

**Report Round Table
of the Central Conference CSE**

**Procedure for the Election of a Bishop
at the called session of the Central
Conference CSE 2022**

**Sharing on the Work with Refugees in the
Central Conference CSE**

**Report of the
74th Meeting of the Executive Committee
form March 25 - 26, 2022
in Mulhouse, France**



The United Methodist Church

Central Conference of Central and Southern Europe



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Report of the 74th Meeting of the Executive Committee
from March 25 - 26, 2022, Mulhouse (France)

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Facts of the Central Conference of Central and Southern Europe

General Information

Annual Conferences of the Central Conference

Provisional Annual Conference Bulgaria-Rumania
Provisional Annual Conference Austria
Annual Conference Poland
Annual Conference Switzerland-France-North Africa
Provisional Annual Conference Serbia-Macedonia
Annual Conference Czech Republic-Slovakia
Provisional Annual Conference Hungary

Episcopal Supervision since May 1st, 2006

Bishop Dr. Patrick Streiff

Bishop retired

Bishop Heinrich Bolleter

The agents of the Central Conference

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The »Geneva Area«

The "Geneva Area" was founded in 1936 and assigned to the Southeastern Jurisdiction Conference in the United States. His first bishop, Dr. John Louis Nuelsen, chose Geneva as residence. Since it is customary in the United Methodist Church to name the parish according to the respective residence of the bishop, the new parish was given the name "Geneva Area".

Until 1954, all bishops resided in Geneva. In these eighteen years, the "Geneva Area" became a household name. To preserve this connection, the Central Conference in Brussels decided in 1954 to "keep the name of the Genevan Area and let the bishop have a free hand, to choose his residence, where he considers him right according to the circumstances."

The bishops of the Geneva Area

John Louis Nuelsen	1936 - 1940
William W. Peele	1940 - 1941
Arthur J. Moore	1941 - 1944 and 1952 - 1954
Paul N. Garber	1944 - 1952 and 1965 - 1966
Ferdinand Sigg	1954 - 1965
Ralph E. Dodge	1965 - 1966
Franz W. Schäfer	1966 - 1989
Heinrich Bolleter	1989 - 2006
Patrick Streiff	2006 -

The Central Conference of Central- and Southern Europe

The "Central Conference of Central and Southern Europe" was founded in 1954. It was formed from those Annual Conferences, Provisional Annual Conferences, and Missions left over after the dissolution of the "Central Conference of Central Europe" and the "Central Conference of Southern Europe" and summed up in the "Geneva Area".

The Meetings of the Central Conference

- 1st Meeting from October 14 to 17, 1954 in Brussels, Belgium
- 2nd Meeting from February 7 to 10, 1954 in Geneva, Switzerland
- 3rd Meeting from October 13 to 16, 1960 in Linz, Austria
- 4th Meeting from September 22 to 27, 1964 in Strasbourg, France
- 5th Meeting extraordinary from September 2 to 4, 1966 in Lausanne, Switzerland
- 6th Meeting from March 5 to 9, 1969 in Berne, Switzerland
Theme: »Die Kirche lebt«
- 7th Meeting from March 21 to 25, 1973 in Schaffhausen, Switzerland
Thema: »Es ist in keinem anderen Heil«
- 8th Meeting from March 15 to 20, 1977 in Zofingen, Switzerland
Theme: »Seid dankbar in allen Dingen; denn es ist der Wille Gottes in Jesus Christus an euch.«
- 9th Meeting from March 18 to 22, 1981 in Niederuzwil, Switzerland
Theme: »Dienet einander, ein jeder mit der Gabe, die er empfangen hat, als die guten Haushalter der vielfältigen Gnade Gottes.«
- 10th Meeting from March, 13 to 17, 1985 in Zurich-Zelthof, Switzerland
Theme: »Gott dienen - ein Leben lang.«
- 11th Meeting from March 15 to 19, 1989 in Baden, Switzerland
Theme: »Christus der Weinstock - wir die Reben.«
- 12th Meeting from March 10 to 14, 1993 in Berne-Bümpliz, Switzerland
Theme: »Wo der Geist des Herrn ist, da ist Freiheit«
- 13th Meeting from March 12 to 16, 1997 in Aarau, Switzerland
Theme: »Mit Grenzen leben - in Christus überwinden«
- 14th Meeting from March 14 to 18, 2001 in Bülach, Switzerland
Theme: »Lasst uns aber Gutes tun und nicht müde werden« (Gal. 6,9)
- 15th Meeting from April 13 to 17, 2005 in Berne-Altstadt, Switzerland
Theme: »Furcht ist nicht in der Liebe« (1. Joh. 4, 18)
- 16th Meeting from March 11 to 15, 2009 in Bülach, Switzerland
Theme: »Seek God and Live - the Methodist Way
- 17th Meeting from March 13 to 17, 2013 in Winterthur, Switzerland
Theme: »Faith, Hope and Love - these three«
- 18th Meeting from March 8 to 12, 2017 in Zurich-Zelthof, Switzerland
Theme: »Jesus is Lord«

Rules of Order of the Central Conference of Central and Southern Europe

Paragraph 1 - Foundation

1. The United Methodist Church (Evangelisch-methodistische Kirche) in Central and Southern Europe is part of the United Methodist Church.
2. The United Methodist Church in Central and Southern Europe is issuing for its area a *Discipline* in accordance with *the Book of Discipline* of The United Methodist Church.
3. The United Methodist Church in Central and Southern Europe is made up of all annual and provisional annual conferences as laid out by the General Conference of The United Methodist Church.
4. The United Methodist Church in Central and Southern Europe is organized in accordance with the powers granted by the 1952 General Conference of the former Methodist Conference and in accordance with the *Book of Discipline* of The United Methodist Church as the "Central Conference of Central and Southern Europe". (See Constitutional Document from October 14, 1954 in the Minutes of the Central Conference 1954 in Brussels, pp. 39 - 40.)
5. The "Central Conference of Central and Southern Europe" has its office in Switzerland, Badenerstrasse 69, 8004 Zürich. In the following it will be referred to in short as "Central Conference".

Paragraph 2 - The Central Conference

1. The Central Conference shall be composed of the Bishop, of voting delegates, delegates with advisory voice as well as guests, who have received an invitation from the conference chair or secretary. Guests may be restricted to public sessions.
2. Central Conference members with voting rights are the delegates of the annual and provisional annual conferences elected according to the provisions of the *Discipline* and the rules of order. Only regular members have voting rights.
3. Members with advisory voice are:
 - Retired Bishops;
 - Delegates of the associated Churches within the Central Conference borders;
 - The secretary, treasurer, chairperson of the judicial court, chairpersons of the working groups, if they are not already voting members.

Advisory members may participate at all sessions of the Central Conference and submit motions to the Central Conference.

4. The delegates of the annual and the provisional annual conferences shall be elected according to the proportion determined by the executive committee. The provisions of the *Discipline* are to be observed.
5. The Central Conference shall convene once every four years within the twelve months following the General Conference. The Central Conference shall be convened by the Bishop in agreement with the executive committee. If the Bishop is prevented from doing this, the secretary may make notice of the conference session. If the Central Conference has not already decided otherwise, time

and place of the upcoming session, the executive committee shall determine time and venue of the upcoming session. If necessary a special session of the Central Conference may be called.

6. The Bishop shall lead the meetings and is chairperson. If he or she is unable to lead the conference, the conference shall elect from the clergy members an interim chairperson.

7. A quorum shall be established when notice of the conference is extended at least one month prior to the conference and at least half of the members with voting rights are present. If there are too few members, the conference shall be postponed from day to day. If on the second day there are still too few members, on the third day without regard to the number of members in attendance the Central Conference shall have a quorum.

8. Without prejudice to specific provisions, the Central Conferences decides with a simple majority of the votes cast. Abstentions are to be ignored.

9. The official languages of the Central Conference shall be German and English. The Central Conference minutes shall be published in one of the two languages only.

10. The rights and responsibilities, which the Central Conference has received from the General Conference, are laid out in the *Discipline*. In the area of the Central Conference it shall have the sole legislative power.

11. Further tasks of the Central Conference shall be:

- To promote the work which has been entrusted to the conference;
- To establish all necessary rules and regulations for administration and supervision;
- To install necessary organs and to elect their representatives;
- To assign the tasks to the organs and to supervise their work;
- To approve the budget for the quadrennium.

12. The Central Conference, where the laws of the land permit, can organize and incorporate itself and its institutions in order to acquire legal status and apply the appropriate legal provisions.

Paragraph 3 - Agents and Organs of the Central Conference

1. The agents of the Central Conference are:

- The Bishop;
- The secretary;
- The treasurer.

Through nomination the Bishop can petition that a voting member of the executive committee be elected vice chair of the executive committee.

2. The Organs of the Central Conference are:

- The Executive Committee;
- The Office;
- The Council on Finances and Administration;
- The Judicial Court;
- The Committee on Investigation;
- The Committee on Appeals;
- The Working Group on Episcopacy;
- Other Working Groups.

Paragraph 4 - The Bishop

1. The Bishop embodies the unity of the Central Conference with the entire United Methodist Church. He or she is supervisor (proctor) of the entire work within the Central Conference (geographical) boundaries. He or she shall represent the Central Conference outside of the conference and determines, if he or she is prevented and deems it to be prudent, a deputy. The Bishop may *ex officio* participate in all meetings of the Central Conference.
2. The Bishop shall be elected through secret ballot with a three-fifths majority of the voting delegates present. The Executive Committee may establish a preparatory process for the election of a bishop. All ordained elders in full connection, who belong to an annual or provisional annual conference of the Central Conference, may be elected.
3. The newly elected Bishop has a term of four years. When the Bishop's first term of office is closing, the executive committee shall determine whether a re-election for life or an election of a new Bishop shall take place and makes the appropriate motion to the Central Conference. For a re-election for life a three-fifth majority is required.
4. If the office of Bishop becomes vacant (due to death, retirement or resignation) the executive committee in accordance with the *Discipline* shall determine the necessary steps. The executive committee shall decide whether an extraordinary session of the Central Conference shall be announced and makes the motion to elect a new Bishop.
5. A retired Bishop shall be an advisory member of the Central Conference and the executive committee. He or she shall remain member as long as his or her residency is within the Central Conference borders. He or she is to be invited to all meetings of these organs.

Paragraph 5 - The Secretary

1. Based upon the nomination of the executive committee the Central Conference shall elect a secretary for a four-year term. The candidate does not need to be a voting member of the Central Conference. Re-election is possible.
2. The term of office shall begin with the adjournment of the session during which the election occurred and continues until the closing of the next regular session of the Central Conference. The secretary shall *ex officio* be member and secretary of the executive committee and the office.
3. The secretary shall write the minutes of the Central Conference, the executive committee and the office and shall publish and mail these as required through their by-laws. In consultation with the Bishop, he or she shall manage as need dictates the correspondence for these organs and shall administer to the tasks which the *Discipline* places on him or her. The Central Conference, the executive committee, and the office may name additional tasks.
4. If the office of secretary becomes vacant during the quadrennium, an interim secretary may be appointed by the executive committee or by the Bishop.

Paragraph 6 - The Treasurer

1. The Central Conference shall elect following nomination by the executive committee a treasurer for a four-year term. The candidate does not need to be a voting delegate of the Central Conference. Re-election is possible.
2. The term of office of the treasurer shall begin with the adjournment of the Central Conference session, during which the election took place, and continues until the conclusion of the next regular Central Conference session. He or she shall be *ex officio* a member of the executive committee.
3. The treasurer shall manage the finances following the framework of the approved budget. He or she shall annually prepare a fiscal report of all transactions, which is given to the executive committee for review. He or she shall submit motions regarding the budget of the current year as needed. He or she shall write and in consultation with the executive committee submit a budget proposal for the quadrennium to the Central Conference for approval.
4. If the office of treasurer becomes vacant during the quadrennium, an interim treasurer shall be appointed by the executive committee or by the Bishop.

Paragraph 7 - The Executive Committee

1. The executive committee shall be composed of the following members with voting rights: the Bishop, the secretary and the treasurer, as well as one superintendent and one lay delegate from each annual and provisional annual conference, as well as the chairperson of the working group on episcopacy. Lay representatives must be elected members of the Central Conference.

Retired Bishops are members with advisory voice. If a conference consists of more than one country, then beyond the two voting delegates the superintendent of each additional country shall be a member of the executive committee with advisory voice.

Through invitation the Bishop may also invite the chairpersons of the working groups.

2. The representatives of the annual and the provisional annual conferences shall be nominated for election for the executive committee by the Bishop after consultation with the elected delegates of those annual and provisional annual conferences. Vacancies in the interim shall be filled by election of the executive committee upon nomination of the Bishop.
3. The term of office for the executive committee shall be four years. It shall begin with the adjournment of the Central Conference session, during which the election took place and continues until the conclusion of the next regular session of the Central Conference.
4. Chairperson of the executive committee shall *ex officio* be the Bishop.
5. The executive committee shall meet at least once a year. The meetings shall be announced by the Bishop, if he or she is prevented in doing this, by the vice-chairperson or the secretary. There is a quorum if half of the voting delegates are present. The executive committee shall decide through majority vote of the voting members present.

6. The executive committee shall manage the business of the Central Conference between sessions. Most particularly:
 - To attend to the completion of its resolutions and decisions and to do what is necessary to further the standing and development of the work;
 - To receive the financial statement of the treasurer and to discharge him or her on the basis of the audit report;
 - To make the necessary adjustments and extensions to the Central Conference financial budget;
 - To attend to the preparation of the Central Conference sessions.
7. The executive committee elects through the nomination of the Office the persons who shall represent the Central Conference in the worldwide church bodies, as long as no other voting regulations exist.
8. The executive committee shall report to the Central Conference on its work and make the necessary motions.

Paragraph 8 - The Office

1. The office shall be composed of the Bishop, the vice-chairperson, the secretary, and the treasurer. Chairperson shall be the Bishop.
2. The office can through a motion of the Bishop include a fifth person, who is elected by the executive committee from among its members.
3. The office shall have the following responsibilities:
 - Preparation of the executive committee meetings and supervision or administration of its decisions;
 - The determination of the language, in which the minutes of the Central Conference shall be written;
 - Administration of all financial and personnel matters for the office of Bishop and the secretariat of the Bishop, which are not otherwise supervised;
 - Nomination of members to the Council on Finances and Administration passed on to the executive committee, which confirms the nominations;
4. In pressing situations, for which the Central Conference or the executive committee have not made any provisions, the office can act for the interim on behalf of the executive committee.

Paragraph 9 - The Council on Finance and Administration

1. The Council on Finance and Administration shall be composed of three persons to be nominated by the office and confirmed by the executive committee.
2. The council shall annually examine the disbursement of funds of the Central Conference and shall submit the written report of the review to the executive committee.
3. The council shall resolve the budget issues of the Bishop and his or her office with the appropriate bodies of the General Conference. The accounting is done through the association "Hilfe im Sprengel". The council supports the Bishop and the Bishop's office in advisory capacity.

4. The members of the council are also members of the pension board of the Central Conference. The executive committee can elect further members to the pension board.

Paragraph 10 – The Committee on Investigation

1. The Central Conference shall elect a committee on investigation in accordance with the disciplinary and arbitration regulation of the Central Conference, consisting of seven clergy members in full connection (if possible not more than one pastor per annual or provisional annual conference), two laity with advisory voice, and six substitutes (five clergy members in full connection and one layperson). The election takes place upon nomination by the Bishop.
2. The committee on investigation is responsible for any complaint against the Bishop.
3. The committee on investigation constitutes itself and gives itself rules of procedure and by-laws. Seven clergy members in full connection respectively their substitutes build the quorum. Members of the committee on investigation, who might be party to the dispute, are to be replaced by substitutes.

Paragraph 11 - The Committee on Appeals

1. The Central Conference shall vote for a committee on appeals in accordance with the disciplinary and arbitration regulation of the Central Council, made up of five pastoral members (four in full connection and a full-time local pastor) as well as four laity, who have at least six continuous years as a professing member of the United Methodist Church, also as many substitutes. The election takes place after the recommendation of the Bishop.
2. The committee on appeals of the Central Conference is responsible for appeals in disciplinary proceedings against pastoral members.
3. The committee on appeals shall constitute itself and choose its rules of order and bylaws. Committee members, who might be party to a dispute or feel biased, shall be replaced by a substitute.

Paragraph 12 - The Judicial Court

1. The judicial court shall be composed of five persons of which at least two must be clergy members in full connection. At the same time four substitutes shall be elected, two of which shall be clergy members in full connection and two lay members. The candidates shall be persons of integrity and qualified for this task. They must not for the same period of time be members of the Central Conference, the executive committee, the working groups or the organs of the disciplinary and arbitration regulation. Their election follows the nomination prepared by the executive committee.
2. The judicial court shall constitute itself and shall provide its own procedural and working rules. A quorum shall be established by the presence of three members. A tie decision shall be decided by the vote of the chairperson. A member shall be excluded from a judicial process if he or she is a member of a church body, which is party to the case.

3. The judicial court shall meet as necessity calls at a place, which the chairperson shall name. The chairperson or a substitute shall be invited to the meeting of the Central Conference.
4. The judicial court shall make all judicial decisions in accordance with the constitution, excluding the jurisdiction of the Judicial Council of the General Conference.
5. The Central Conference may charge the judicial court with additional tasks.
6. The decisions of the judicial court shall have immediate effect. The option to invoke the judicial council of the General Conference in accordance with the constitution is hereby not affected.
7. The decisions of the judicial court shall briefly outline the facts and points of controversy as well as the rationale for the decision. All parties shall receive this document as well as the secretary of the Central Conference. It shall be published in the minutes of the following Central Conference session.
8. Petitions to the judicial court may be made by:
 - The Bishop of the Central Conference;
 - At least one-third of the voting members of the executive committee;
 - At least one-fifth of the delegates with voting rights present at the Central Conference;
 - At least one-fifth of the voting members present at the annual or provisional annual conference; in provisional annual conferences, which have fewer than 25 members, half of the voting members present.

Paragraph 13 - The Working Group on Episcopacy

1. The Central Conference shall elect a working group on episcopacy, which consists of one executive committee member from each annual and provisional annual conference. The nomination shall be suggested by the office. The Bishop shall choose one fifth of the members.
2. The working group meets at least once a year. It fulfills the tasks in accordance with the *Discipline* and reports directly to the Central Conference and the executive committee.

Paragraph 14 - Other Working Groups

1. The Central Conference can elect further working groups and authorize them to undertake specific tasks. The members of the working groups need not be members of the Central Conference.
2. In general, the working groups shall be comprised of three members. Vacancies shall be filled by the executive committee.
3. The chairperson of the working group shall be determined by the Central Conference. Otherwise the working group shall constitute itself.
4. The chairperson shall report annually to the executive committee on the activities of the working group. The reporting has to take place in writing and in the official languages of the Central Conference.

Paragraph 15 - The Session of the Central Conference

1. The session committee of the Central Committee consists of the chairperson, the secretary, the treasurer, the chairperson of the ushers (counters of votes), and the conference host. This committee shall make all decisions in all procedural or organizational questions, which are not disciplinary question or which are not otherwise regulated in these rules of order. All members of the Central Conference have the right to appeal a decision made by this committee.
2. The approved program prepared by the preparations committee of the Central Conference is the official program of the session.
3. At the beginning of the first meeting the executive committee shall place a motion for election of the following persons:
 - 6 ushers (vote counters) (3 clergy delegates and three lay delegates) and a chairperson;
 - Two auditors of the conference minutes;
 - The reporters;
4. The Office lays the to do list before the conference for acceptance.

Paragraph 16 - The business meetings

1. No member of the Central Conference may be absent from the business meetings without permission, unless it is due to illness or other legitimate reason. In this case a written note indicating the reasons shall be given to the secretary in a timely manner.
2. The chairperson shall announce the presence of a quorum. The times of opening the meetings, recess, and conclusion of the day's deliberations shall be the decision of the chairperson. He or she shall preside over the deliberations.
3. The meetings of the Central Conference shall generally be public. Visitors shall sit in the area designated to them.
4. The chairperson may for selected business call for a closed meeting. He or she must announce a closed session when at least one-fifth of the members require it. Before the closed meeting begins all guests shall leave the conference room. The business of the closed meeting shall be confidential. The decisions of the closed session shall recorded in writing.

Paragraph 17 - Deliberations

1. Business may reach the Central Conference:
 - By motion of the chairperson
 - Through the reports of the organs of the Central Conference named under paragraph 3;
 - By motion of the annual and provisional annual conferences;
 - By motion of members of the Central Conference.
2. For the business meetings the following rules shall apply:
 - All motions and amendments shall be submitted by a member of the Central Conference and be supported by another member;
 - All motions and amendments shall be written in one of the official languages of the Central Conference and given to the secretary;
 - When an amendment is proposed and has been supported, the chairperson may limit debate to the proposed amendment. The same shall apply to amendments to the amendment. The discussion shall follow the reverse order of the submitted amendments;

- A motion for reconsideration after the concluding vote on a petition may be made by a member of the majority vote fraction only.
- The following motions must be voted on immediately after consideration of the list of speakers: close of debate and motion to vote, motion to recess and postpone the meeting, point of order, matter regarding the agenda, commit to refer the matter for consideration to a Central Conference organ.

Paragraph 18 - Voting Procedure and Elections

1. Unless otherwise designated, voting is public. Elections may be public or by ballot.
2. Prior to the vote the chairperson shall offer a brief review of the amendments, which are on the table. Amendments to the amendment shall be voted on prior to the vote on the amendment and the vote on the motion itself, which is voted on a last.
3. Voting shall generally be a showing of hands. Only the votes of the delegates present at the time of the vote shall be counted. Abstentions shall be ignored. When there is a tie vote the motion is defeated.
4. When elections are open, the candidates shall be voted on in the order of their nominations.
5. Ballots shall be used for secret elections. Empty and invalid ballots shall not be considered in determining the majority. The ushers shall see that each voting ballot has a different color, format or print. They shall also count the number of voting ballots passed out. If the number of voting ballots turned in to be counted is higher than the number passed out, the vote is invalid and must be repeated. The ushers shall record the result of the election as follows: number of voting members, number of invalid voting ballots, and number of empty voting ballots and distribution of valid ballots.
6. If the election is to take place without nominations, the first two votes shall be open. After the second vote no further candidates must be included. As of the third vote the Central Conference may, following a motion of a member, declare in an open vote that the candidate with the highest number of votes below the absolute majority is elected. For the election of a Bishop paragraph 4 applies.

Paragraph 19 - Thematic Events

1. In regard to the tasks of the Central Conference as defined in the *Discipline* thematic events can be organized in connection with the meetings of the executive committee. The theme is selected by either the Central Conference or the executive committee.
2. Further persons who in their country work in this area or may offer further impulses to the annual and provisional annual conferences may be invited to the thematic events taking place in connection with the meeting of the executive committee. Generally not more than one person per country may be invited in addition to the executive committee members. The additional persons will be invited by the Bishop after consultation with the respective superintendent.
3. At the Central Conference the themes may be taken up again for consolidation and continuation or new themes can be initiated.

Paragraph 20 - The Conference Minutes

1. All Central Conference accepted reports, petitions and decisions shall be integral parts of the conference minutes and shall be included in the minutes in full.
2. After the revision through both of the auditors of the minutes and through the chairperson the minutes are valid and will be published.

Paragraph 21 - Final Provisions

1. Petitions to change these Rules of Order of the Central Conference require a two-thirds majority to pass.
2. These Rules of Order were adopted by the 2013 Central Conference and replace the previous Organizational Structure and Rules of Order from 2009. They shall take effect on March 16, 2013.
3. On March 10, 2017, the Central Conference amended the second sentence of Paragraph 4, point 2. The amendment takes effect immediately.

Procedural and working rules of the Judicial Court

General provisions

Article 1: Jurisdiction of the Judicial Court

The competences of the Judicial Court shall be those listed in Article 12 of the Rules Order of the CC CSE.

Article 2: Working mode in general

1 Wherever possible, the Judicial Court shall do its work in writing, in particular with the help of electronic communication (e-mail).

2 If special circumstances require so, the Judicial Court shall hold a meeting. In such a case it shall be able to take decisions if at least three members are present. The president shall decide on the order of the day. In principle, meetings of the Judicial Court shall not be public.

Article 3: Procedure

Without prejudice to the present rules, the Judicial Court shall proceed based on its free decision, provided that equality of treatment and fair hearing are guaranteed.

Article 4: Decision-making

The Judicial Court shall decide with the simple majority of the votes cast. Abstentions shall not be taken into account for these purposes. In the case of equal votes, the president of the Judicial Court shall decide.

Article 5: Working languages and languages of procedure

The working languages and the languages of procedure of the Judicial Court shall be German and English.

Procedure for formal decisions of the Judicial Court

Article 6: Standing

Applications for a formal legal decision to be taken by the Judicial Court within the meaning of Article 12(4) of the Rules or Order of the CC CSE shall be brought by the persons and groups of persons listed in Article 12(8) of the same Rules of Order.

Article 7: Written submissions

1 Applications for a formal procedure before the Judicial Court shall be made in writing. The written application is to be sent to the secretary of the CC CSE. An application by e-mail shall be deemed to have been received where the secretary has confirmed its receipt within 7 days after the application was sent.

2 The written application shall in any case contain the following information:

- a) Names of the parties

- b) Addresses, telephone numbers, fax numbers and (where applicable) e-mail addresses of the parties
- c) The application
- d) The grounds on which the application is founded.

3 The Judicial Court shall forthwith send to the defendant a copy of the written application. Within 30 days after the receipt of the application the defendant shall to the Judicial Court send a reasoned answer to the application in writing.

4 The Judicial Court shall forthwith send to the applicant a copy of the written submissions of the defendant.

Article 8: Oral procedure and procedure in writing

1 The formal procedure before the Judicial Court shall be conducted in writing. In special cases, the president shall be entitled to decide in favour of an oral procedure.

2 In the case of an oral procedure, the president shall decide on the place of the session and on the order of the day. At the beginning of the meeting, the Judicial Court shall appoint one of its members as secretary.

Article 9: Communication with the parties

1 Without prejudice to section 3 of the present article, the communication of the Judicial Court with the parties to the procedure shall, wherever possible, be carried out by e-mail.

2 Parties who receive e-mail messages shall immediately confirm their receipt. Absent such a receipt, the sending party shall repeat the sending of the message in an appropriate manner. Without prejudice to registered mail, the communication shall be deemed to have been received once its receipt has been confirmed.

3 The following documents shall be sent by registered mail as well, where applicable, by e-mail:

- a) The written submissions by the application (to be sent to the defendant)
- b) The written submissions by the defendant (to be sent to the applicant)
- c) The setting of any additional dates for action by the parties by the president of the Judicial Court
- d) The formal decision by the Judicial Court.

Article 10: Participation of experts

The president of the Judicial Court shall be entitled to appoint experts, in particular from among the members of the United Methodist Church who may be experts in the relevant field.

Article 11: Decisions of the Judicial Court

1 The decisions of the Judicial Court shall contain information about possibilities of appeal. They shall be sent in writing to the parties, the secretary of the CC CSE and to the Bishop of the CC CSE.

2 The decisions of the Judicial Court shall numbered consecutively and shall be published according to Article 12(7) of the Rules of Order of the CC CSE in the next protocol of the CC CSE.

Further procedures

Article 12: Further tasks and informal requests

1 Where the CC CSE assigns further tasks to the Judicial Court based on Article 12(5) of the Rules of Order of the CC CSE, the president of the Judicial Court shall decide on the procedure.

2 The president of the Judicial Court shall decide on informal requests put to it by the Bishop or by other leaders of the church.

Entry into force

Article 13

The present procedural and working rules shall enter into force on 1 January 2009.

Done by the Judicial Court on 21 December 2008 and adapted on 30 March 2013 to the terminology of the Rules revised by the Central Conference 2013.

For the Judicial Court:

The president: Prof. Dr. Christa Tobler, LL.M.

I. Minutes

of the 72nd meeting of the Executive Committee of the Central Conference of Central and Southern Europe

Unauthorized translation - original in German

Minutes of the Executive Committee of Friday, March 25, 2022

Friday, March 25, 2022, 2:00 p.m.

Plenary session at the Église Méthodiste Tabor in Mulhouse

Bishop Streiff welcomes the participants in Mulhouse and also those by zoom. He especially welcomes Matthias Bruhn, who moderates the round table. For the first time, Krasimir Madzharov from Bulgaria is among us. He is the designated Superintendent of the UMC in Bulgaria.

The following people are present:

Voting members:

Bishop

Active Bishop	Bishop	Patrick Streiff	present
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Office

Secretary	Pastor	Markus Bach	present
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Treasurer	Pastor	Iris Bullinger	present
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Executive Committee

Bulgaria-Romania	Sup.	Daniel Topalski	online
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Layperson	Desislava Todorova	partially online
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Serbia-North Macedonia-Albania	Sup.	Daniel Sjanta	present
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Layperson	Daniela Stoilkova	present
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Austria	Sup.	Stefan Schröckenfuchs	present/online
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Layperson	Ben Nausner	online
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Poland	Sup.	Andrzej Malicki	online
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Layperson	Olgierd Benedyktowicz	absent
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Switzerland-France-North Africa	Sup.	Serge Frutiger	present
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Layperson	Lea Hafner	present
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Czech Republic-Slovakia	Sup.	Stefan Rendoš	online
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Layperson	vacant	---
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Hungary	Sup.	László Khaled	present
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Layperson	Henrik Schauer mann	online
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Chair WG Episcopacy	Pastor	Jörg Niederer	present
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Advisory members:

Retired Bishop	Bishop	Heinrich Bolleter	excused
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Additional superintendents

France and Belgium	Sup.	Etienne Rudolph	present
Algeria and Tunisia	Sup.	Freddy Nzambe	present
Albania	Sup.	Wilfried Nausner	online
Czech Republic	Sup.	Ivana Procházková	partly present
Romania	Sup.	Rares Calugar	online
North Macedonia	Sup.	Marjan Dimov	present
Bulgaria	design. Sup.		Krassimir Madzharov
rov	present/online		

Chairmen of the Working Groups

WG Theology and Ord. Ministries	Sup.	Stefan Zürcher	online
WG Liturgy	Pastor	Stefan Weller	present
WG Church Order & Legal Issues	Sup.	Daniel Topalski (ex-member)	online
WG Children and Youth	Layperson	Boris Fazekas	absent
WG Women's Ministry	Pastor	Monika Zuber	partly online
Coordinator	Layperson	Barbara Bünger	present/online

Present as guests are:

Assistant to the bishop		Urs Schweizer	present
Bishop's Office		André Töngi	present/online
Moderator Round Table		Matthias Bruhn	online

We sing the song "We sing of your glory" with expert guitar accompaniment by the bishop's assistant.

Bishop Streiff gives a reflection on yesterday's daily motto from Psalm 143:5f:

"I remember the days of old; I meditate on all that you have done; I ponder the work of your hands."

The psalm describes a difficult time when people believe and think that God is far away. They have the impression that the future is uncertain and difficult.

Many of us currently also come from places where there are many refugees. It is a difficult situation, in which we also think about how things can go on and whether God is there. Into this situation the psalm tells about God's faithfulness. The psalm calls to God and his faithfulness in a troubled time. For us, too, it is about remembering that God has given and continues to give us his faithfulness. But we can also remember God's faithfulness in good times. When I left Switzerland, the weather was very nice, with bright sunshine and warmth. Spring has arrived. This leads to a great discrepancy when we become aware of the great difficulties in which other people live who are not too far away from us. At this time, let us remember God's faithfulness to us. Prayer.

Bishop Streiff: We decided at the Round Table to rearrange this afternoon's program and deal with the Round Table report first. Stefan Schröckenfuchs will leave us this afternoon but will be able to join us tomorrow for the second part of the Round Table discussion online from Vienna.

Bishop Streiff: Tonight, there will be a report and prayer evening on the consequences of the situation in Ukraine and the work of the EMK with the refugees from Ukraine. This will be led by Serge Frutiger. There will be various reports from the affected countries.

Bishop Streiff: In this context, I would like to express my sincere thanks to Urs Schweizer, who has worked very intensively on the coordination of relief efforts and on reporting on the war in Ukraine and its consequences. We are very grateful that we now also have coordinators in the various countries who are involved on the ground.

Round Table Central Conference MSE

Oral report by Matthias Bruhn

Bishop Streiff welcomes Matthias Bruhn, facilitator for the roundtable.

Matthias Bruhn introduces himself. He feels very honored to have been asked for the task of moderator and supervisor of the Round Table. He explains what has happened so far: After an initial assessment of our confidence in the process (Will we find a good solution at the round table that suits everyone?), the first step was to listen to each other about what the situation is like in the different countries. This was done in groups of two, and the aim was to find out what the discussion partner needs for his ministry and what values are important to him.

The next step was to find out what the reactions and consequences would be if any of the following decisions were made:

- What should the CC Church Order (unchanged or changed) allow for in terms of internal regulations at the level of an Annual Conference or a District Conference for a single country?
- The CC Church Order is left as it is (so-called "zero option").
- All qualifying statements on marriage and same-sex relationships are deleted from the Church Order (like Central Conference Germany).
- A reference to two different understandings of marriage in the church, both of which can be celebrated, is included (like Methodist Church in Britain).
- An open understanding of marriage (covenant between two adults) with protection of traditional conscience beliefs is included (like "One Church Model" of 2019 General Conference).
- The traditional understanding of marriage (covenant between a man and a woman) applies in principle, but the possibility is created to expand it and allow blessings if the state legislation allows same-sex partnerships or such marriages and the EMK in the country decides to do so.
- The "kaleidoscope" model of Switzerland-France-North Africa is taken up: "traditionalists" and "liberals" remain together as one conference, and both convictions are accepted.

Bishop Streiff points out that the group would have liked to meet in person in Budapest in February, but this was not possible due to the pandemic. The meeting had to be held online.

Matthias Bruhn: But that didn't hinder the conversation.

Bishop Streiff: At the same time, the small-group on church order convened by the Executive Committee also worked with Serge Frutiger, László Kháled and me.

László Kháled: We have been working on the issues related to the Church Order. We first looked at our Central Conference Church Order to see what is changeable and what is not. We also looked at what it says about homosexuality. There are only two places, one is in the Social Principles, the other is in the other articles. We don't yet have a plan for what the text will ultimately look like, but we have found that the right of adaptation certainly gives us the opportunity to find a helpful way. To this end, Article 543.7 states:

A central conference shall have power to make such changes and adaptations of the Book of Discipline as the special conditions and the mission of the church in the area require, especially concerning the organization and administration of the work on local church, district, and annual conference levels, provided that no action shall be taken that is contrary to the Constitution and the General Rules of The United Methodist Church, and provided that the spirit of connectional relationship is kept between the local and the general church. Subject to this restriction, a central conference may delegate to an annual conference within its boundaries the Power to make one or the other of the changes and adaptations referred to in this paragraph, upon the request of such annual conference.

This means that a Central Conference can approve internal regulations for the organization in a country (as there are already examples in Poland and the Czech Republic). However, adaptations can also be made which concern the mission. The decisive point is that the adaptation can only be made by a central conference. What exactly is possible through adaptation, and how far the right of adaptation goes, has not yet been clarified. But it turns out that there is the possibility of working out a way for us through the right of adaptation.

Bishop Streiff: We are not yet at the place where we have a concrete text that we can propose for our Central Conference Church Order. For this we need the criteria that are important for the different countries and their missions.

Bishop Streiff: If there are no questions on that, we'll take it a step further and hear what the roundtable shared at the last meeting.

Matthias Bruhn: What you have heard so far has been the status until yesterday. We have learned about the different situations in the countries and also seen the flexibility of the church order and the few places that we need to look at more closely. That's why we asked ourselves the next question, what are the criteria for a solution that is acceptable to all, and we came up with the following points:

1. the main message should be the important message: "We want to live in unity, even if we do not agree on everything. "
2. in matters of human sexuality, each country can follow its local beliefs and laws.
3. there shall be no outside pressure on Annual Conferences and Districts.
4. we want to protect the unity of our Central Conference by using the process of adaptation (through translation) to avoid pressure from the General Conference. A solution must work even if the Book of Discipline is changed by the General Conference.
5. communication aspects must be addressed (within and between Annual Conferences).
6. we want to end the discussion so that we can focus on what our mission/task is for the future.
7. a bishop is expected to adhere to the principle of impartiality and not to emphasize personal views. A bishop cannot override the vote of the Closed Session regarding ordinations; however, a bishop's personal freedom of conscience must be accepted.
8. The Annual Conferences must respect the bishop-elect, despite the existing points of contention.

The first four points are so important that every Annual Conference and every country can agree to them. The other points are to be subordinated to this. We hope that with these criteria we can lay a foundation on which a helpful formulation for the Central Conference Church Order can be found.

Bishop Streiff: Thank you very much, Matthias, for your insight into the work of the round table and the result. Are there any queries, reactions that help us further before we go into a next step?

Stefan Schröckenfuchs: The following countries have been involved in the Round Table since the beginning: Hungary, Serbia, Austria, Poland, Switzerland-France, North Macedonia. Ivana Procházková from the Czech Republic has also joined this year. This morning we had an intensive, but good conversation, in which we helped each other in the formulations.

Markus Bach: It seems important to me how we understand and relate our CC Church Order and the Book of Discipline. Which text and which authority can decide how our being together is determined? Is it the General Conference, which determines the Book of Discipline, or the Central Conference, which determines the CC Church Order? The previously mentioned goal of togetherness can only be pursued if we consider the CC Church Order that we have adopted as the basis and not the Book of Discipline. Of course, the CC Church Order should be as close as possible, to the Book of Discipline. But it should not drive us apart or separate us. This is a difficult approach, but I believe doable. Germany has a similar understanding of their CDO (Constitution, Doctrine, Order = Church Order of Germany).

Stefan Schröckenfuchs: That was a big part of our discussion and our questions about how to understand the church order. As a starting point, we started from the text of the CC Church Order 2005.

Jörg Niederer: At the General Conference level, the right of adaptation is currently under pressure. There are efforts that the Book of Discipline should no longer be adaptable. Where do we stand with regard to these questions?

Bishop Streiff: There is no direct mechanism that a central conference has to ask the general conference if a certain adaptation is possible. But you can't just do whatever you want. You can't just write your own church order. It is a matter of adaptation. But adaptation has a lot of flexibility. Sometimes a bishop has to say that you can't go that far in an adaptation. An adaptation has to be grounded in the particular situation and mission of the church. At the Round Table, we were convinced that through adaptation we have to give countries security for their mission.

Stefan Weller: I don't yet understand exactly what is meant by the sentence "There must be no external pressure." is meant. Does it mean pressure from other churches, from the government or from other people?

Daniel Sjanta: It is meant an intra-church pressure, between Annual Conferences, District Conferences, Bishop or pastors.

Stefan Schröckenfuchs: I would like to add the General Conference.

Wilfried Nausner: I thank the group. This is going in a good direction of unity with different opinions. This brings people together. It shows a good possibility for all sides. You didn't talk about "traditional" or "liberal", that is helpful. In Albania, that will be helpful. Good work!

Bishop Streiff: Not all countries and conferences are part of the Round Table. Nevertheless, everyone should be able to express themselves, even those who are not part of it.

Etienne Rudolph: Regarding the situation in France, I can say that unfortunately we can only win a minority with these criteria. The majority will therefore leave the EMC because the clear rejection of homosexuality is not mentioned. Moreover, they would thus also be part of a church which lives a more open attitude in other places.

Bishop Streiff: There are congregations in France that could still imagine being part of a more open conference together with the EMC in Switzerland; others will leave the EMC, even if we don't know yet when. Some have already left, others not yet.

Andrzej Malicki: Since the beginning of the round table, we have noticed that we have different opinions - but also the will to stay together. Even if we met by zoom, it was a fruitful work. I would like to thank everyone who contributed to our roundtable discussions. Thanks also to Matthias Bruhn, who helpfully moderated our work. We have different backgrounds and opinions, but find a common path.

It's a pity I can't be with you now. But the situation in Poland is very difficult because of the refugee situation.

Ivana Procházková: In the fall of last year, we talked with the pastors and the district conference about this and also about what our Methodist conviction is. In the process, we established a minimum consensus. The statements in that discussion very much followed the question grid: I like...; I desire..., I fear.... We have determined we are conservative, have a traditional stance with regard to the understanding of marriage, and would like to keep ordination according to the current church order. But we see community as the highest priority of our being church. Therefore, we have decided to participate in the Round Table.

Bishop Streiff: At the 1st meeting, two people each talked about their positions and then presented the other position to the plenary. The other person could then respond whether they were understood or not. This mutual understanding is very important.

Etienne Rudolph: Did I understand correctly that there are actually only two countries where there are different attitudes towards homosexuality: Switzerland and Austria?

Stefan Schröckenfuchs: I don't think that there is only one or only the other attitude anywhere. But I think that the attitudes in Switzerland are the most polarizing. In Austria, differences are there, even if they are not too great.

Lea Hafner: In Switzerland, we all have opinions, as they do in the Central Conference. We received a mandate from the Board to look for a way to stay together despite this. The Kaleidoscope model emerged from this.

Bishop Streiff: Last year we hoped to come to a conclusion at the Annual Conference. The postponement of the General Conference gave us additional time, and there was a desire, especially from the traditional side, to clarify even better how they can find or keep their place in the Church.

Stefan Weller: I have a special role because I come from the GDR but am a pastor in Switzerland. It is really interesting how Switzerland deals with differences. In Switzerland, there is a tradition of asking different opinions in order to find compromises. That is a special strength of Switzerland. Sometimes it's also difficult because you don't move forward so quickly.

Serge Frutiger: I would like to hear about the situation of the countries that are not involved in the Round Table.

Bishop Streiff: These are Bulgaria, Romania and Slovakia.

Daniel Topalski: I would like to congratulate the Round Table for their work. However, we have a different understanding and therefore we would like to go another way, as soon as possible.

Rares Calugar: We are in a similar place as Daniel. I don't see a path for us in that direction.

Stefan Rendoš: I would like to know if what, László Khaled proposed is the final result?

Bishop Streiff: No, this is not the final result yet. We will talk tomorrow about what the next steps will be. These criteria give us the basis to find a solution. Our goal is to present a proposal at the November Central Conference meeting that the majority can agree to.

We're going to take a break.

Friday, March 25, 2022, 4:15 p.m.

Plenary session at the Église Méthodiste Tabor in Mulhouse

Central Conference Office (Report 0; Enclosure 2 + 3)

represented by Markus Bach

Re 2.2 Meeting of the Central Conference 2022

- 1. The Executive Committee unanimously reaffirms the desire that the bishop calls for an extraordinary meeting of the Central Conference of Central and Southern Europe in Basel in due course, taking place from November 16-20, 2022 - this to include a clearly defined agenda. Immediately prior to this, a meeting of the Executive Committee shall be held. The office will be entrusted with the necessary preparations.**
- 2. The Executive Committee unanimously affirms that all persons currently holding an office on Central Conference level or on European/worldwide level shall be asked by summer 2022 whether they would like to continue their task beyond the extraordinary session of the Central Conference in order to be able to prepare necessary replacement or new elections.**

Bishop Streiff: The Secretary will write to the officers accordingly.

Wilfried Nausner: It might also be good to clarify the question of working groups in principle. What are the topics that unite us as a Central Conference and challenge us together, and on which we can also find people who are willing to work together so that the congregations can benefit from such work?

Bishop Streiff: We will have time tomorrow and then we can consider which working groups we want and need and what they should work on. Some working groups work intensively, others work less or not at all. It is important that we have enough members in working groups, but also that we have good chairs. What working groups do we need in the future, and what topics do we need for the theme days? The secretary will include this in his letter.

Re 3. financial matters

The Executive Committee unanimously accepts the 2021 accounts on the basis of the auditor's report, grants discharge to the treasurer and expresses its sincere thanks for the services rendered.

Re 5.1 Children and Youth Working Group

Bishop pointed out that he received an email from EMYC last week mentioning that it had met:

The European Methodist Youth and Children's Council met online last Saturday. There were eight in attendance from Russia, Ukraine, Ireland, England, Portugal, Latvia and Germany. Bishop Kheday is President and the vice-President is Ukrainian. They have organized an online prayer gathering next week and invite all to be part of it: Wednesday 23rd March - 5PM GMT | 6PM CET | 7PM EET
Please see below wording that you can share on your communication channels, as well as attached images: The European Methodist Youth and Children's Council invites children, young people and adults to join together, on zoom, to pray for the situation in Ukraine. We will be hearing stories from our Methodist friends in Ukraine and Russia. If you are under 18 years old, you need to have an adult in the room. Those hosting will lead in English, we will include other languages in our prayers. It will be great to join together in prayer across Europe with people of all ages, led by our young people.

Lea Hafner: Is there any way to get in touch with Roxanne?

Ben Nausner: Have there been no reports since 2019?

Markus Bach: It is indeed the case that the last time we had a report was in 2019. But we have to keep in mind that the EMYC is part of the European Methodist Council (EMC) and the Working Group on Children and Youth belongs to the Central Conference of Central and Southern Europe. However, the meetings have always taken place simultaneously and interconnected. And because the EMYC did not meet due to the pandemic, there were no meetings of the WG Children and Youth.

Bishop Streiff: Now the pandemic is (hopefully) over again, and meetings should be possible. We hope that this will also launch the work again. Please let us know from the different countries who from your side could serve as contact person(s).

Wilfried Nausner: The EMYC is a group of the EMC. It is their task to bring young people together. I am disappointed that this is not working. It is important that the EMC is active here. I wonder what is going on in the EMC that this is not working. I ask the bishop to bring this in there.

Bishop Streiff: Andrzej Malicki is also in the EMC. I have already tried to get answers in various ways but agree with Wilfried.

Daniel Sjanta: We already talked about this in October. I wonder if the will and the possibility are still there.

Bishop Streiff: We have to make it possible for our Central Conference that young people meet, completely independent of the European level. Please give us the addresses of young people who are eligible for this. In Switzerland we are also trying to create capacities for this. A concrete request for a proposal for support has been deposited with Community Development and is still open.

Working Group Episcopacy (Attachment 4)

Represented by Jörg Niederer, Chairman

Jörg Niederer: Since the last meeting, I have also been invited to the office of the Central Conference in order to think about relieving the bishop, but also to work on the possibility of an election of a bishop. At the moment it looks like there could be two possibilities to hold an election at the CC meeting in November 2022.

The *Bishop* provides some clarification on Exhibit 4.1.

Based on the explanations, the chairman of the Working Group Episcopacy withdraws the motion to adopt the election procedure for a bishop. The election procedure cannot be determined until it is clear whether and how an election of bishops can be held at an extraordinary Central Conference.

The Executive Committee approves the report of the Working Group on Episcopacy with thanks.

Bishop Streiff: Since we got through the reports quickly today, we will not start until 9:00 tomorrow. The secretary will inform everyone by mail.

Friday, March 25, 2022, 6:30 p.m.

Dinner at the Hôtel Bristol in Mulhouse

Friday, March 25, 2022, 8 p.m.

Evening prayer at the Église Méthodiste Tabor in Mulhouse

Under the direction of *Serge Frutiger*, an evening on the current situation with the war in Ukraine will take place. The participants from different countries report about their work with the refugees from Ukraine. A separate report is attached to the minutes.

Ivana Procházková will lead the prayer.

Sharing on the Work with Refugees in the Central Conference CSE from Friday, March 25, 2022

Poland (Leading Superintendent Andrzej Malicki)

So far, about 2.2 million refugees (for the leaders of the UMC in Poland: "guests") have arrived in Poland from Ukraine, the vast majority of them women and children. An estimated 60% of them are planning to stay in the country, the rest are traveling on to other countries. Most of the local churches of the UMC are involved in the relief efforts in one way or another:

- Providing overnight accommodations for short stays and for longer-term stays (in Warsaw alone for about 100 people).
- Distribution of clothes, shoes, food (also in cooperation with other institutions)
- Help with administrative questions (→ regulation of residence permits as a prerequisite for the possibility to work; enrollment of children and adolescents in schools).

On the one hand, relief supplies have already been delivered to Ukraine from Pulawy; on the other hand, two Ukrainian UMC pastors and half a dozen people from a local church of the UMC in Ukraine have now been taken in there. In principle, however, no religious or denominational affiliation is asked for – those who need help and turn to the UMC receive this help whenever possible, partly also thanks to ecumenical cooperation.

In the meantime, there are also Ukrainian "guests" who attend UMC services. Communication takes place via Russian or Ukrainian – but children in particular also learn the related Polish language very quickly and can sometimes already communicate after two weeks of integration in a school.

Slovakia (District Superintendent Stefan Rendoš)

The situation is similar to that in Poland; however, with 200,000 refugees, the numbers involved are much smaller. Most of them try to reach countries further west in Europe. The UMC in Slovakia is small and cannot do too much on its own initiative. But most pastors and church members try to help. Church buildings are being opened for refugees, private housing is being made available, and collections (→ donations of money and goods) have already taken place, which have then been handed over to leaders of the UMC in Ukraine.

Czech Republic (District Superintendent Ivana Prochazkova)

The challenge with regard to Ukrainian refugees is that the number of arrivals is quite variable. Most local churches of the UMC try to help - they provide overnight accommodation for refugees in transit, but also create housing for longer-term stays. The UMC operates three larger centers with a total of 80 to 100 places and helps the longer-term residents with regard to meals/food, medical care, administrative concerns and also linguistic integration. There is a well-functioning cooperation with government agencies and NGOs, although government agencies have, while having made financial commitments, so far hardly made any corresponding payments.

There are many volunteers in the UMC in the Czech Republic who are willing to help - the challenge is to get the necessary financial means for the help. The church is therefore very grateful for help from Western Europe and the USA.

An impressive example is "Agape" UMC in Prague, a congregation consisting of 20% people with Russian background and 80% people with Ukrainian background. They refrain from political commentary and derogatory/exclusionary remarks; their focus is on praying together, worshiping together, and helping Ukrainian refugees together (→ transports to Ukraine, assistance with communication, translation, emergency chaplaincy, cultural understanding, etc.).

Romania (District Superintendent Rares Calugar)

After the outbreak of war, the first refugees arrived very quickly in Romania. The advantage for the UMC was that there was already a functioning infrastructure – a former hotel in Cluj-Napoca rented by the Church with appropriate overnight accommodations and a very effective cooperation of various NGOs, as a result of which it is possible to react very quickly to emerging needs. Basically, an attempt is made to find permanent places to live within about three days for Ukrainian refugees who want to stay in the country – within the existing and constantly growing network, and always while maintaining the greatest possible (also legal) security for the refugees → no one is sent to a place that is not personally known to those responsible for the assistance. There is a cooperation with restaurants in Cluj-Napoca (→ support with regard to meals), with other Churches (→ accommodation of elderly people in an Orthodox monastery; accommodation of about 30 orphans from an orphanage in a building of the Lutheran church outside Sibiu), with educational/governmental institutions (→ so far already 18 children have been enrolled in school, rent of a house for women and children) and with many private persons (→ practical help such as cooking for the orphans outside Sibiu).

Several transports of material donations to Ukraine have already been organized (non-perishable food, medical consumables, insulin, etc.); the total value of the delivered goods was over EUR 50,000. These trips mostly also serve as a means of transporting 4-6 refugees at a time on the return journey.

In Cluj-Napoca, too, refugees now take part in the services of the UMC, which are therefore conducted bilingually (Romanian/English).

Bulgaria (District Superintendent Daniel Topalski)

So far, about 70,000 to 90,000 refugees have come to Bulgaria – at first mainly people who have relatives and friends in Bulgaria, but recently many others as well. The state authorities work very efficiently; the refugees already receive the necessary documents at the border, which regulate their residence status in the country and also give them the opportunity to work. The state also makes great efforts with regard to accommodation – refugees are accommodated in private hotels, and their stay for up to three months is paid for. Refugees are accommodated in some UMC churches, but the involvement of members and friends of the UMC also includes, for example, work in reception centers. An Armenian UMC pastor is also particularly involved with Armenian refugees from Ukraine and helps them to continue their journey to Armenia. Day centers for Ukrainian children are being set up in EMK premises in Shumen and in Varna. Adults also receive Bulgarian lessons (although communication is not an insurmountable problem given the linguistic affinity between Russian, Ukrainian and Bulgarian).

The young generation in Bulgaria in particular is heavily involved in helping Ukrainian refugees, and the state was ultimately pushed to get involved primarily by their involvement. For Superintendent Daniel Topalski, this is a sign of hope – also because this commitment of a new generation pushes back the intentions of nationalist groups to profit from the refugee situation.

Hungary (Superintendent Laszlo Khaled)

In Hungary, too, most refugees are in transit. The UMC is involved in many ways; so far about 100 people have found overnight accommodation in six churches. The help also includes meals, food distribution at railroad stations in Budapest, medical care, etc. Thanks to some donations from abroad, a "Washing Point" as well as an "Internet Access Point" have been set up for Ukrainian refugees.

A collection in all local churches of the UMC resulted in a sum of over EUR 8,000, never before achieved in such a collection, which was passed on to those responsible for the work in western Ukraine.

It is impressive how refugees who stay in guest rooms in Budapest are also involved in the Sunday service – it is an expression of bridges that are gradually built between the work with/for refugees and the regular church work. A Ukrainian member of the Adventists, for example, shared his experiences and sang a song that can also be found in the Hungarian UMC hymnal. And a Baptist missionary, also a refugee from Ukraine, is now helping with translation work and the necessary pastoral care of the refugees.

Urs Schweizer, Assistant of the Bishop

Minutes of the Executive Committee of Saturday, March 26, 2022

Saturday, March 26, 2022, 9.00 a.m.

Morning prayer at the Église Méthodiste Tabor in Mulhouse

Bishop Streiff welcomes those present.

We begin with the song "Great is Thy faithfulness".

Daniela Stoilkova gives the morning devotion and says a prayer. The morning devotion can be found in the appendix to the minutes. Afterwards she invites to a prayer community.

We sing the song "In the Lord".

Saturday, March 26, 2022, 9:30 a.m.

Plenary session at the Église Méthodiste Tabor in Mulhouse

Bishop Streiff points out today's program.

Round Table Central Conference MSE

Oral report by Matthias Bruhn

Matthias Bruhn invites us to a small group work with the following work assignment.

UMC – CSE ExCO

Dr. Bruhn
MEDIATION & TRAINING

Small groups on Round Table Process:
(You need the following roles: **1 spokesperson**, **1 interviewer („traditional“)**, **1 interviewer („liberal“)**, everybody to observe and give comments)

1. Please decide on a **spokesperson** of your group that will **summarise**, what you said, for the plenum. Use a flipchart and Marker.
Sprecher/in benennen, die aus der Gruppe berichtet!
2. Please find 1 person from „liberal“ country and 1 person from „traditional“ country to interview each other
Je eine „liberale“ und eine „traditionelle“ Person fürs Interview
3. We may not agree but we need to understand each other's situation.
Take 20 Min.:
one interviewer asks the other about the situation in his/her country, using questions from the following page.
Anleitung nächste Seite
4. If you have enough time, change sides after approx. 20 Min.
Wechseln nach 15 Minuten, wenn die Zeit reicht
5. Remarks from everyone in the group:
one or two sentences, for example
„What did I learn from the interview?“
„My question or remark to the Round Table“
Ein oder zwei Sätze von jedem in der Gruppe über das Interview oder den runden Tisch
6. Spokesperson, please put the main points from „5.“ on your flipchart.

1

The following people share from their small group:

Urs Schweizer tells about the interview between Daniela Stoilkova and Stefan Weller. They have found that the personal positions they have told are never the same as those of the country or the church. There is always a difference between the personal and the general attitude towards homosexuality. It was emphasized by both that unity was more important than the church having to separate because of the issue of homosexuality.

László Khaled reports from the group with Marjan Dimov and Serge Frutiger. In the conversation it was noticed that there is a pressure situation that cannot be disregarded. North Macedonia speaks of a "gender pressure" from the European Union. In Switzerland there is a social pressure for "marriage for all".

Barbara Bünger tells of the conversation between Henrik Schaueremann and Ben Nausner. They talked less about the church or the country, but more personally. In Hungary, society is changing, and the question is therefore how we as a church can hold up a Christian mirror to society. On the other hand, it is important to note that there are two levels, the theological understanding and the social approach to affected persons. Even if homosexuality is understood as a sin, love for people is still important and possible. Ben Nausner emphasizes that in Austria the dialogue on this topic is important. However, this must be value-free and an expression of a desired relationship.

Stefan Schröckenfuchs adds that it was a good conversation, but it was not always apparent exactly what the different positions meant.

Matthias Bruhn tells about the conversation between Daniel Topalski and Stefan Zürcher. Daniel Topalski considers the biblical position very important, as decided by the General Conference of 2019. People in Bulgaria cannot imagine being in a church that does not emphasize a clear rejection of homosexuality. Stefan Zürcher has emphasized that God's love for all people is important to him and that homosexuality is only one side of being human.

Matthias Bruhn thanks for the conversation and the openness shown in it.

Bishop Streiff: The value of conversation for all involved is in the conversation itself.

At the request of Bishop Patrick Streiff, *Matthias Bruhn* points out the next steps of the Round Table:

1. Elaboration of a "Declaration of Unity"
→ Round table (draft by small group)
2. Clarify which passages of the Church Order need adaptation (at least for some).
→ Starting from the paper of the small group
3. During the process, it must be clarified on which level the adaptation should take place.
What is the higher level text?

→ The small group will work out proposals that will be discussed at the next round table

4. How to deal with the Social Principles under revision?

The roundtable small group will work on items 1., 3. and 4.

The small group on church discipline will work on item 2.

The next roundtable is expected to be held in August 2022.

Daniel Topalski: I see that the round table will work on the church order. The working group on church order and legal issues has not worked so far, and I have resigned. The working group must not be ignored.

Henrik Schaueremann: Who will ultimately decide on the "Declaration of Unity"?

Bishop Streiff: The Round Table will come to the Executive Committee with a report with a proposal. This will submit a report with a proposal to the Central Conference in November 2022.

Henrik Schaueremann: Is there still a possibility for us to comment on this paper beforehand?

Bishop Streiff: That will be one of the questions we still have to discuss at the round table.

Stefan Schröckenfuchs: We will work on this text as a round table as a small group, including Andrzej Malicki, Stefan Schröckenfuchs and Matthias Bruhn. We will present this text to the Round Table and they will decide what will be helpful for the way forward.

Bishop Streiff: It would be helpful if the roundtable could still talk about how they would like to resolve this issue.

We're going to take a break.

Saturday, March 26, 2022, 11:20 a.m.

Plenary session at the Église Méthodiste Tabor in Mulhouse

Bishop Streiff: Stefan Weller gives us updates on the "Transforming Worship" forum.

International Forum "Transforming Worship"

Stefan Weller, Chair of the Working Group Liturgy

Stefan Weller: Thank you very much for allowing me to speak to you via this forum. I cordially invite you to this meeting in Stuttgart from October 13 to 16, 2022. It will be held in English and German. Pastors and lay people are invited. The booklet

for the conference has just been completed, I have distributed some preprints. The PDF version will be sent to all by the secretary. Six years ago, we held a theme day on liturgy here in Mulhouse. We have been in a process since then about how we want to shape our worship services. The meeting this year is to help us take that process into the congregations. The meeting was postponed due to the pandemic, but we hope it is now possible to hold it. There are several workshops. These are described in the booklet.

Last year the Executive Committee approved a financial amount for the International Forum. Therefore, the meeting can be attended for Euro 150. There are several accommodation options, but registration must be done by the end of June 2022. There is a support for participants from Eastern European countries. So, the cost should not be an obstacle for participation.

Bishop Streiff: We will talk in Monday's superintendents' meeting about what the exact support will be in these countries. Are there any questions about the program? Please reach out to potential participants from your conferences so that we have different people from different countries.

Stefan Weller: I think it's an enrichment to be able to work in this European group.

Bishop Streiff: Thank you very much for your commitment to this group.

Current information / Miscellaneous

Bishop Patrick Streiff

Bishop Streiff: The question of whether entire U.S. Annual Conferences can withdraw from the UMC has been sent by the Council of Bishops to the Judicial Council for urgent clarification.

Paragraph 572 describes how an Annual Conference outside the U.S. can leave the UMC to become an autonomous or affiliate church. However, it does not describe how a transfer to another Methodist church can occur. However, the process with the goal of becoming an autonomous or affiliate church is very complicated: An Annual Conference would have to decide to do so and also needs the approval of the Central Conference concerned. Its decision must be ratified by the Annual Conferences within the Central Conference by a two-thirds majority of all the votes cast by the Annual Conferences. This decision must be validated by the General Conference. The next Central Conference may then confirm the withdrawal.

As bishops of the European Central Conferences, we are examining to what extent - with the good will of the respective Central Conference - an "accelerated procedure" is possible.

We also need to clarify how a district or district conference can leave the church. This requires common guidelines, which the Council of Bishops is currently working on. We could do it according to the model in the "Protocol for Reconciliation and Grace through Separation," although the General Conference has not yet ruled on it. I hope we can find

helpful ways to do the separation as quickly as possible where one is desired. Otherwise, we would have to wait another four years until the next General Conference. I hope we can find such a way.

Etienne Rudolph: Do you already see a time horizon for that?

Bishop Streiff: At the end of the next meeting of the Council of Bishops, we hope that the roadmap will be clarified. That will be the end of April 2022. That might mean that we have to call extraordinary meetings of the Executive Committee. I am willing and will agree that we will convene such extraordinary meetings. For this reason, I would like us to vote on the following motion:

Motion Bishop Streiff to the Executive Committee:

The Office of the Central Conference may convene one or more online meetings of the Executive Committee as necessary to prepare for an extraordinary meeting of the Central Conference in November 2022.

Ben Nausner: Could we at best already set fixed dates for this now, since it will not be easy to find common dates for this at a later date?

Bishop Streiff: That is not possible at the moment, because it is not yet clear which decisions will have to be made on our part and when. But we will do our best to clarify the dates with you as early as possible. Right now, we can't set them yet. We will work with Doodle to find dates where as many as possible can participate.

Bishop Streiff: Are you ready to vote on the motion?

The Executive Committee unanimously decides that the Office of the Central Conference may convene one or more online meetings of the Executive Committee as necessary to prepare for an extraordinary session of the Central Conference in November 2022.

Markus Bach: I would like to inform you that shortly before the current Executive Committee meeting, we received the resignation of Daniel Topalski as Chair of the Working Group Church Discipline and Legal Affairs and as Church Advocate.

Bishop Streiff thanks Daniel Topalski for his commitment to the Central Conference of Central and Southern Europe.

Stefan Schröckenfuchs: What does this mean for the further work of the Working Group Church Discipline and Legal Affairs. What can we do? Can we elect a successor?

Bishop Streiff: We have no proposal at this time because the resignation was too short notice.

Stefan Schröckenfuchs: I propose that Serge Frutiger takes over the chair. He is an elected member of the Working Group along with Wilfried Nausner and Petr Procházka.

Serge Frutiger: I would first need to know if the other small group of the Round Table, which is also working on the Church Order, will continue to work.

Bishop Streiff: She continues to work for the attention of the Round Table.

Serge Frutiger: It doesn't seem to make sense to me that both groups are working on the church order.

Markus Bach: In October of last year, we elected a small group for the round table, in which Serge Frutiger, László Khaled and the bishop are. This has the task of finding formulation proposals for the Church Discipline for the attention of the Round Table on how homosexuality should be included in the Church Discipline. This small group works for the Round Table. The Working Group on Church Discipline and Legal Affairs, however, works for the Central Conference.

Stefan Schröckenfuchs: The Working Group Church Discipline and Legal Affairs should be able to review what the small group Church Discipline has worked out.

Bishop Streiff: But it should not be a duplication.

Serge Frutiger: I could imagine chairing the Working Group Church Discipline and Legal Affairs if I get the support of the others. It should be an advantage that I am in both groups.

Bishop Streiff: The motion is before us that we elect Serge Frutiger as interim chair of the Working Group Church Discipline and Legal Affairs until the extraordinary meeting of the Central Conference in November 2022. Can we vote on this?

The Executive Committee unanimously elects Serge Frutiger as interim chair of the Working Group Church Discipline and Legal Affairs until the extraordinary meeting of the Central Conference in November 2022.

Saturday, March 26, 2022, 12:30 p.m.

Lunch at the Hotel Bristol, Mulhouse

Saturday, March 26, 2022, 2:30 p.m.

Plenary session at the Église Méthodiste Tabor in Mulhouse

Bishop Streiff points out the agenda items planned for this afternoon.

Urs Schweizer: Stefan Weller has brought a flyer for the 16th Lay Seminar from June 11 to 16, 2022 in Velletri (Italy). However, it is still uncertain whether the seminar can actually take place. The deadline for registration is April 3, 2022, after which a

decision will be made whether the seminar will take place, based on the registrations received. Please inform and motivate your lay persons to participate. The joint meetings are not only important in the youth area, but also among the lay people.

Stefan Weller: There is also financial assistance for those who cannot pay the full amount.

Bishop Streiff: I now invite you to an exchange and to a collection of ideas on how and with which working groups and topics we would like to deal with in the future. But it is not about decisions now, but about a brainstorming, an exchange of ideas. My question is: What kind of working group do we need in the future? What topics should they work on? We can also bring in topics that we can take up on individual theme days.

Wilfried Nausner: To move into the future, we need to think about what brings people together. It's not about what they think or do, but what brings them together. That's what we need to think about. For example, it seems to me that we need a working group on diakonia. Another working group would have to deal with current social issues. We need to ask ourselves what our task is with current issues. In order to be and stay together, we need reconciliation, reconciliation with others, with creation, with neighbors, etc.

Stefan Weller: For a possible theme day, I suggest: "Digitalization". By that I mean the whole area that has changed because of the pandemic. Since the pandemic outbreak, congregations increasingly need digital media, church services are offered digitally, and so on. But this topic also includes the helpful and critical use of social media. How do we deal with it? How are society and the church being changed by it?

Markus Bach: I propose the topics of ecology and integrity of creation as ideas for a Working Group and as a topic proposal for a theme day.

Stefan Schröckenfuchs: We need to work more actively on the topic of youth and children. How can we link our young people more actively in Europe? For me, this is about more than just a theme day or a selective, one-off event.

Urs Schweizer: For me, the important question is, how we as a church deal with an increasing secularization of society. How do we behave in a society that knows or wants to know less and less about the Christian message and the Christian faith?

Daniel Sjanta: What Stefan Schröckenfuchs mentioned with the youth is also important from our side. It is important that we live these contacts across national borders.

Bishop Streiff: What we experienced as young people has shaped us in such a way that we can still benefit from it 40 or 50 years later.

Daniel Sjanta: I think back fondly on the Faith Conference and the EMYC meetings.

Henrik Schauer mann: I also support the issue with young people.

Lea Hafner: I agree, and I also think that we need to support young people in being able to meet again.

Stefan Schröckenfuchs: It would also be worthwhile to think even more about what makes us Methodists. What is our distinctiveness - perhaps even our distinctiveness in Europe?

Urs Schweizer: Another topic is "migration".

Bishop Streiff: Thank you for the ideas. If you come up with more ideas in the next few days, please report them to our secretary, Markus Bach.

Video conference with the European bishops

Bishop Harald Rückert and Bishop Christian Alsted are connected.

Bishop Streiff: I now welcome Bishops Harald Rückert and Christian Alsted, who have joined us online. Bishop Eduard Khegay cannot be with us for scheduling reasons. Bishop Alsted will be able to say something about the Eurasian bishopric. In preparation for this meeting, we have formulated the following two themes for our exchange: What are the implications for us of the renewed postponement of the General Conference? What are the implications of the Russia-Ukraine war and the large number of refugees for our Church? First, however, we begin with prayer.

Bishop Alsted: It is good to be able to talk with you in the face of the terrible situation we are experiencing in Ukraine. I am happy to pass on greetings from Bishop Khegay. We have already met this morning for an extensive online session. Unfortunately, due to scheduling reasons, he cannot be with us now. As the Bishop of Russia and Ukraine, he is currently under a lot of pressure from many sides. Our church in western Ukraine is currently receiving many people who have fled but do not want to leave the country. They hope to find a safe place there. But the situation has also changed in the West, and it is not so safe anymore. I am in contact with pastors from Ukraine. They are going through a difficult time. Pastors have also been drafted into the army. Many countries from Central and Southern Europe are affected by the refugee flows. We in the north of Europe also have refugees, but not to the same extent as the surrounding countries of Ukraine. We stand behind you in prayer. We are also collecting money and sending it to the bishop's office in Zurich. We are very grateful for the good coordination and cooperation with Zurich, even if we are only in a 2nd or 3rd line. Some of you are in the forefront of caring for and accompanying the refugees.

When many refugees came from Syria in 2015, we realized that we as a society and church can help. We can welcome people into our worship services and congregations. These opportunities give us a chance to live our faith. Especially in Estonia, there are many Ukrainian nationals. There are churches with many volunteers who are involved with the refugees. There are many buses that go to the border to pick up relatives. I am proud of what our members are doing. This is a big topic at our executive session. Most people in our Central Conference are directly affected by the consequences of the war.

We also discussed the situation of what the implications of the postponement of the General Conference would be for our Central Conference. We bishops had adopted a document on what should happen after the acceptance of the "protocol" by the General Conference. We need to reconsider that, and we need to figure out how we are going to handle it in the new situation. We need to clarify how it is possible for districts or annual conferences or even districts to leave our church. It is a complicated path, and it is our goal to make this possible by 2024. On the one hand, we do not want to put obstacles in the way of those districts and precincts that want to leave. But on the other hand, it is necessary that we allow contextualization in the individual Annual Conferences through the right of adaptation.

In connection with this, we have talked about holding an extraordinary meeting of the Central Conference. There are several reasons for doing this. In our process with the Round Table, we are at a place where we are finding more openness to each other.

Bishop Rückert: We just finished our meeting of the Church Council, which is the equivalent of your Executive Committee, an hour and a half ago. May I extend warm greetings and thanks for our sharing. We pray for you in these challenging times.

We didn't really need the postponement of the General Conference. For us, however, it has been clear for some time how we want to deal with the issue of homosexuality. At the 2017 Central Conference, a working group was set up to discuss how we want to organize our church in Germany in the future, and we would have liked to discuss this further. We have therefore decided that we will hold an extraordinary meeting of the Central Conference in November 2022 with a restricted agenda.

Unlike the situation with you, a major departure of districts is not an issue with us, even though I am not a prophet. There will be at most five districts that could leave the church. In fact, I hope and believe that the church will be even more united in November than before. A few congregations and pastors will leave us. But they will find other free churches in Germany. Out of about 50,000 Methodists in Germany, 700 people and 15 congregations have joined the Community Federation. It was important and helpful that we founded the covenant. We also gave a lot of thought to how LGBTQ people feel in our church and how they are accepted. The Round Table encouraged us to be an open church. This in turn has led to these people asking what they can do for us. We have always held that even when we have different opinions and attitudes, we do not want to let go. We meet again and again at the communion table, that's why we belong together.

In Germany, we are also affected by the war in Ukraine, although not in the same way as you. It is not easy to bear that a few decades ago the same aggression also came from Germany. This makes us humble. We currently also have many refugees coming to Germany. But we do not have a Methodist coordination center. But many congregations are getting involved to give refugees a shelter. In East Germany there are still people who speak Russian and therefore can help a little, even if the language is not identical. We are grateful that the help is organized through the bishop's office in Zurich. Thank you for this service you are doing, especially to Urs Schweizer. I believe our help will be needed for a very long time.

Henrik Schaueremann: I have a question for *Bishop Alsted*. Which conferences or countries will leave the church because of the homosexuality debate?

Bishop Alsted: No Annual Conference has made a decision yet. They are sorting out the options. It is still unclear whether they will stay or go. Estonia has the most questions, but no decision has been made there either. Unlike Central and Southern Europe, the countries are not divided into Annual Conferences, but are organized as District Conferences.

I cannot say anything about Russia. But it is clear that they have a negative stance on homosexuality and are in intensive discussion with the Global Methodist Church.

Serge Frutiger: In Germany, you have worked out proposals on how to change the church order. Can you tell us how you are dealing with this?

Bishop Rückert: We can only do this via the right of adaptation and are still clarifying the possibilities. However, we will only change a few texts and also work with omissions.

Bishop Streiff: Thank you very much for being with us this afternoon. I invite you to sing a song together and then to pray.

We sing the song: "God of the Poor". *Bishop Streiff* will then say a prayer and a blessing.

With heartfelt thanks to all, *Bishop Streiff* closes the Executive Committee meeting.

The Secretary:
Markus Bach

These minutes of the 74th session of the Executive Committee of the Central Conference of Central and Southern Europe, held in Mulhouse, France, March 25-26, 2022, were reviewed and declared correct.

The auditor of the protocol:
Lea Hafner and Jörg Niederer

Annex to the minutes:

Morning Devotion Saturday, March 26, 2022

Psalm 9

⁹ The LORD is a refuge for the oppressed, a stronghold in times of trouble.

¹⁰ Those who know your name trust in you, for you, LORD, have never forsaken those who seek you.

In the past few years I had the chance to have close encounter with the many faces of fear seeing it outside of me in the eyes of other people and in the world in general but also within me.

Short before pandemic started, my personal life took on a different direction of that I wanted and have been planned for myself which put me in position of uncertainty. What followed afterwards was only adding to my anxiety.

Seeing people afraid for their health and lives, family having Covid, watching close friends lose both parents, switching to online life, people going distant and most of all closing up church and services affected me in a way I was not able to handle alone. Lots of my mental and emotional needs were unmet. I needed help.

I asked and God provided for me. And I learn that fear, loss and suffering also has its place in the life of faith.

Now as a war aroused we are all aware that many people, many Christians as well, face these days the dark side of human existence experiencing fear and anxiety.

And every person will have this feelings also in a different context. Everyone depending on their values and their personal needs.

For this morning I would like to invite you to have some time to reflect on these questions:

1. In what area in my life, I feel or experience uncertainty or anxiety?
2. What's the need that I want to be provided so I can feel safe and secure?

This can be also reflected in the context of the topic of unity as well.

We can all take part in prayer asking God to provide for us and for the others too.

Daniela Stoilkova

II. Directory of Decisions

of the 72nd meeting of the Executive Committee of the Central Conference of Central and Southern Europe

Decisions for the Executive Committee / Central Conference

1. The Executive Committee unanimously reaffirms the desire that the bishop calls for an extraordinary meeting of the Central Conference of Central and Southern Europe in Basel in due course, taking place from November 16-20, 2022 - this to include a clearly defined agenda. Immediately prior to this, a meeting of the Executive Committee shall be held. The office will be entrusted with the necessary preparations.

Elections

2. The Executive Committee unanimously affirms that all persons currently holding an office on Central Conference level or on European/worldwide level shall be asked by summer 2022 whether they would like to continue their task beyond the extraordinary session of the Central Conference in order to be able to prepare necessary replacement or new elections.
3. The Executive Committee unanimously elects Serge Frutiger as interim chair of the Working Group Church Discipline and Legal Affaires until the extraordinary meeting of the Central Conference in November 2022.

Financial decisions

4. The Executive Committee unanimously accepts the 2021 accounts on the basis of the auditor's report, grants discharge to the treasurer and expresses its sincere thanks for the services rendered.

Decisions for Working Groups / Office of the Central Conference

Office of the Central Conference

5. The Executive Committee unanimously decides that the Office of the Central Conference may convene one or more online meetings of the Executive Committee as necessary to prepare for an extraordinary session of the Central Conference in November 2022.

The Secretary: Markus Bach

III. Report of the Office

Report of the Central Conference Office

1. Presence and Minutes

1.1 Meetings of the Office

The office met four times since the October 2021 Executive Committee meeting: on December 17, 2021; January 25, 2022; February 16, 2022; and March 7, 2022. Jörg Niederer, chair of the Working Group on Episcopacy, also attended all of these meetings as a guest.

1.2 Report of the proceedings of the 72nd and 73rd sessions of the Executive Committee

The proceedings report of the 72nd and 73rd sessions of the Executive Committee of March 2021 (online) and October 2021 (Budapest), written by Secretary Markus Bach, will be made available for download on the CC CSE website as soon as it is ready (<https://www.umc-cse.org/en/downloads--links/documents-studies-and-lectures/minutes-cse.html>).

However, the Secretary Markus Bach has already prepared the minutes of the 73rd meeting of the Executive Committee in October 2021 in a German and, for the first time, also in an English working version and sent them to the members of the Executive Committee.

1.3 Composition of the Executive Committee

Actually, no new lay member of the Czech and Slovak Republics Annual Conference has been nominated; thus, this seat remains vacant.

Due to the appointment of Erdzhan Madzharov as new district superintendent of the UMC in Bulgaria, Daniel Topalski will retire from the Executive Committee after the meeting of the Annual Conference Bulgaria-Romania from March 31 to April 3, 2022. The Office thanks him for his many years of service on the Executive Committee of the Central Conference.

2. Planning for the meetings of the Executive Committee and the Central Conference

2.1 Meeting of the Executive Committee in March 2022

Place and implementation

As it was important for the "Cabinet South" as well as the "Round Table" to meet once again in person, a meeting place was sought for the various spring meetings in March 2022, which is easily accessible and yet not too expensive. Therefore, the choice fell on Mulhouse - this also in the expectation that the relatively strict Covid 19 measures in France would be relaxed in time due to the general development of the pandemic.

Since the Executive Committee meeting will last only a little more than one day, it seemed to make sense to the office to offer online participation to those persons who will not also

attend the meetings, thus working on the issues at hand in a hybrid meeting format. The agenda will be available at the beginning of the meeting (Attachment 1).

The hybrid Executive Committee meeting will be held as follows:

Fri. 25.3.22	14.00 - 15.45	Plenary meeting
	15.45 - 16.15	Break
	16.15 - 18.00	Plenary meeting
	20.00 - 21.00	Sharing (Implications of the war in Ukraine) / Evening Prayer
Sat. 26.3.22	08.30 - 10.00	Plenary meeting
	10.00 - 10.30	Break
	10.30 - 12.00	Plenary meeting
	15.00 - 16.30	Meeting with the European Bishops

Finalizing the program

The office decided to include only the following topics and concerns on the agenda:

- Report of the Office of the Central Conference
- Acceptance of the 2021 annual financial statements and audit report
- Report of the "Round Table"
- Report of the Working Group on episcopacy

No reports from the Working Groups were requested - rather, the focus of the discussions should be on the topics mentioned above.

Assignments for the meeting

The office issue the following commissions:

As assistant to the secretary:	Urs Schweizer
For the review of the minutes:	Lea Hafner and Jörg Niederer
As conference treasurer:	Iris Bullinger
As a reporter for church media:	Jörg Niederer

2.2 Meeting of the Central Conference 2022

At the beginning of March 2022, the Commission on General Conference decided to postpone the 2020 gathering of General Conference again - and this to the year 2024. This means that the next *ordinary* meeting of the Central Conference of Central and Southern Europe will also have to be postponed until after the General Conference gathering.

The office therefore, decided, after intensive discussion, to propose to the Executive Committee that an *extraordinary* meeting of the Central Conference be held at the planned time and place (i.e. November 16-20, 2022 in Basel), combined with a meeting of the Executive Committee immediately beforehand (November 15-16, 2022 in Basel). Whether the length of the meeting will possibly be shortened at the beginning or end can only be decided in connection with the official call.

The already decided conference theme "**The fruit of the Spirit is...**" (with reference to Galatians 5:22) is to be retained for the extraordinary meeting of the Central Conference.

For the purpose of calling an extraordinary session of the Central Conference, the following shall be observed:

- With the concurrence of the Executive Committee, the bishop may call an extraordinary session of the Central Conference, with the official call expected to be issued just under three months before the start of the session
- The call must state all business to be dealt with at the extraordinary meeting
- The last delegates elected by each Annual Conference shall be the delegates to the extraordinary session of the Central Conference
- In principle, an extraordinary session of the Central Conference has all the rights of a regular session except for the election of a new bishop. However, there are provisions in the 2016 Book of Discipline (General Conference) that could make an election possible. Currently, the Council of Bishops is working to clarify the implementation of these provisions for Central Conferences. There is thus a reasonable hope that an extraordinary session of the Central Conference will also be able to conduct an election of a new bishop.

Possible topics for the extraordinary meeting may include:

- Spiritual elements (worship, prayer etc.)
- Episcopal address
- Country Reports from the countries of the Central Conference
- Reports: Office of the Central Conference, Working Group on Episcopacy, "Round Table";
the official Working Groups write short summary reports only, without enclosures for debate and/or voting by the Central Conference
- A proposal or draft resolution for the future direction and formulation of the CC-CSE-Discipline prepared by the Round Table; either as a report of the Round Table or of the Executive Committee, which will meet immediately prior to the extraordinary session of the Central Conference.
- Financial issues (report on the current financial situation and decision on the budget)
- Elections for positions to be filled in the period until the next ordinary meeting of the Central Conference CSE
- Considerations and decisions regarding retirement or reduction of workload of the current active bishop
- Additional information

Motions to the Executive Committee

- 1. The Executive Committee reaffirms the desire that the bishop calls for an extraordinary meeting of the Central Conference of Central and Southern Europe in Basel in due course, taking place from November 16-20, 2022 - this to include a clearly defined agenda. Immediately prior to this, a meeting of the Executive Committee shall to be held. The office will be entrusted with the necessary preparations.***
- 2. The Executive Committee affirms that all persons currently holding an office on CC level or on European/worldwide level shall be asked by summer 2022 whether they would like to continue their task beyond the extraordinary session of the Central Conference in order to be able to prepare necessary replacement or new elections.***

3. Financial Issues

Statement 2021 of the Central Conference accounts and auditors' report

Iris Bullinger presents the account of the Central Conference for the year 2021 (Attachment 2). It closes with an positive balance of CHF 25'566.23.

The auditor's report of the auditor, Adrian Wenziker, for the 2021 accounts is available in writing (Attachment 3).

Motion to the Executive Committee

The Executive Committee accepts the 2021 accounts on the basis of the auditor's report, grants discharge to the treasurer and expresses its sincere thanks for the services rendered.

The budget for 2022 was already approved at the Executive Committee meeting in October 2021.

4. Further reports

4.1 Reporting "Round Table"

The "Round Table" with representatives from Poland, the Czech Republic, Hungary, Serbia, North Macedonia, Austria, France and Switzerland, led by the external moderator Dr. Matthias Bruhn (Germany), intensively reflected on how a common path for the Central Conference of Central and Southern Europe could look like, which could be shared by as many as possible. A report from the meeting immediately prior to the Executive Committee meeting will be given orally.

4.2 Working Group on Episcopacy

The Working Group on Episcopacy has been working intensively on the question of how Bishop Patrick Streiff could be relieved if it were not possible to elect a successor in November 2022. In order to work together to find solutions, the Chair of the Working Group on Episcopacy has attended the meetings of the office since the last Executive Committee meeting in October 2021. A report from the Working Group on Episcopacy is available (Attachment 4).

5. Miscellaneous

5.1 Working Group Children and Youth

At the last Executive Committee meeting, there was no report from the Working Group Children and Youth. This led to questions about the status of the Working Group and the EMYC. In an email dated November 18, 2021, the former chairman of the Working Group, Martin Obermeir-Siegrist, commented as follows (excerpt from the email):

"I gave my part of the co-chairmanship of the WG to Irena Stefanova from Bulgaria at the meeting of the WG Children and Youth at the EMYC Council meeting in Skopje (03.-06.10.2019). Boris Fazekas from Serbia retained his co-chairmanship at that time. I assumed that they would write a report to the CC as agreed and also report the change of

chairmanship. I sent them a report template. I also wrote them both a list of what to do as a chair team and when and sent another document on the complex delegate rotation system. Urs Schweizer received a copy of both - he sent me feedback at that time.

- At the 2019 EMYC Council meeting, Roxanne Bainbridge (UK) was elected EMYC Secretary.

- The 2020 Council meeting was first announced in abbreviated form as an online meeting, then we were informed that only the EMYC Executive would meet. A date for the 2021 Council meeting was communicated, but no results of the Executive meeting.

- In 2021, the Council meeting was again first announced as an online meeting, then cancelled altogether due to lack of registrations. Roxanne wrote on 30.9.2021: "I will be in touch shortly as we will be holding a meeting to discuss the future of EMYC following the pandemic and would appreciate your contributions."

Since then, I have heard nothing more, even when asked. "

Various discussions took place in the UMC in Switzerland on how the networking of youth and young adults at the level of the Central Conference could be promoted not only ideally but also in terms of personnel. The board of the Annual Conference Switzerland-France-North Africa has forwarded the urgent request to the area "church development" to become active in this matter. However, no concrete decisions have been taken so far.

Markus Bach, Secretary

Attachments to the office report

- Attachment 1 Agenda / Planning of the meeting time
- Attachment 2 Statement 2021
- Attachment 3 Auditors' report 2021
- Attachment 4 Report of the Working Group on Episcopacy

IV. Annexes of the report of the Office

Statement 2021

Einnahmen	Rechnung 2021		Konsolidiert 2017 - 2021	
Beiträge Jährliche Konferenzen				
Schweiz	45 000.00		225 000.00	
Frankreich	4 500.00		22 500.00	
Österreich	3 238.00		16 171.48	
Bulgarien	1 500.00		7 500.00	
Makedonien	750.00		3 750.00	
Serbien	750.00		3 750.00	
Ungarn	1 500.00		7 500.00	
Slowakei	750.00		3 750.00	
Tschechien	750.00		3 750.00	
Polen	1 500.00		7 500.00	
Nordafrika	0.00	60 238.00	0.00	301 171.48
Gaben und Zinseinnahmen		56.00		10 216.80
Total Einnahmen		60 294.00		311 388.28
Ausgaben				
Zentralkonferenz inkl. Protokoll	0.00		45 784.76	
Sitzungen Exekutive inkl. Protokoll	16 811.90	16 811.90	76 413.34	122 198.10
AG Theologie und Ordinierte Dienste	0.00		7 051.79	
AG Kirche und Gesellschaft	0.00		0.00	
AG Kinder und Jugend	0.00		0.00	
AG Liturgie	0.00		5 557.45	
AG Kirchenordnung und Rechtsfragen	0.00		0.00	
AG Frauendienst	0.00*		0.00	
AG Bischofsamt	0.00		0.00	
Reserve für a.o. Aufträge	0.00	0.00	0.00	12 609.24
Superintendententreffen	0.00		23 146.08	
Weitere Tagungen	0.00	0.00	0.00	23 146.08
Beiträge der Zentralkonferenz an:				
Weltrat	2 722.21		14 362.50	
Europäischer Rat	6 342.96		31 626.45	
Jugendrat (EMYC)	0.00	9 065.17	18 031.20	64 020.15
Verschiedenes				
Druckkosten	0.00		1 180.30	
Bibliothek / Archiv	7 500.00		37 627.50	
Übrige Kosten	1 350.70	8 850.70	14 550.16	53 357.96
Total Ausgaben		34 737.77		275 331.53
Einnahmen		60 294.00		311 388.28
Ausgaben		34 737.77		275 331.53
Einnahmen-Überschuss		25 566.23		36 056.75
Ausgaben-Überschuss				

Balance Sheet of December 31, 2021

	Fr.	Fr.
Aktiven		
Zahlstelle EMK	203 653.44	
Guthaben	461.30	
Passiven		
Kreditoren / Trans. Passiven		1 551.85
Rückstellungen		0.00
Eigenkapital		176 996.66
Ergebnis		+ 25 566.23
Total	204 114.74	204 114.74

Plan-les-Ouates, 23. März 2022, Iris Bullinger

Auditors Report

On behalf of the Central Conference of Central and Southern Europe, I have revised the financial statements for the third year since the last Central Conference. Due to the postponement of the Central Conference to 2022, a new budget was prepared for the 6-year period between the two Central Conferences.

The accounts for 2021 close with a profit of CHF 25'566.23 (cumulative profit for 2017 - 2021 of CHF 36'056.75). The stated equity capital as of December 31, 2021 amounts to CHF 202'562.89.

I have audited the opening and closing balance sheet, checked the annual accounts for the profit and loss accounts on a random basis and ascertained that the accounts have been kept clean and correct.

The undersigned certifies the accuracy of the 2021 financial statements and balance sheet as at December 31, 2021 and requests that the Treasurer, Iris Bullinger, discharge should be granted and thanked for her clean and diligent work.

Zurich, March, 2022

*The auditor:
Adrian Wenziker*

Working Group Episcopacy

The Working Group on Episcopacy includes:

Andrzej Malicki (PL)

Jörg Niederer, Chair (CH-FR-NA)

Stefan Rendoš (CZ-SK)

Henrik Schauer mann (HU)

Stefan Schröckenfuchs (AT)

Daniel Sjanta (RS-NMK-AL)

Desislava Todorova (BG-RO)

Since the last meeting of the Executive Committee, the Working Group met twice by ZOOM with Bishop Patrick Streiff. On February 14, 2022, all members were able to be present. On March 9, 2022, Stefan Schröckenfuchs and Daniel Sjanta were not able to participate and asked for apologies.

Since the last meeting of the Executive Committee, Jörg Niederer was also invited to the meetings of the Central Conference Officers. This was helpful since the agenda always included the reduction of the future workload of Bishop Patrick Streiff as well as a possible election of a bishop.

At the February 14, 2022, online meeting, the conversation was largely about the reduction of the future workload of Bishop Patrick Streiff.

In the meantime, General Conference has been postponed again and will take place as a regular meeting in 2024 only.

At the March 9, 2022, online meeting, the focus of reflection changed. Since not only our Central Conference is interested in an early election of bishops, discussions of the Council of Bishops with legal advisors are underway. In the process, ways are explored to elect bishops at a called session of a Central Conference, as well. Once again, a document from the Central Conference Officers was available (annex 4.1). The content was presented by Bishop Patrick Streiff.

What remains essential for an election of a bishop is the fact that at a coming called session of Central Conference, it should be clarified first how a common future with as many countries as possible can be shaped if restrictions on practiced homosexuality are dropped in a future UMC. Only this clarity would make a transfer of office possible for a new bishop in a helpful way. It is, therefore, crucial that the questions discussed at the "Round Table" and in other contexts produce a clear result prior to the election of a bishop.

With this expectation, the election of a new bishop should be pursued. The relevant texts of the Book of Discipline of the worldwide UMC are listed in the attachment. The Council of Bishops is currently clarifying how, in view of the extraordinary situation - with a quadrennium extended to eight years due to the multiple postponements of General Conference - elections of bishops at called sessions of Central Conferences can be made happen in the easiest possible way. The Central Conference of Central and Southern Europe is not the only one that wishes to be able to hold an election of bishops.

Due to new developments, it now seems possible that the election of a bishop can take place at a called session of our Central Conference later this year. For this reason, the WG Episcopacy has revised a document and created a template for the ballot papers.

Motion to the Executive Committee:

Adoption of the document "Procedure for the Election of a Bishop at the called session of Central Conference of Central and Southern Europe 2022" as the foundation for the election of the bishop.

The list of Ordained Elders in Full Connection, which lists all eligible pastors, will be updated after the 2022 Annual Conferences in collaboration with the Bishop's Office. Further documents and motions for the election of a bishop (scheduling of the transfer of office, motion on the tenure, etc.) will only be prepared or revised once it has been finally determined that an election of a bishop can take place.

Finally: I would like to take the opportunity to thank Bishop Patrick Streiff for the extensive clarifications regarding a reduction of his workload and the possibilities of an election of a bishop before the end of this year. Some of this has become wastepaper again, others give us hope.

I would also like to thank his wife Heidi for all her support during this time, which was far from being easy.

*For the Working Group on Episcopacy,
Jörg Niederer*

Annexes:

- 4.1 CC-CSE – Extra session of the Central Conference and options on episcopal supervision and/or election
- 4.2 Procedure for the Election of a Bishop at the Central Conference of Central and Southern Europe 2022
- 4.3 Draft of a Ballot paper

CC-CSE – Extraordinary session of the central conference and options on episcopal supervision and/or election

Annex 1

Preparatory comments for the Working Group on Episcopacy

At the meeting of the WG Episcopacy in February 2022, we discussed a paper dealing mainly with considerations if no new bishop can be elected. I am grateful that Bishops Alsted, Rückert and Wenner would be willing to give support if needed. The WG on episcopacy clearly favoured such an option if no episcopal election will be possible.

At this meeting on March 9, we know that there will be a further postponement of General Conference. As a consequence, we can not hold a regular session of central conference because regular sessions need to take place within one year following the meeting of the General Conference. The only thing we can do is an extra session / called session of central conference.

Here below are the regulations of the BOD 2016 for a called session of central conferences and under what conditions such session can hold episcopal elections.

I am quite confident that there will be a pathway to hold an episcopal election at a called session of the central conference in November 2022. However, it is not yet clear whether this pathway will be an “easy” one or a “complicated” one. I will try to give orally more details to these options and explain the BOD regulations.

Regulations of the BOD 2016

Par. 30 (Constitution):

The central conferences shall meet within the year succeeding the meeting of the General Conference at such times and places as shall have been determined by the preceding respective central conferences or by commissions appointed by them or by the General Conference. ...

Par. 46 (Constitution – new version GC 2016 – validated by COB in May 2018 – new text in bold):

The bishops shall be elected by the respective jurisdictional and central conferences and consecrated in the historic manner at such time and place as may be fixed by the General Conference for those elected by the jurisdictions and by each central conference for those elected by such central conference, **provided that episcopal elections in central conferences shall be held at a regular, not an extra, session of the central conference, except in the case where an unexpected vacancy must be filled.**

Par. 542.2:

... The Bishops resident [*comment: “resident bishop” means a bishop in active ministry*] in a central conference or a majority of them, with the concurrence of the executive committee or other authorized committee, shall have the authority to call an extra session of the central conference to be held at the time and place designated by them.

Par. 543.3:

When a central conference shall have been authorized to elect bishops, such elections shall be conducted under the same general procedure as prevails in the jurisdictional conferences for the

election of bishops. A central conference shall have power to fix the tenure of bishops elected by the said central conference.

Par. 407. *Vacancy in the Office of Bishop:*

A vacancy in the office of bishop may occur due to death, retirement, resignation, judicial procedure, leave of absence, or medical leave. In case assignment of a bishop to presidential supervision of an episcopal area is terminated by any of the above causes, the vacancy shall be filled by the Council of Bishops on nomination of the active bishops of the College of Bishops of the jurisdiction or central conference concerned [*comment: for CC-CSE there is only one active bishop as voting member of the College of Bishops for CC-CSE, with retired bishop Bolleter as member with voice, but no vote*], after consultation with the jurisdictional or central conference and annual conference committees on the episcopacy [*comment: for CC-CSE there is only a Working Group on Episcopacy of the Central Conference and none such committees in the Annual Conferences*] and the cabinet(s) [*comment: for CC-CSE this would mean all superintendents in CC-CSE together*]; or, if the vacancy should occur within twenty-four months of the episcopal assumption of presidential supervision of that area, the College of Bishops of the jurisdiction or central conference concerned may call a special session of the jurisdictional or central conference as provided in par. 521.2. ... It is recommended that the previous bishop serving the vacant episcopal area not be appointed to serve in the interim.

[*Comment: In BOD1988, the same wording was used, only referring to jurisdictional conferences in the whole par. 508; in BOD 1992, everywhere the reference was to 'jurisdictional / central conference' in all of par. 508. – with identical change in 506.1+2a; 513.1+2+4+5+6+7;*]

[*Further comment: par. 407 talks about assignment of a bishop, not election day!; according to the BOD, after each regular central conference, the bishops are assigned to a episcopal area, even if in the situation of CC-CSE there is only one active bishop for only one episcopal area.*]

Par. 521. *Special Sessions* [*Comment: a section dealing with Jurisdictional Conferences!*]

1. The jurisdictional conference may order a special session in such manner as it shall determine.
2. The College of Bishops of a jurisdiction by a two-thirds vote shall have authority to call a special session of the jurisdictional conference when necessary; provided, however, *that if an episcopal area is left vacant by reason of death, retirement or other cause within twenty-four months of the episcopal assumption of presidential supervision of that area, the College of Bishops may by majority vote convene within three months, after giving not less than thirty days' notice, a special session of the jurisdictional conference for the purpose of electing and consecrating a bishop and of considering any other matters specified in the call; ...*
3. The delegates to a special session of the jurisdictional conference shall be the delegates last elected by each annual conference.
4. A called session of the jurisdictional conference cannot transact any other business than that indicated in the call.

[*Comment: There is no similar paragraph for central conferences.*]

The CC-CSE version of the Discipline has only a much reduced text in par. 407 and par. 408 which mentions the possibility of an extra session of the central conference, but without any other specifics.

Procedure for the Election of a Bishop at the called session of Central Conference of Central and Southern Europe 2022

Preliminary Remarks

- A) The election of the delegates to the 2022 called session of Central Conference has taken place at the Annual Conference meetings in 2019.
- B) It is crucial that the process for the election of a bishop should remain open as long as possible. No person should be particularly mentioned prior to the called session of Central Conference meeting and the first ballot. Therefore, the forms containing the personal details of the nominees will be submitted only after the first ballot.
- C) Eligible clergy members can withdraw from the election after each ballot. However, there will be no corresponding request from the presiding bishop whether someone continues in the balloting process; the initiative for the withdrawal must come from the eligible clergy member.

Election Procedure

- 1. All persons who have, at the time of the election, the status of an ordained elder in full connection, are eligible. Each voting person (lay and clergy members) can give his or her vote to one person. A person is considered elected if the number of votes in his/her favor has reached a 3/5 majority of the voting members present.
- 2. The result will be communicated to the called session of Central Conference on the same day. If a second ballot is needed, only those persons who have received two or more votes will remain eligible. These persons will then submit the personal information form with the biographical details to the secretary of the Central Conference within two hours. On the same evening, these forms will be handed out to the delegates.
- 3. If further ballots are necessary, these will take place successively on the day following the day of the first ballot. This provides for enough time to read the personal information forms. The ballots will continue until a person has been elected. A person is considered elected if the number of votes in his/her favor has reached a 3/5 majority of the voting members present. After each ballot, the person with the lowest number of votes will drop out.
- 4. Any eligible person may withdraw from the election after each ballot. However, this person is not allowed to recommend another person for election.

Draft Ballot

1st Ballot / 1. Wahlgang

One person is to be elected as Bishop of the CC CSE

Zu wählen ist eine Person für das Amt der Bischöfin / des Bischofs der ZK MSE

.....

V. Institutions of Central Conference

elected for 2017 - 2024

Office	Clergy:	Lay:
Bishop, Chair	Patrick Streiff	
Vice Chair		vacant
Secretary	Markus Bach (CH)	
Treasurer	Iris Bullinger (CH)	

Executive Committee

Members with vote:

Bishop, Chair	Patrick Streiff	
Vice Chair		vacant
Secretary	Markus Bach	
Treasurer	Iris Bullinger	
AC Austria	Sup. Stefan Schröckenfuchs	Ben Nausner
AC Bulgaria-Rumania	Sup. Daniel Topalski	Desislava Todorova
AC Switzerland-France-North Africa	Sup. Serge Frutiger	Lea Hafner
AC Czech Republic-Slovakia	Sup. Štefan Rendoš	vacant
AC Hungary	Sup. László Khaled	Henrik Schauer mann
AC Poland	Sup. Andrzej Malicki	Olgierd Benedyktowicz
AC Serbia-North Macedonia-Albania	Sup. Daniel Sjanta	Daniela Stoilkova
Chair WG Episcopacy	Jörg Niederer	

With voice, but not vote:

Bishop retired	Bishop Heinrich Bolleter	
France and Belgium	Sup. Grégoire Chahinian	
Algeria and Tunisia	Sup. Freddy Nzambe	
Czech Republic-Slovakia	Sup. Ivana Procházková	
Rumania	Sup. Rares Calugar	
North Macedonia	Sup. Marjan Dimov	
Albania	Sup. Wilfried Nausner	
Council on Finance and Administration		Adrian Wenziker (CH)
Judicial Court		Christa Tobler (CH)
WG Theology and Ordained Ministry	Stefan Zürcher (CH)	
WG Children and Youth		Boris Fazekas (RS) or Irena Stefanova (BG)
WG Church and Society	David Chlupáček (CZ)	
WG Women's Work		Monika Zuber (PL)
Coordinator		Barbara Bün ger (CH)
WG Liturgy	Stefan Weller (CH)	
WG Discipline and Legal Affaires	Daniel Topalski (BG)	

Council on Finance and Administration

Chair	Adrian Wenziker (CH) Stefan Hafner (CH) Daniel Burkhalter (CH)
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Pension Board

	Bishop Patrick Streiff	Adrian Wenziker (CH) Stefan Hafner (CH) Daniel Burkhalter (CH)
Additional specialist:		Marcel Rügger (CH)
Pension Benefits Officer:		André Töngi (CH)

Committee on Investigation

AC Austria	Stefan Schröckenfuchs	Roland Siegrist
AC Bulgaria-Rumania	Mihail Stefanov	
AC Switzerland-France-North Africa	Hanna Wilhelm (Convener)	
AC Czech Republic-Slovakia	Petr Procházka	
AC Hungary	László Khaled	Grethe Jenei
AC Poland	Sławomir Rodaszyński	
AC Serbia-North Macedonia-Albania	Ana Palik-Kunčak	

Alternate members:

AC Austria	Martin Obermeir-Siegrist	
AC Bulgaria-Rumania	Margarita Todorova	
AC Switzerland-France-North Africa	Gunnar Wichers	
AC Czech Republic-Slovakia	Pavel Procházka	
AC Hungary	Zoltán Kovács	
AC Poland		Olgierd Benedyktowicz
AC Serbia-North Macedonia-Albania	Marjan Dimov	

Committee on Appeals

AC Austria	Wilfried Nausner (Convener)	Gerhard Weissenbrunner
AC Bulgaria-Rumania		Mariela Mihaylova
AC Switzerland-France-North Africa	Etienne Rudolph	
AC Czech Republic-Slovakia	Pavel Hradský	
AC Hungary		Henrik Schaueremann
AC Poland	Józef Bartos	
AC Serbia-North Macedonia-Albania		Marija Parnicki
Lokalpfarrer - Local Pastor	Ruedi Stähli (CH)	

Alternate members:

AC Austria		Hayford Boateng
AC Bulgaria-Rumania	Margarita Todorova	
AC Switzerland-France-North Africa	Theo Rickenbacher	Marc Berger
AC Czech Republic-Slovakia		Josef Thal (CZ)
AC Hungary	Márton Hecker	
AC Poland		Bozena Daszuta
AC Serbia-North Macedonia-Albania	Lila Balovski (RS)	
Local pastor	Ľuboš Tagaj (SK)	

Judicial Court

Members:	Martin Streit (CH)	Christa Tobler (CH)
	István Csernák (HU)	Philipp Hadorn (CH)
	1 person vacant	

Alternate members:	Jean-Philippe Waechter (FR)	Bernhard Pöll (AT)
		Regula Dannecker (CH)

Counsel for the church

Counsel:	Daniel Topalski (BG)
Reserve persons:	Markus Bach (CH)
	Petr Procházka (CZ)
	Gábor Szuhánszky (HU)
	Etienne Rudolph (FR)

Working Group Episcopacy

AC Austria		Stefan Schröckenfuchs
AC Bulgaria-Rumania		Desislava Todorova
AC Switzerland-France-North Africa	Jörg Niederer (Chair)	
AC Czech Republic-Slovakia	Štefan Rendoš	
AC Hungary		Henrik Schaueremann
AC Poland	Andrzej Malicki	
AC Serbia-North Macedonia-Albania	Daniel Sjanta	

Working Group Theology and Ordained Ministry

Stefan Zürcher (CH - Chair)
Michael Nausner (AT)
Zoltán Kovács (HU)
Daniel Sjanta (RS)
Edward Puślecki (PL)
Jana Daněčková (CZ)
Vladimir Todorov (BG)
(and 1 person of the Central Conference of Germany)

Working Group Church and Society

Marietjie Odendaal (CH)
David Chlupáček (CZ - Chair)
1 person vacant

Working Group Children and Youth

Irena Stefanova (BG - Co-Chair)
Boris Fazekas (RS - Co-Chair)
and the delegates of the countries to the EMYC

Working Group Women's Work

Monika Zuber (PL - Chair)
Maria Đurovka-Petraš (RS)
Gabriella Kopas (SK)
Murielle Rietschi Wilhelm (CH)
Coordinator Central Conference: Barbara Büniger (CH)

Working Group Liturgy

Stefan Weller (CH - Chair until CC 2022)
Esther Handschin (AT)
Jana Křížova (CZ)
Erika Stalcup (CH - Chair after CC 2022)

Working Group Discipline and Legal Affairs

Petr Procházka (CZ)
Serge Frutiger (CH - Chair ad interim)
Wilfried Nausner (AT - MK/AL)

Representatives beyond the Central Conference

European level:

European Methodist Council (EMC) and Joint Commission of UMC in Europe

Bishop	Patrick Streiff	
	Margarita Todorova, (BG)	David Chlupáček (CZ)
	Andrzej Malicki (PL)	Emil Zaev (MK)

European Commission on Mission (ECOM)

Connexio Co-Chair		Daniel Hänni (CH)
Connexio General Secretary		Ulrich Bachmann (CH)

Fund for Mission in Europe (FMIE)

Bishop	Patrick Streiff	
	David Chlupáček (CZ)	
Manager FMIE, with voice, but not vote		Andreas Stämpfli (CH)

European Lay Seminar

Bettina Weller (CH)

Methodist e-Academy (Governing Board)

Bishop	Patrick Streiff, Chair	
	Ivana Procházková (CZ)	
	Daniel Topalski (BG)	
Coordinator, with voice but not vote		David Field (CH)

Community of Protestant Churches in Europe - CPCE (South-East Europe regional group)

Martin Obermeir-Siegrist (AT)
Novica Brankov (RS)

Community of Protestant Churches in Europe - CPCE (WG Church Community)

Jana Křížova (CZ)

Conference of European Churches (CEC)

Proxy Governing Board	vacant
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Ecumenical Youth Council in Europe (EYCE)

Member Executive Committee	Boris Fazekas (RS)
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Worldwide level:

Standing Committee on Central Conference Matters

Bishop	Patrick Streiff Petr Procházka (CZ)	Christine Schneider-Oesch (CH)
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Connectional Table

Stefan Zürcher (CH)

General Board of Global Ministries (GBGM)

Andreas Stämpfli (CH)

In Mission Together (IMT)

AC Bulgaria-Rumania	Rares Calugar (RO) Tsvetan Iliev (BG)	
AC Czech Republic-Slovakia	Jana Křížová (CZ)	Lenka Procházková (SK)
AC Hungary		Laura Tordaj-Szuhánski
AC Poland	Monika Zuber	
AC Serbia-North Macedonia-Albania		Jennifer Moore (MK) Maria Đurovka-Petraš (RS)
Coordinator		Urs Schweizer

General Board of Church and Society (GBCS)

vacant

Division on Ministries with Young People (DMYP)

Young adults		Maria Sonnleithner (AT)
Youth		Stanislava Bako (RS)
Adult workers with young people	Donát Gyurko (HU)	

General Commission on Archives and History (GCAH)

Judit Lakatos (HU)

World Methodist Council:

World Methodist Historical Society – European Section

Vice-Chair	Judit Lakatos (HU)
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World Federation of Methodist and Uniting Church Women (WFMUCW)

Vice-Chair Europe Continental	Lilla Kardosné Lakatos (HU)
Editor «Tree of Life»	Ligia Istrate (RO)

World Evangelism

Regional Secretary Central and Southern Europe	Lenka Procházková (SK)
--	------------------------

VI. Addresses

Last update: March 2022

Bishops:

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Bolleter Heinrich Grenzweg 9, CH-5036 Oberentfelden
ret. Bishop 0041-62-723 02 71, heinrich.bolleter@umc-cse.org

People of the Central Conference:

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