Discipleship Council Report

The Discipleship Council: (a) functions, as necessary, on behalf of the Annual Conference in between sessions; (b) ensures that Conference resources align to our vision, mission, and critical issues; and (c) discerns, develops, reviews, and evaluates the strategic direction of the Conference toward its vision and goals. It coordinates and consults with the Conference Council on Finance and Administration regarding the annual budget.

In the midst of leadership transitions, we have had a very productive year. In the Summer of 2018, our chairperson, Jen Ihlo, resigned due to unexpected work, General Conference, and family demands. In the Fall of 2018, the Rev. Jenny Cannon switched from being Secretary to serving as Interim Chair, and Carol Travis assumed the role of Secretary. In the Spring of 2019, the Rev. Jessica Hayden was named as Chair. In this year of experimentation, the chairs from the five interim boards participated with voice and no vote.

We accomplished the following:

1. Clarified our vision. The Baltimore-Washington Conference inspires and equips local churches to develop disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world. Our vision includes that our discipleship agencies will provide the structure, support and opportunity for more engagement within and beyond the local church so that more transformed lives transform lives.

2. Approved Project Transformation (PT) DC as a BWC partnered ministry. This decision has zero budgetary implications and allows them to submit an institutional report each year as their ministry within our annual conference grows. PT DC’s mission is to engage young adults in purposeful leadership and ministry, support children in holistic development, and connect churches with communities. Their first summer was 2018 where 98 children participated in summer programming at Hughes Memorial United Methodist in Ward 7, and Brighter Day Ministries in Ward 8. Ninety percent of them felt that they would do well in reading at school this year.

3. Created a simpler process for Ministry Relationship Oversight Committee to enable it to do its work. (https://www.bwcumc.org/administration/ministry-relationships/)

4. Clarified the BWC organizational structure and developed recommendations for realignment in collaboration with the Interim Discipleship Agency Boards, Connectional Table and the Rules Committee.

At the 2018 Annual Conference Session, more than 80% of delegates affirmed experimenting with refocusing and realigning our collective ministry for greater impact.

Since the 2018 Annual Conference Session, BWC leaders and staff continued having conversations with a wide variety of stakeholders to discern what our next steps should be. As of April 1, 2019, more than 630 people have been involved in providing feedback and engaging in conversations regarding one or more aspects of the realignment in the Discipleship Agency areas. The Discipleship Council affirms the following:

- The realignment and refocusing has enabled the BWC to invest more in local faith community efforts through the first round of Missional Innovation Grants for Young People’s Ministry, Advocacy & Action, and Abundant Health.
The realignment and refocusing has resulted in stronger collaborative staff-agency relationships which means that Annual Conference leaders are at the center, not the periphery of decision making.

The realignment and refocusing has allowed the BWC to have more flexibility, nimbleness and visibility with regards to urgent advocacy needs.

More boards are functional and more people are engaged in ministry that is focused on grassroots.

Red = Not functional due to not meeting or meeting to write the journal report.

Yellow = Meeting regularly, understand their why and not yet making desired impact. More than half of those in the yellow category this year believe they will be able to be green next year if given the opportunity to continue their work.

Green = Fully functional and making progress toward their purpose.
The structural simplification of Discipleship agencies provides for more clarity of purpose, cohesion, and clearer connection to the mission and ministry of local faith communities. All requirements contained within the Book of Discipline are maintained.
Notes on above:

- CBCS=Conference Board of Church and Society (now referred to as Advocacy and Action)
- COSROW=Commission on the Status and Role of Women (now referred to as Gender Equality).
- CCORR=Conference Commission on Religion and Race (now the executive team of Racial Justice).
- *Multicultural Ministry falls within the Advocacy and Action budget but impacts all five strategic areas. It includes: African American Ministry (Strengthening the Black Church for the 21st Century and Black Methodists for Church Renewal), Deaf Ministry, Hispanic/Latino Ministry, Native American Ministry (formerly known as CONAM).
- ** We seek to refrain from creating a committee when calling a meeting of leaders is sufficient. For example, an annual forum for leaders (lay and clergy) who are interested in learning and addressing ethnic local concerns/opportunities with follow-up action items taken by people who can implement them is more impactful than seven people on a committee. Annual forum notes and action items will be shared with all Discipleship board chairs and other leadership as deemed appropriate.
Leadership Development Board

Purpose:
We seek to equip and mature leaders who develop disciples of Jesus Christ who know their purpose and use their gifts to build up the body of Christ for the transformation of the world. We nurture a culture in and through the Leadership Development Board of call, competency, and spiritual maturity through teams working together to equip vibrant lay and clergy leadership throughout the conference. The Leadership Development Board coordinates, supports and contributes to all leadership efforts within the conference.

Responsibilities:
- Coordinate and communicate a master Board calendar for all leadership training within the conference.
- Meet at least quarterly and additionally as necessary, with agendas distributed one week before each meeting, with a focused approach to each meeting.
- Ensure that new initiatives are aligned with the vision and strategic plan for leadership development in the conference.
- Engage others outside the Leadership Development Board through task forces, chaired by Board members in the following areas:
  - Develop a coaching network to equip coaches that will walk alongside leaders implementing discipleship systems.
  - Develop a partnership with the Leadership Academy Team to provide resources and opportunities for training.
  - Develop a partnership with the Call and Clergy Care office to work with clergy and laity who feel the call to ministry in the local church.
  - Partner with our local seminaries to cultivate a pipeline of mature spiritual leaders.
  - Comply with all requirements of the Book of Discipline related to leadership development which aren’t owned by other agencies and boards within the conference (¶629. Board of Discipleship functions, ¶631 Conference Board of Laity).

Team Composition: 11 voting members including, BOOM Chair (or designee), Conference Lay Leader, Director of Lay Servant Ministries, up to 6 people with skills and demonstrated fruitfulness in discipleship and leadership development (3 lay, 3 clergy), one Youth and one Young Adult.

Ex Officio (voice no vote): Director of Leadership and Congregational Development, Executive Minister of Call and Clergy Care, Wesley Seminary rep.

Time Commitment: Quarterly meetings (3-4 hrs.) either in person or via Zoom. Taskforce and subcommittee meetings as needed (depending upon the task).

New Faith Expressions Board

Purpose:
We encourage the development of New Faith Expressions, which are communities of faith in-tune with our changing culture. These communities of faith are developed with those who are not yet a part of a church, in mind. We believe it will take all kinds of churches to reach all kinds of people. 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.

Responsibilities:
- Constantly cast a vision for a planting culture, where everyone feels freed up to plant a new place for new people in their community.
  - By the grace of God, be able to lead people to do what they might think is impossible.
Encourage evangelism in order to create new places and spaces for new people within and beyond the bounds of existing congregations.

- Develop and oversee systems for identifying, training and supporting pastors and/or laity to create new faith expressions.
- Develop a strong cadre of clergy and laity who have the gifts and graces to lead new faith expressions.
- Identify and train potential partner churches to reach new people by creating new faith communities.
- Create an overarching strategic plan to accomplish the mission including vision, values, goals, priorities, and strategies.
- Assist the District Superintendents, in their role as chief mission strategists of the district, in their work of starting new faith communities and transforming existing congregations to reach new people.
- Coordinate the use of Conference resources, in strategic ways, to help us live out our mission of inspiring and equipping local faith communities to develop disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world.

Team Composition: 10 voting members (at least 1 from each District) selected by the Committee on Nominations using interest forms.

Ex Officio (voice no vote): Director of New Faith Expressions and Coordinator of Hispanic Ministries

Young People’s Ministry Board

Purpose:
We nurture a culture, in and through the Young People’s Ministry (YPM) Board, of loving, joyful, and hard-working teams working together to create and sustain a vibrant young people’s ministry throughout the conference. The YPM Board coordinates, oversees, supports and contributes to the crafting of the vision of all young people’s ministry within the conference (including, but not limited to, ROCK, campus ministry, the work of Conference Council for Youth Ministry, the work of Young Adult Council, the work of the Board of Higher Education and Ministry, and camping and retreat ministry).

Responsibilities:
- Speak into, endorse, support, and share a three-year strategic design and execution process for young people’s ministry in the conference.
- Ensure that clear communication takes place between the various areas of young people’s ministry in the conference.
- Coordinate and communicate a master calendar for all board-related young people’s ministry programming in the conference.
- Meet at least quarterly and additionally as necessary, with agendas distributed one week before each meeting, with a calm, confident, and focused approach to each meeting.
- Ensure that new initiatives are aligned with the vision and strategic plan for young people’s ministry in the conference.
- Engage others outside the Interim Young People’s Ministry Board through task forces, chaired by Board members in the following areas (see Appendix A for descriptions):
  - Database
  - Training
  - Grants and Scholarships
  - Campus Ministry (many functions of BHEM)
Young Adult Ministry (formerly Young Adult Council)

- Student Leader Cohort (many functions of CCYM)
- ROCK

- Comply with all requirements of the Book of Discipline related to young people’s ministry.
- Assess strategic ministry needs and troubleshoot key pressure points efficiently and effectively.

Team Composition: 10 voting members (at least 4 of which are youth) selected by the Committee on Nominations using interest forms completed by youth and young adults and ensuring there is balanced representation from all areas (Student Leadership Cohort, campus ministry, Retreat and Camping ministry, and Young Adult Ministry)

Ex Officio (voice no vote): ROCK event coordinator, Retreat & Camping Ministry rep, Campus Ministry rep, two advocate advisers who hold leadership roles in the local church and have extensive experience with young people, and a staff rep.

Advocacy & Action Board

Purpose:

We inspire and equip faith communities to develop disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world by collaborating with others to transform systems that disenfranchise, marginalize, and oppress. The Advocacy and Action Board is tasked with establishing a clear, consistent and impact-driven BWC presence on urgent policy matters at local, state, and national levels, and helps set Conference-wide justice priorities rooted in our Social Principles.

Responsibilities:

- Develop, share, and implement a strategic plan for justice ministry throughout the conference that includes vision, values, goals, priorities, and execution strategies that is revised and re-evaluated annually.
- Coordinates, oversees, supports, and contributes to the implementation of its vision through the work of social action teams, specialized committees, and forums:
  - 7 Social Action Teams
    - Climate/Environmental Justice
    - Gender Equality (COSROW ¶644)
    - Gun Violence Prevention
    - Immigration Reform
    - Racial Justice (CCORR ¶643)
    - Restorative Justice (R/CJAMM)
    - Wealth Equity
  - 3 Committees:
    - Native American Ministry (CONAM ¶654)
    - Deaf Ministries
    - Commission on Disability Concerns (¶653)
  - 3 Annual Forums:
    - Small Membership Church
    - Ethnic Local Church Concerns (including the Grow Church through Ministries for Asian Americans, Black Methodists for Church Renewal (BMCR), Strengthening the Black Church for the 21st Century (SBC21) and Hispanic/Latino Ministries ¶655)
    - Christian Unity and Interreligious Relationships

- Comply with all requirements of the Book of Discipline related to Advocacy & Action (e.g. ¶629, ¶642, ¶643, and ¶644 and relevant parts of ¶632, ¶645, ¶653, ¶654, ¶655).
- Ensure that new initiatives are aligned with the vision and strategic plan for BWC’s justice ministry.
● Organize needed training for local churches and leaders on community organizing, intercultural
  proficiency, and justice as a spiritual discipline to grow and multiply disciples.
● Coordinate with the Office of Leadership and Congregational Development/Leader
  Development Board to hold Annual Forums (see above).
● Assess strategic ministry needs and troubleshoot key pressure points efficiently and effectively.
● Create and/or identify systems to track progress and maintain connection with Advocacy &
  Action servant leaders and other engaged persons.
● Ensure clear communication between all aspects of the Advocacy & Action network.
● Coordinate and communicate an external master calendar for all Advocacy & Action board-
  related programming throughout the conference.
● Meet at least quarterly and additionally as necessary, with meaningful and productive agendas
  that foster a calm, confident, and focused approach to each meeting.
● Establish and maintain work groups, task forces, and/or subcommittees, chaired by Board
  members or designees, to ensure effective implementation of the strategic plan. (Appendix B)

Team Composition:
15 voting members with passion and commitment to justice and service to include: 7 chairs of each
A&A Social Action Team; 3 annual forum leaders (see above), and 4 others whose collective gifts
span grant administration, project management, legislative advocacy, and data analysis and
evaluation, selected by the Committee on Nominations using interest forms as well as ensuring at
least three board members are young adults.

Ex Officio (voice no vote): Representatives from: Deaf Ministries, Committee on Disability
Concerns, Justice For Our Neighbors (JFON), UMW rep, UMM rep, Native American Ministries
(CONAM), and a staff representative.

Wellness & Service Board

Purpose:
We nurture a culture, in and through the Wellness & Service (WS) Board, of loving, passionate, and
committed teams, working together to create and sustain programs and ministries that develop
disciples of Jesus Christ through alleviating human suffering, meeting human needs, and
proactively improving health and well-being for individuals and communities.

Responsibilities:
● Speak into, endorse, support, and share a long-range strategic design and execution process for
  wellness and service ministry throughout the conference (revise and re-evaluate annually)
● The WS Board is responsible for crafting the vision of all health ministry and mission outreach
  work within the conference. It coordinates, oversees, supports, and contributes to living out that
  vision through specialized programs, ministry offerings, and organizational efforts including,
  but not limited to:
  ● Volunteers in Mission (VIM)
  ● Early Response Teams (ERT) / Disaster Response
  ● HIV/AIDS Ministry / Quality of Life Retreats
  ● Global and national missionary itineration
  ● Holistic health ministry training and events
  ● Health advocacy and linking individuals to health services
  ● Collaborating on Mission u
  ● The work of Seeds of Security / Domestic Violence/Intimate Partner Violence
  ● Prevention (DV/IPV)
  ● Wellness & Preventive Health Care
● Comply with all requirements of the Book of Discipline related to Board of Global Ministries ¶633.

● Ensure that new initiatives are aligned with the vision and strategic plan for BWC abundant health ministry

● Assess strategic ministry needs and troubleshoot key pressure points efficiently and effectively

● Ensure that clear communication takes place between all areas of abundant health ministry

● Coordinate and communicate an external master calendar for all abundant health ministry programming throughout the conference

● Meet at least quarterly and additionally as necessary, with meaningful and productive agendas that foster a calm, confident, and focused approach to each meeting.

● Establish and maintain work groups, task forces, and/or subcommittees, chaired by Board members or designees, to ensure effective implementation of the strategic plan (see Appendix C).

Team Composition:
13 voting members with passion and commitment to health and mission ministry including the Conf. Secretary of Global Ministries, VIM Coordinator, and Disaster Response Coordinator, 1 youth or young adult, and 9 others who have gifts in grant administration, project management, training and instruction, and/or data analysis and evaluation, selected by the Committee on Nominations using interest forms.

Ex Officio (voice no vote): UMW representative, UMM representative, and a staff representative

Connectional Table
Some conference leaders believe that instead of the Connectional Table we should simply call meetings of Annual Conference leaders as necessary: once in the fall for orientation and any generative work needed to the coming year; and then again to review petitions, reports and resolutions before they go to Annual Conference. Furthermore, voting concurrence/non-concurrence doesn’t hold the weight that many attribute to it as often the issues are complex and members have admitted not really understanding what they are voting on.

There was discussion at the Connectional Table and Discipleship Council about the purpose and, ultimately, the need for the eight district reps who currently hold no other Annual Conference leadership position. The original logic for this was so that the votes of Connectional Table on resolutions represented something of the Annual Conference as a whole and not just Conference leadership. However, eight votes out of 89 isn’t significant and the need for those persons given the current function of the table isn’t clear.
In the event that the Connectional Table is continued, we are recommending a less than 10% decrease in the number of voting members from 89 to 81 as follows:

- 57 members remain the same
- Rename 18 member bodies to reflect the new Discipleship Agency structure;
- Remove the 8 District Reps with “no other Leadership position;”
- Adjust the numbers of members from three bodies; and
- Add 3 new members (VIM coordinator and chair plus one from New Faith Expressions).

Membership of the Connectional Table is as follows with recommended changes in bold.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2014-2017 Membership</th>
<th>2019 Membership Changes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1-Conference Lay Leader</td>
<td>same</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1-Conference Secretary</td>
<td>same</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1-Resident Bishop</td>
<td>same</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16-District Superintendents and District Lay Leaders</td>
<td>same</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8-District Reps With No Other Leadership Experience</td>
<td><strong>0-District Reps with No Other Leadership Experience</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1-Nominations</td>
<td>same</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1-Conference Secretary of Global Ministries</td>
<td>same</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Reps from chapters of local caucuses</strong></td>
<td><strong>1-VIM Coordinator</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1-Black Methodists for Church Renewal</td>
<td>same</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>1-Korean Caucus</strong></td>
<td><strong>Young People’s Ministry Board’s RCM Reps</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2-Discipleship Council</td>
<td>same</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2-Retreat and Camping Ministries (RCM)</td>
<td>Young People’s Ministry Board’s RCM Reps</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2-Committee on Hispanic/Latino Ministries and Korean Caucus</td>
<td>Committee on Hispanic/Latino Ministries</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2-Commission on Religion &amp; Race</td>
<td>same</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2-Commission on Disability Concerns</td>
<td>same</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2-Youth Ministries</td>
<td><strong>Young People’s Ministry Board’s High School Youth Reps (or equivalent)</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2-Young Adult Ministries</td>
<td><strong>Young People’s Ministry Board’s Young Adult Reps from Young Adult Ministries (or equivalent)</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2-United Methodist Women</td>
<td>same</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2-United Methodist Men</td>
<td>same</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2-Council on Finance and Administration</td>
<td>same</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2-Board of Ordained Ministry</td>
<td>same</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2-Rules Committee</td>
<td>same</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2-Board of Trustees</td>
<td>same</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2-Board of Pensions</td>
<td>same</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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1 Per 2006 Journal. The number indicates the number of people represented
2 The BWC hasn’t had a Retreat and Camping Ministry Board since 2005
3 Per 2006 structure author's annotation, the Korean Caucus should show up under the local caucuses and not be listed as a part of Hispanic/Latino Ministries
In the coming year, we seek to identify shared metrics that are meaningful for all and keep us aligned and focused on our mission.

- Progress on Discipleship Agency board goals (see ministry reports for details) which are essential to the BWC’s mission of inspiring and equipping local faith communities to develop disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world so that more transformed lives transform lives.

- Number of people:
  - Engaged and
  - Maturing in Wesleyan discipleship

- Impact being made in communities in which our churches and ministries reside.

Discipleship Council Recommendations:

1. The adoption of a BWC vision statement that includes the tagline: transformed lives transform lives.
2. The ministry partnership with Project Transformation DC.
3. The realignment of Discipleship Agencies to allow for more effective, focused and nimble ministry by re-forming Discipleship Agencies into these five boards:
   a. Leadership Development
   b. New Faith Expressions
   c. Young People’s Ministry

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4 BWC has been operating without a Board of Discipleship for many years
d. Advocacy and Action

e. Wellness and Service

This includes allowing Discipleship Agencies to modify task forces as needed to address ministry needs while maintaining Book of Discipline requirements.

4. The modifications as noted to the Connectional Table which allow for appropriate interfacing with new Discipleship Agency structure and remove 8 members who have no Annual Conference Leadership Role. (Pending input from the Rules Committee.)

5. Update language within BWC’s Policies and Procedures manual as needed to reflect the name changes contained within this report.

Submitted by Rev. Jessica Hayden, Discipleship Council Chair, and Christie Latona, Director of Connectional Ministries.