue)
- D. Council and Conference Meeting 16-24 August 2021 in Gothenburg, Sweden
  - 1. Process for Conference theme 2021; will be discussed at Steering Committee in 2017. Logo competition will go out to all member churches.
- E. Suggested that youth and young adult committee meets at different time than other committees; noted that not everyone on YYA committee must be youth or young adult. Not all youth/young adults need attend the YYA committee. Remember that young people are not just the future, but present NOW, and their voices should be heard and included.

ACTION: Bishop C.R. Opoko proposed that 10% of the makeup of Council Members be composed of young people. Churches would be challenged to encourage young people, but each church is responsible for their own delegation. Difference could be “worked out” by administration;

Amended: Refer this matter regarding the makeup of the Council to include young people to bylaws committee to work out provisions. Approved

#### XXIII. Report of Ministerial Exchange Program

David Friswell shared that he is now serving as one of several MEP coordinators. The bylaws indicate MEP is a duty of the WMC. He and several other regional coordinators will be working to broaden the exchange program to be a more global, as it has been primarily between the U.S. and Britain in recent years.

Adjourn

## Appendix 1

### Youth and Young Adult Committee Report

#### Vision and Mission Statements

The Youth and Young Adults of the World Methodist Council is a group of young people with diverse backgrounds and a wide variety of talents, **actively working together** to give a voice to the youth, to empower one another, to reach out to the world in its entirety, and to follow Jesus through the methods of John Wesley.

#### Vision and Mission Statements

As such, The Youth and Young Adults of the World Methodist Council, seeks to:

- Make the council known to the young people of the World Methodist Council;
- Unite the young people from the Methodist and Wesleyan organizations with a global vision, while responding to their regional and contextual focal concerns through local implementation;

#### Vision and Mission Statements

- Strengthen partnerships within the standing committees of the council for effective collaborations toward shared goals;
- Establish strong connection and networking with other faith based and non-faith based organizations;
- Respond to the needs of the people and take an active role in working together towards justice and peace; and
- Develop young leaders who will act today, and then take on significant roles in the council in the future.

## Programs



## Recommendations

To further express our investment and empowerment to the youth and young adults, we recommend that:

1. At least 10% of each denomination's delegation be given to the youth and young adults;
2. At least one slot be reserved for the youth and young adults in each standing committee of the council; and
3. A program of leadership mentoring be developed to serve as preparation and exposure for the youth and young adults.

## Appendix 2

### Themes Identified by the Standing Committees of the World Methodist Council

Migration

Poverty/Inequality

Racism/Discrimination

#### **Ecumenical Relationships**

##### ***Migration***

Religious Freedom

Justice & Peace

##### **Education**

##### ***Poverty***

##### ***Racism***

Sustainable Development

##### **Evangelism**

##### ***Migration***

Human Trafficking

##### ***Poverty and Inequality***

##### **Family Life**

Health and Well-Being

##### ***Poverty and Inequality***

Evangelism/Mission

##### **Inter-Religious Relationships**

Globalization

***Migration***

***Race-Human Relations***

Theological Education

Being community in digital/tech age

***Poverty and Inequality***

Living reconciliation

**Worship & Liturgy**

Climate Change/Environmental Justice

***Migration***

(Inter-cultural ways of working)

**Social & International Affairs**

***Inequality and discrimination***

***Migration*** (human trafficking, modern slavery)

Climate Justice

**Youth & Young Adults**

Will support Council priorities