



For Immediate Release | December 10, 2018

Western Jurisdiction Mission Cabinet urges prayer and study in preparation for GC2019

Reaffirming its support for the One Church Plan, the Western Jurisdiction's Mission Cabinet is calling United Methodists to prayer and learning in preparation for the upcoming special session of the General Conference.

On the first Sunday of Advent, the leaders gathered in a retreat format – beginning with a holy time for communion, prayer, and deep reflection – to discuss the challenges of navigating the uncertainty presented by General Conference 2019. In conversation, they considered the myriad possible outcomes and how best to provide excellent leadership to the Church in the remaining months prior to, and those directly after, the conference.

Throughout its meeting, the Mission Cabinet continued to affirm its commitment to the full inclusion of LGBTQ persons at all levels in the church today, and a desire to remain at the table with others in the church who see things differently. At its last gathering in September, the Mission Cabinet [endorsed the One Church Plan](#) not as a perfect plan, but as the one having the “best potential to maximize the presence of United Methodist witness, allow for contextual differentiation, and balance an approach to different theological understandings of human sexuality with as much unity as possible.”

During its retreat, members of the Mission Cabinet shared what they are hearing and experiencing in their respective areas. Confusion about the One Church Plan, and lack of specific details regarding its practical impact on annual conferences, local churches and pastoral leadership, was a common thread. Partisan misinterpretations have added to the challenges faced by United Methodists seeking to honestly discern how this plan might help the church to move forward past 50-year-old divisions regarding human sexuality.

Hoping to clarify some of the confusion, the Mission Cabinet is encouraging people to review information available on a new website, onechurchplan.org. The site provides an overview of the plan and a FAQ answering many of the practical questions people have. It also includes testimony from bishops and the reminder that the plan is the only one to merit the support of a majority of United Methodist bishops.

Additionally, the Mission Cabinet calls upon United Methodists in the Western Jurisdiction to continue in prayer for the upcoming work of this special session of the General Conference, even as they continue their most meaningful work of calling and nurturing disciples, and loving God and neighbor more fully.

The Western Jurisdiction Mission Cabinet, is composed of the chair of the Leadership Team, Directors of Connectional Ministries and the College of Bishops serving the Western Jurisdiction. Their time was blessed by hospitality offered by Riviera United Methodist Church in Los Angeles, California.



Addendum

General Conference is the top policy-making body of The United Methodist Church, which usually meets every four years, but will be gathering for a special session on February 23-26, 2019 in St. Louis, Missouri. The sole purpose of this special session will be to receive and act on a report from the Commission on a Way Forward. The 32-member Commission was authorized by General Conference 2016 and appointed by the Council of Bishops to examine paragraphs in The 2016 Book of Discipline concerning human sexuality and exploring options to strengthen the unity of the church.

In May of 2018, the Council of Bishops endorsed the One Church Plan as the best solution to a 50-year-old global debate. Eight hundred and sixty-four elected United Methodist delegates, about 42 percent from outside of the United States, will participate in the decision-making process in February.