

Historical Statement of the Central Conference of Central and Southern Europe

On a common future within the Central Conference CSE

Consequences of separation in the Central Conference CSE

Elements of a theology of marriage (Version 2)

Report of the 73rd Meeting of the Executive Committee from October 21 - 23, 2021 in Budapest, Hungary



The United Methodist Church

Central Conference of Central and Southern Europe



The United Methodist Church

Central Conference of Central and Southern Europe

Report of the 73rd Meeting of the Executive Committee
from October 21 - 23, 2021, Budapest (Hungary)

Table of Contents

Table of Contents	3
Facts of the Central Conference of Central and Southern Europe	5
Rules of Order of the Central Conference of Central and Southern Europe	8
Procedural and working rules of the Judicial Court	18
I. Minutes of the 73rd meeting of the Executive Committee	
Minutes from Thursday, October 21, 2021	21
Minutes from Friday, October 22, 2021	35
Minutes from Saturday, October 23, 2021	55
Evening Prayer from October 21, 2021	70
Morning Devotion from October 22, 2021	74
Evening Prayer from October 22, 2021	76
Morning Devotion from October 23, 2021	77
II. Directory of decisions	
Decisions of the Executive Committee	78
III. Report of the Office	80
Consensus-Based Discernment	87
Historical Statement (Bishop Patrick Streiff).....	89
On a common future within CC CSE (Bishop Patrick Streiff)	97
Consequences of separation (Author: Bishops Office «Hilfe im Sprengel»)	105
Dates CC CSE 2021 - 2023	108
IV. Reports of the Working Groups	
Working Group Theology and Ordained Ministry	109
- Elements of a theology of marriage (Version 2)	111
- Discussion notes on the Introduction to the Draft of a General BoD 2020	115
Working Group Liturgy	117
- German translation of the Alternates Pieces from the BOW	118
- Budget Transforming Worship	125
Working Group Church Discipline an Legal Affairs	126
Working Group Church and Society	126
Working Group Children and Youth	126
Working Group Women’s Work	127
Working Group Episcopacy	129
- Information letter to the Annual Conferences	130
- Procedure for Nomination and Election of a Bishop at the CC CSE 2022	131
- Nomination paper for the election of a Bishop	133
- Personal sheet for the nominated candidates for Bishop	134
Judicial Court	135
V. Other reports	
European bishops: letter of cancellation	136
Report Round Table CC CSE	137
- Attachment: 3 rd Meeting of the Round from October 13, 2022	139
Report of the Foundation of the WCA Eastern Europe Chapter	141

World Methodist Council (WMC)	142
European Methodist Council (WMC)	143
Connectional Table	144
In Mission Together	144
General Board of Global Ministries (GBGM)	146
Commission of Central Conference Theological Education	150
Conference of European Churches (CEC)	151
Community of Protestant Churches in Europe (CPCE)	152
- Attachment 1: CPCE council agendas for 2 nd half of term	153
- Attachment 2: CPCE study programs for next 2 years	154
- Attachment 3: CPCE plans 50 th anniversary activities	155
CPCE South East Europe Group	157
VI. Statistics based on the Annual Conferences 2020	158
VII. Financial reports	
Statement 2020	160
Balance sheet of December 31, 2020	163
Auditor's report 2020	163
Budget 2022	164
VIII. Institutions of the Central Conference	166
Delegations of the CC CSE to worldwide commissions and Working Groups	170
IX. Addresses	172

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

Chair: Bishop Dr. Patrick Streiff
Badenerstrasse 69, Postfach 2111
CH-8021 Zürich 1
Mail bischof@umc-cse.org
Fon +41 44 299 30 60
Fax +41 44 299 30 69

Vice-Chair: vacant

Secretary: Markus Bach
Bahnstrasse 31, CH-8619 Uster
Mail markus.bach@umc-cse.org
Fon +41 44 940 12 43

Treasurer: Iris Bullinger
111, Chemin des Verjus, CH-1228 Plan-les-Ouates
Mail iris.bullinger@umc-cse.org
Fon +41 22 794 34 05

The Bishops-Office and Headquarters of the Central Conference

Badenerstrasse 69, Postfach 2111
CH-8021 Zürich 1
+41 44 290 30 60 / +41 44 290 30 69 (Fax)
bischof@umc-cse.org

Employees in the Bishops-Office

Urs Schweizer, Assistant of the bishop
+41 44 290 30 60
urs.schweizer@umc-cse.org

André Töngi, Finance and Administration
+41 44 290 30 63
andre.toengi@umc-cse.org

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 73rd meeting of the Executive Committee of the Central Conference of Central and Southern Europe

Minutes of the Executive Committee of Thursday, October 21, 2021

Unauthorized translation - Original in German

Thursday, October 21, 2021, 2:00 p.m.

Plenary session at the Lion's Garden Hotel, Budapest

The Executive Committee meeting begins with a Covid test for everyone. Everyone is negative, which is positive. That is why we sing a song "Maker in whom we live".

Bishop Streiff warmly welcomes all present and shows his joy that we can finally meet again locally after our last meeting in Austria was determined by the outbreak of the coronavirus and we had to end the meeting prematurely.

Bishop Streiff welcomes in particular the new members of the Executive Committee present: Ivana Procházková, Ben Nausner and Serge Frutiger. Ullas Tankler is also among us, although not for the first time.

Lea Hafner sends warm greetings from Helene Bindl, who is on the road to recovery after her surgery.

Bishop Streiff studied and preached on the Letter to the Colossians over the summer. Col. 3,12-14

You are God's chosen people. You are holy and dearly loved. So put on tender mercy and kindness as if they were your clothes. Don't be proud. Be gentle and patient. Put up with each other. Forgive the things you are holding against one another. Forgive, just as the Lord forgave you. And over all of those good things put on love. Love holds them all together perfectly as if they were one. (NIRV)

Love is depicted as a bond for togetherness, like a belt holding a dress together. It is interesting to note that terms used here (kindness, humility, forbearance, patience) were not usually used as signs of quality in those days. Nevertheless, they are listed here as quality marks for life in Christ. They are also called fruits of the spirit.

Let the peace that Christ gives rule in your hearts. As parts of one body, you were appointed to live in peace. And be thankful. Let Christ's word live in you like a rich treasure. Teach and correct each other wisely. Sing psalms, hymns and spiritual songs. Sing with thanks in your hearts to God. Do everything you say or do in the name of the Lord Jesus. Always give thanks to God the Father through Christ. (NIRV)

In Switzerland, there are video clips under the title "Methodistetroffe" (Met a Methodist). In it, individuals are asked either-or questions. In the question "Worship or sermon?"

practically everyone emphasized: Worship. Only one person said "preaching." In Austria, we heard that people came to church because they heard the singing. Worship is more than just preaching. In Switzerland, people have long talked about going "to the sermon." Worship must include what we find here in Colossians. It includes singing in our hearts to God's glory.

Afterwards the bishop says a prayer and we sing the song "There is a longing in our hearts".

The following people are present:

Voting members:

Bishop

Active Bishop	Bishop	Patrick Streiff	present
---------------	--------	-----------------	---------

Office

Secretary	Pastor	Markus Bach	present
Treasurer	Layperson	Iris Bullinger	present

Executive Committee

Bulgaria-Romania	Sup.	Daniel Topalski	excused
	Layperson	Desislava Todorova	excused
Serbia-North Macedonia-Albania	Sup.	Daniel Sjanta	present
	Layperson	Daniela Stoilkova	present
Austria	Sup.	Stefan Schröckenfuchs	present
	Layperson	Ben Nausner	present
Poland	Sup.	Andrzej Malicki	excused
	Layperson	Olgierd Benedyktowicz	excused
Switzerland-France-North Africa	Sup.	Serge Frutiger	present
	Layperson	Lea Hafner	present
Czech Republic-Slovakia	Sup.	Štefan Rendoš	present
	Layperson	vacant	---
Hungary	Sup.	László Khaled	present
	Layperson	Henrik Schauer mann	present
Chair WG Episcopacy	Pastor	Jörg Niederer	present <u>13</u>

Advisory members:

Retired bishop

	<i>Bishop</i>	Heinrich Bolleter	excused
--	---------------	-------------------	---------

Additional superintendents

Albania	Sup.	Wilfried Nausner	excused
Algeria and Tunisia	Pastor	Freddy Nzambe	excused
France and Belgium	Sup.	Etienne Rudolph	present
North Macedonia	Sup.	Marjan Dimov	present
Romania	Sup.	Rares Calugar	present
Czech Republic	Sup.	Ivana Procházková	present

Chairperson of the Working Groups

WG Theology and Ord. Ministries	Sup.	Stefan Zürcher	present
WG Liturgy	Pastor	Stefan Weller	excused
WG Church Discipline & Legal Affairs	Sup.	Daniel Topalski (Exec. member)	excused
WG Children and Youth	Layperson	Boris Fazekas/Irena Stefanova	excused
WG Women's Work	Pastor	Monika Zuber	excused
Coordinator	Layperson	Barbara Büniger	present__6

Present as guests are:

European Secretary GBGM	Ullas Tankler	✓
Assistant to the bishop	Urs Schweizer	✓
Bishop's Office	André Töngi	✓
		<u>3</u>

Total present: 22

The *Bishop* presents the schedule for discussion. The Executive Committee is ready to work accordingly.

The *bishop* refers to report 1.1.2 "Consensus-based Discernment". He would like to work with this method at the meeting of the Executive Committee so that we can already familiarize ourselves with it in view of the Central Conference. It is not a matter of all of us being or becoming of one mind, but of all of us coming to the conclusion that we have been heard. He explains the method.

Report of the Office (Reports 1.1; 1.1b; 1.2; 1.3; 1.4; 1.5; 1.6; 1.8)

represented by Markus Bach, Secretary

The report of the office was posted in advance in the Dropbox of the Central Conference and is therefore no longer read out. There is also a supplementary report 1.1b of the meeting of October 20, 2021. We will go through the report section by section.

Re 1.4 By-elections:

The Executive Committee unanimously elects Ben Nausner to the Executive Committee as the new lay member for the Annual Conference Austria.

The Executive Committee unanimously elects Serge Frutiger to the Executive Committee as a new pastoral member for the Annual Conference Switzerland-France-North Africa.

The Executive Committee unanimously elects Superintendent Ivana Procházková as a member with advisory vote to the Executive Committee.

Re 1.5 CCPI CC-CSE Pension Board:

The Executive Committee unanimously elects Markus Hafner to the pension board of the CC CSE

Re 3.1 Statement 2020 of the Central Conference and auditor's report:

The Executive Committee approves the financial statement 2020 on the basis of the auditor's report, grants discharge to the treasurer and expresses its sincere thanks for the services rendered.

Re 3.3 Budget 2022:

Bishop Streiff: The 2022 budget already includes the acceptance of the round table request. When the budget was adopted, we also approved this request.

The Executive Committee requests CHF 10'000 to be charged to the 2022 budget to allow the Round Table to meet physically once or twice until the regular Central Conference.

The Executive Committee approves the 2022 budget.

Re 4. statistical data within the Central Conference:

Lea Hafner: How should I understand the number from North Macedonia? Is that an estimated number?

Marjan Dimov: We did not have the possibility to collect the statistical data in the past. This is due to the lack of books and possibly also due to the people responsible. People used to simply count the houses and not the people. So, this number is not reliable and has to be checked and worked up in tedious work.

Re 5.2 New name of the Annual Conference:

The Executive Committee approves to the new name "Serbia - North Macedonia - Albania" and commissions the Bishops Office to report this change to the Secretary of the General Conference.

to 7. historical overview of the ZK MSE:

Bishop Patrick Streiff has previously pointed out that the Book of Discipline of The United Methodist Church is prefaced by a historical statement, but that such a text is missing from the Church Order of the CC CSE. Since historical knowledge of origins and common heritage can quickly be forgotten, Bishop Streiff has written an appropriate text. The whole picture of the various predecessor churches and their mission should become visible. The bishop asks the members for their written additions, thoughts and comments.

Stefan Schröckenfuchs: I am very grateful for this work. I am too young to be able to remember. I note in this history that we as a Central Conference are a result of external circumstances rather than the result of a constructive vision. In our regulations, I also find no reference to a purpose or goal for our Central Conference. Can this statement be made in this way? We should think about that.

Ullas Tankler: Is there any new information in this document compared to what you published in your book on European Methodism?

Bishop Streiff: No, it is rather the result that I have also published in my book. It is clear that our Central Conference in this size and composition would neither be elected nor composed in this way today. It is much more the result of our history.

Stefan Schröckenfuchs: I did not expect that there would be great answers to my question. But I would still like to ask whether this composition of the Central Conference is so meaningful and helpful for our future.

Bishop Streiff: In the rules, we look forward and clarify how we want to work together in the future. In the historical reflection, on the other hand, we look back at how things came about.

Bishop Streiff: Send me any comments on this text and we will present it at the next Central Conference to have it approved.

Re 8.5 Structural and financial consequences of separation:

Bishop Streiff: The association "Hilfe im Sprengel" (the legal entity of the CC CSE) has prepared a document, which would mean a split of the UMC in structural and financial terms. This text is based on the assumption that the 2022 General Conference will agree to the "Protocol of Reconciliation and Grace through Separation" as currently written, and that the 2022 CC CSE will not decide by a two-thirds majority to leave The United Methodist Church. This document fleshes out the three documents from the European bishops that we had before us in March of this year:

- On the way to the future
- Task force mandate for the postal UMC
- Separation from UMC

Lea Hafner: Am I correct in assuming that the statements in this document are based on the currently applicable law?

Bishop Streiff: They are based on what the "Protocol" says about how the separation will be accomplished. For example, the "Protocol" says that a church that leaves the UMC and goes to another Methodist church can do so with its assets. It also makes clear that separation is to be handled consistently and exactly what is meant by that.

If the "Protocol" is not accepted by the General Conference, there is a possibility for churches outside the USA in the current "Book of Discipline" that an Annual Conference as a whole can leave the church and take its assets with it. However, this is a relatively complicated process because all the remaining Annual Conferences of a Central Conference must agree to the withdrawal (as it was in Sweden, for example). In the "Protocol" this is described in a much simpler way. Without the "Protocol" and without this complicated process, it is also possible to leave the church - but then without being able to take the assets with you.

Daniel Sjanta: We have now started a dialogue, but it is still very unclear what the General Conference will decide. The question is what impact this will have on our being together. In the worst case, we find a common path, but we can't walk it because of decisions of the General Conference. That is what frustrates me very much.

Etienne Rudolph: I believe that we should decide for ourselves, detached from the General Conference, what we want and how we want to be together. For that, we don't have to wait for the decisions of the General Conference. We need to know what we want.

Stefan Schröckenfuchs: I already had a longer discussion yesterday about the importance of the "Book of Discipline" and the General Conference for us as a Central Conference. We are in a very special and not easy situation. We depend on each other for support. Therefore, we should not make decisions so dependent on the General Conference. We have to make sure that we first find a way for us to stay together. How the way can then be found with the General Conference remains to be seen. The General Conference is very big, and we are small and different, so the General Conference cannot find the solution for us at all. It is simply overburdened with this.

Henrik Schaueremann: Thank you for the document. It helps us to see ourselves and our situation clearly.

Ullas Tankler: I know that I am here in the Executive Committee of the Central and Southern Europe Central Conference. But when we talk about Europe, it is important to know that there are several Central Conferences in Europe, and we cannot avoid thinking for the whole of Europe.

European Bishops: Letter of cancellation (Report 3.1)

Bishop Patrick Streiff

Bishop Streiff points out that especially in Northern Europe the wish had arisen to form a European working group already before the General Conference 2022 in order to be able to exchange ideas with regard to the General Conference and to a common future of the UMC in Europe. However, the interest in this was limited in other conferences. Therefore, in late summer 2021, it was decided not to pursue this idea further. For our Central Conference, the Round Table has priority.

Round Table of the Central Conference CSE (Report 3.2)

represented by Stefan Schröckenfuchs

Stefan Schröckenfuchs: We had another round table meeting last week. We are working on clarifying the questions of what makes us a central conference together. We are also trying to figure out what is missing. The formation of the Eastern Europe Regional Chapter of the Wesleyan Covenant Association (Chapter) has given us greater clarity on what direction it might go in terms of future composition. On Friday evening, we will have the opportunity to be together again as a roundtable. And it would be helpful if everyone

could be there who is part of the participating countries, not just the group itself. We want to strengthen trust in each other and not force anyone to do anything. The question will be whether we can trust each other as history and time evolve, through a new bishop or other new situations.

Marjan Dimov: We think the same way in North Macedonia. There are very different opinions in our Central Conference. Others go other ways. But we have said that we want to stay in this federation of the Central Conference. When everything is shaky, we need more security and solidarity. What we decide together, we want to implement together in the future.

Serge Frutiger: I have a question about the attitude of the Church in the Czech Republic. Has it moved forward in its decision?

Ivana Procházková: We would like to be open in conversation with countries outside the Central Conference to clarify whether there is a common path with them as a conservative thinking country. But we have not made any contact so far. When we have completed this clarification process, we can consider whether to join the round table.

Bishop Streiff: At what level is this being discussed?

Ivana Procházková: We are currently discussing it in the church council, with the pastors and local pastors, and at the district conferences with the laity. We are working towards a consensus. I currently have no mandate to participate in the round table and to seek a common path with the Central Conference.

Stefan Schröckenfuchs: I have understanding for that. It is helpful to know where you stand.

Bishop Streiff: That is why it is good that we can see each other here and be in conversation with each other.

Štefan Rendoš: Covid helps us to have time for the conversation.

Bishop Streiff: That is why we have also set aside an evening so that we can be in conversation with each other.

We're going to take a break.

Thursday, October 21, 2021, 4:30 p.m.

Plenary session at the Lion's Garden Hotel, Budapest

Bishop Streiff points out that for the following agenda item Daniel Topalski will be joined by zoom.

Report of the Foundation of the WCA Eastern Europe Chapter (Report 3.3)

represented by Daniel Topalski

Daniel Topalski is pleased to be able to participate in this way. He explains the background that led to the founding of the Eastern Europe Chapter of the WCA. The members are individuals who think traditionally - so it is not an association of conferences or congregations. The goal of the chapter is to bring the traditionally thinking people together and to be able to participate more actively in the process that is leading to a conservative worldwide church. In this way, it is possible for us to get involved before it is too late. It was our own initiative to start such a chapter and not the initiative of the WCA. We are 38 members from Bulgaria, Romania and Slovakia who founded this Eastern Europe Chapter of the WCA. We do not want to push anyone to be part of it or to do anything.

Bishop Streiff: Can you say something about the name? It means on the one hand that the chapter is for people in our Central Conference, but on the other hand that it is also open to all who are interested.

Daniel Topalski: It is the only chapter in Europe, so other Methodists outside our Central Conference could be there. But currently the members are only people from our Central Conference.

Bishop Streiff: Where can people find out about the Regional Chapter?

Daniel Topalski: We will be launching our website in the next few days. There you will also find a contact form that you can use to get in touch with us.

Lea Hafner: Bishop Streiff has described the refounding as the first step towards separation. Do you see it in the same way?

Daniel Topalski: I cannot speak for the Annual Conference, this has to be done by the members for themselves. I can say from my point of view that it is a clear sign that we want to stay in the UMC if it keeps the traditional understanding regarding marriage and homosexuality and the bishop shares this attitude. But I can only speak for the individuals, not for the Annual Conferences.

Barbara Büniger: Would it be possible for someone from Bulgaria who thinks differently to be at our round table? Or would she have to do so without having a mandate from the Annual Conference?

Daniel Topalski: It would be up to the Central Conference to decide whether to accept such people. However, in our Annual Conference, the Church Council has decided that we will not participate in the Round Table. Therefore, such a person would have no mandate.

Serge Frutiger: What would have been necessary for you to participate in the Round Table?

Daniel Topalski: Our position is the logical consequence of the development that has taken place in our church. We simply cannot imagine that the bishop acts in one way in one country and differently in another country where completely different rules apply. We have communicated this before. But it's up to our church council to decide how to proceed here, that's not up to me.

Bishop Streiff: I would like to point out again that in 2019 we did a survey of the boards of the Annual Conferences on their attitude with regard to the treatment of homosexually feeling people and the models submitted to the General Conference in 2019. It is to this decision of the Church Board that Daniel refers.

Bishop Streiff: Thank you very much for the interview. I point out that Štefan Rendoš and Rares Calugar are also on the board of the Eastern Europe Chapter. Would you like to add something?

Rares Calugar: We also have members from Romania who belong to the chapter, because we have mainly a conservative attitude in Romania. Personally, though, I have no problems being with you guys. We just thought in Romania what is best for us as a church - in a country where it is a taboo to talk about homosexuality. And we don't want others to decide about us. When I talked to the president and vice president of the WCA, we realized that they think and speak only for America. So we decided that we need to have a common voice here in Eastern Europe that we can bring to the deliberations so that our perspective is heard. And then once we have both alternatives of affiliation, then I know which alternative I would choose.

Štefan Rendoš: I support what Daniel said. In the last three years, many things have developed in the Church. But something has also developed at our JK level. Right now we see it as the best opportunity for us to become part of the Global Methodist Church. We've been thinking about what our options are. We are now in a process. What I want to enable our church in Slovakia to do is to allow everyone to decide whether we want to separate - and, if so, where we want to go. It is important that they can decide in freedom and have peace about it.

Rares Calugar: We don't have a choice, in terms of how we want to deal with people who are homosexual, what our options might be as a central conference. So we could not decide which of the options would be best for us. Maybe there would be other ways. But this is now the way we have chosen.

Bishop Streiff: I hear from you that your question is how to support your mission in your country.

Stefan Schröckenfuchs: I understood that you want to have a voice in the Global Methodist Church. I'm not sure if I understood correctly that you think you don't have a voice in the Central Conference. Now you are hoping that you will have a voice in the big Global Church.

The bishop pointed out that we are a community of destiny. No one actually has to be there. We have to find a way for those of us who want to stay together to do so. How can we support each other in our respective missions? What can we do? How do we find solutions without creating problems for others? This is the situation we find ourselves in.

Rares Calugar: Personally, I have many contacts with people from our Central Conference, but most of our people do not have relations with Methodists from other European countries. But we have contact with American persons from our church because they visit us regularly. We have been around only since 2011. We have the same understanding as the Methodists in America. And they do not have a false gospel.

Jörg Niederer: When I search the Internet for Methodist congregations in the USA, I find not only conservative but also liberal Methodists.

Rares Calugar: But we practically only have contact with conservative Christians, and they were the ones who helped us to found it.

Bishop Streiff: That also has to do with the fact that you are such a young church. At the moment, it's the personal contacts that count. The structure, on the other hand, can help us maintain the community even when people change. But it is never the structures that create the community.

Daniel Sjanta: When Rares says that they have little contact with European Methodists and more with American ones, for us it is the other way around. We have close contact with Europe and little with America. That also makes it difficult for us. On the one hand, we can't agree with the understanding of the Bible and marriage that people in other countries in our Central Conference have, but we also can't say we don't want to have anything more to do with them. That makes it very difficult for us. We don't have contact with all the Annual Conferences, but we do with some. Pastors have connections, there are international friendships and even marriages. The current situation is very painful for us, precisely because we have connections.

Bishop Streiff: Thank you for sharing your opinions.

Bishop's thoughts on the common future of the Central Conference (Report 1.7)

Bishop Patrick Streiff

Bishop Streiff has drafted a text on the common future of the Central Conference and would like to work through this document using the consensus method. The document will be discussed in three steps:

- Pages 1-4 in a first step today
- A-C on Friday
- D on Saturday

Where we come from - introductory remarks

Bishop Streiff introduces the 1st part of the document.

Daniel Sjanta: I was also part of the first study group. We can't turn back time. I don't think we have done enough to talk to each other. I hear from Daniel Topalski that we have talked enough. But we haven't looked enough at how to understand each other. The postponements of the General Conference have given us time. People in Serbia did not get the impression that you were a bishop for everyone. They see it differently. I have heard now that you are not against us, but you want to be for all. But we did not experience it that way. We want to be heard and we want to hear others. That is why I say that we have not done enough.

Ivana Procházková: I would like to share my impression from the Czech Republic. Many Czechs have the impression that the Central Conference does not listen to our arguments. The conflict escalated in my eyes on both sides. Czech conservatives are in a conflict.

My episcopal visitations and talks

Bishop Streiff introduces the 2nd part of the document

Lea Hafner: It was very helpful to hear about your experiences. We have very different positions in the Annual Conference Switzerland-France-North Africa. We don't have just a liberal or conservative position, but a mix, and we ask ourselves how we can find a common way with it. It is not easier for us than in conservative countries. We can only find a common way if we sit down at the same table.

Henrik Schaueremann: I have two thoughts on this: On the one hand, I have seen you as a representative of the One Church plan without any discussions about it. That made me and others feel like we were under pressure. Cognitively, I knew we had to find a common way, but we still felt under pressure. On the other hand, we felt that we had to adopt the social situation from the U.S. and other countries in our country. But we are not supposed to follow society. For me, the Central Conference is the decisive factor, not the General Conference. I have memories of Bishops Schäfer, Bolleter and of you, memories of conferences in Europe. This is our thinking, also theologically. We should not be afraid to take a different path than the one that the General Conference sets. If we are going to

walk a common process, we should not determine now what it will look like in the end. Our confidence is based on the fact that we are all doing our best. But it is not a promise that it will be a common path in the end.

Štefan Rendoš: I am grateful to see that you are trying to understand. But there are differences in the experiences made. Petr Procházka wanted to organize a meeting for traditional Methodists in Prague. After talking to the European bishops, he cancelled the meeting. We were frustrated because we could not decide for ourselves. There should be no pressure from above, neither from the next bishop nor from anyone else.

Rares Calugar: I would like to say something about the question of whether the structure or the mission is more important for us. I am missing the question here if we can do the mission together. We don't want to be outside of a structure. I want to have community, but I realize that structures can be a hindrance. For my church, it is important that we have a bishop. However, we have no idea who the next bishop will be. We need to think about what structure we can live our mission in. There are so many fears in our countries. For example, will we have a homosexual bishop? We are even afraid that we might have a female bishop. It is not even possible in our country to hire a woman pastor, although there are many women in my church, for example, and I am convinced that we absolutely need a (local/laity) woman pastor. However, I believe we don't need more questions, we need answers. It is the structure that is causing me at the moment to look at another way.

Serge Frutiger: I was in the Central Conference before and just missed such feedback. I have very different churches in my district where exactly the same questions are asked. I think it's also a problem of language, because I don't speak English well, and it's the same for others, so we can't exchange helpfully.

Ivana Procházková: I am optimistic if we manage to talk about how to promote the mission. It needs respect for every situation in different countries. It is possible to talk respectfully with people about mission. But we cannot demand that they change their minds.

Stefan Schröckenfuchs: We haven't talked about it enough in recent years. In Austria, we are not currently talking about the issue of homosexuality. It would be easier than here. Many in our church were not happy with the Church Order and the Social Principles. But we could live with it because we felt integrated in a worldwide church. There was no discussion on this topic, even though we were dissatisfied. But in 2019, this discussion was thrust upon us. The General Conference is now forcing us to decide which side we want to be on.

Daniel Sjanta: I also think it's important to answer the questions and not just ask them.

Marjan Dimov: I would like to raise two points: It is difficult for people to open up. When it comes to Eastern European countries or the Balkans, it is not only in the Church that people do not dare to speak openly because they depend on the support of Western European countries. That's why we say, "Speak softly so that you won't be heard. If I speak

loudly, there is a risk that we will no longer receive financial support. That's why we have to find ways for people to open up and speak freely.

And we also need to find our way back to a simple belief. Why do Westerners think so liberally and others so conservatively? I don't want to defend one side or the other, but seek the simple faith as John Wesley proclaimed. Then we might understand each other better.

Etienne Rudolph: Some of the questions we have in France are like those expressed by Daniel Sjanta. They cannot understand how the bishop or the Central Conference can go in a certain direction which is not theirs. They do not want to go in a direction where they are confronted with a different attitude. They are very radical in that. The moderates can't get involved because the radicals are dominating the conversation. There is no awareness of the history of our church in France. They are more oriented to evangelical orientations than to Methodism. Therefore, they cannot understand that I am participating in the Round Table without a clear mandate from France. They want me to represent exactly their position. The evangelical side in France will probably not go to the Global Methodist Church because they cannot accept infant baptism either. That brings a big confusion for the churches. I often feel alone there.

We close with a prayer from the bishop.

Thursday, October 21, 2021, 6:00 p.m.

Dinner at the Lion's Garden Hotel, Budapest

Thursday, October 21, 2021, 7:30 p.m.

Plenary session at the Lion's Garden Hotel, Budapest

Country Report Czech Republic

Superintendent Ivana Procházková

Ivana Procházková shows some pictures from the work of the Church in the Czech Republic.

In two weeks we will celebrate an anniversary of our church - but due to Covid-19-related postponements, the 101st anniversary. We hope and are confident that the bishop can come, even if the corona numbers increase.

The work in our JK is divided into two districts: Czech Republic and Slovak Republic. In Czech Republic we have 2'000 members in 15 districts. There is also a Russian-speaking community in Prague. Many of the members and friends there come from Ukraine. It is nice that there is no tension between the Russians and the Ukrainians. There is also an English-speaking congregation in Prague. At the moment this is led by a pastor from England, but she will return soon. The congregation is therefore in search of a new pastor. However, the congregation is also facing challenges due to the pandemic.

Various communities have a kindergarten, even a school or social facilities. On the one hand, it is helpful to have such social institutions, but on the other hand, because of the great professionalization pressure from the EU, it is also a great challenge - on the one hand, to be able to run them, but on the other hand, to involve volunteers from the congregations. There is a new director for diaconia in the Czech Republic, and we hope that he can make a difference in this direction.

It is the goal of the EMK in the Czech Republic to become financially independent - and we are grateful to have many generous people. Since the decision was made a few years ago to gradually reduce state aid for pastors' salaries, this generosity is needed.

At a pastors' meeting during the Covid Lockdown, we talked about our strengths and weaknesses. We found that all pastors are strongly committed and very dedicated to the church. As a weakness we recognized that we have lost many young people or that we do not find the contact with them to the desired extent.

Ecumenical fellowship is important for Methodists in the Czech Republic. We form a bridge between the Roman Catholic Church and Protestant Christians.

Country Report Hungary

Superintendent László Khaled

László Khaled shows a presentation that was made for a university. Laszlo is invited every year to present the UMC there. Together with Austria, the UMC celebrated the 150th anniversary in Hungary, because it was founded in the Hungarian-Austrian Monarchy.

There are 11 districts in Hungary. There was a split within the EMK some decades ago, which could not be overcome until today. László Khaled would call the other group the progressive one, while the EMK is more traditional.

He introduces various congregations and reports on the two high schools with about 500 students that have affiliated themselves with the EMK. He tells about church planting projects and a new church building project in Miskolc that had been dreamed of and planned for decades. Last week this church was opened.

There are five places with a Roma mission.

Thursday, October 21, 2021, 8:15 p.m.

Evening prayer at the Lion's Garden Hotel, Budapest

Etienne Rudolph joins us for evening prayer. The evening prayer is attached to the minutes.

Minutes of the Executive Committee of Friday, October 22, 2021

Unauthorized translation - Original in German

Friday, October 22, 2021, 9.00 a.m.

Morning reflection at the Lion's Garden Hotel, Budapest

Bishop Streiff sends warm greetings from Ben Nausner. He has caught a severe cold, though not a Covid illness, and has decided to travel back home.

Daniel Sjanta leads us in the morning reflection. The reflection can be found attached to the minutes.

Friday, October 22, 2021, 9:30 a.m.

Plenary session at the Lion's Garden Hotel, Budapest

Bishop Streiff points out that yesterday we did not get as far as intended in working on the document "On the Common Future within the Central Conference of Central and Southern Europe". So we will now first continue where we left off yesterday. We will continue on page 3:

On Marriage and Human sexuality (present situation)

The bishop introduces this section.

Rares Calugar: I put two cards (note: the cards are part of the consensus-based procedure in the discussion. Yellow card=agree, Blue card=disagree, both cards=wish to end discussion) because I don't want to talk about it anymore.

There are no further requests to speak on this section. All others show the yellow card to this section.

What we all have in common despite our differences

The bishop introduces this section.

There are only yellow cards for this section as well.

What differences do we have and at what level concerning the unity of the church are those differences?

The bishop introduces this section.

Henrik Schauer mann: I would see the order of differences differently. The definition of marriage comes from the understanding of the Bible. If we understand the Bible differently, we can also give marriage a different understanding. Therefore, I would do the order differently, first the understanding of the Bible with regard to same-sex relationships and then the definition of marriage.

Bishop Streiff: In my reflections I started from the assumption that both differences are based on the understanding of the Holy Scriptures. I wanted to make clear with the order that the differences in the understanding of marriage are considered more weighty in the practice of church work.

Henrik Schauer mann: For me, I wouldn't make a ranking in that order.

Daniel Sjanta: You write that the definition of marriage has a higher ecclesiastical and doctrinal level. In the Bible I recognize a great diversity in the treatment of marriage. However, in the case of same-sex relationships, I cannot assume one definition of marriage. I have more questions than solutions. And this is only one topic - in the abbreviation LGBTQI there are many more letters, with which again completely different challenges and questions are connected.

Bishop Streiff: What also led me to mention the definition of marriage first were the statements in connection with the One Church Plan. There it was argued that the definition of marriage needs to be reformulated. There was a very strong reaction to that call.

Bishop Streiff: Thank you very much for the feedback. We will now move on to the report of the Theology and Ordained Ministries Working Group.

Working Group Theology and Ordained Ministry (Report 2.1; 2.1.1; 2.1.2)

by Stefan Zürcher, Chairman of the Working Group

Stefan Zürcher: We had decided to postpone the meeting last year, and we were not able to hold it after all. The documents we sent to the Executive Committee were based on the meeting in January this year. We were able to meet again online in October 2021. I will give an oral report on that meeting.

Participants of the Working Group meeting were Jana Daněčková, Michael Nausner, Edward Pušlecki, Daniel Sjanta, Christof Voigt, Vladimir Zhelezov and Stefan Zürcher. Zoltan Kovacs unfortunately could not be there. In addition, Bishop Patrick Streiff was present as a guest.

At the online meeting of the Working Group on October 2, 2021, the focus was on the question of how we as a Central Conference can regulate the question of dealing with homosexuality at the level of the church order in such a way that the church mission in our own Annual Conference or country is promoted with the respective context without endangering the mission of the other Annual Conferences or countries of our Central Conference.

We learned from the bishop how this question appeared to him on the basis of personal conversations and experiences of the last months. Afterwards, we shared our reflections on it.

It has been emphasized several times that the question of dealing with homosexuality takes on too much weight with regard to our mission. It is not part of the core of the biblical message that we see as our mission to pass on. This discussion deeply jeopardizes our togetherness as a Central Conference because the social and ecclesial/ecumenical contexts with regard to this question are so different in our countries and Annual Conferences. Can we not give ourselves significantly more time for this conversation, it was asked. Is it imperative to find an answer to this question as a Central Conference at this time? It hardly seems possible at this time. Because depending on the answer, the mission in one or the other part of the countries will be jeopardized.

We agreed that it cannot be about coercing people, congregations or annual conferences to change their personal beliefs or practices. For some, it is about learning to respect different points of view. Respect, unlike tolerance, is reciprocal and an expression of a relationship based on trust at eye level. However, respect must grow and cannot be commanded.

We agreed that it is essential to remain in contact with each other in a trusting manner. Staying in dialogue with each other is essential for the further common path, so that the door does not slam shut by trying to find solutions too quickly, but is kept open by patience.

Questions were also raised as to what diverse convictions and lifestyles may look like in order to be understood as an expression of "sanctification," and whether by agreeing to open up to same-sex partnerships one is not going against doctrinal standards and thus crossing a red line. Others, on the other hand, asked whether the fruit of the Spirit as a result of Christ's transforming love is not much more decisive for judging sanctification - if it can be judged at all in other people.

It became clear that the understanding of the Bible plays an important role in answering this question. However, it was also pointed out that the understanding of biblical texts on ethical and social issues (the role of women, slavery, divorce, etc.) had changed again and again in the past.

Stefan Zürcher: Are there any additions from participants of the Working Group?

Daniel Sjanta: We only had a limited time. You wrote down what was. The discussion continues and we are still not at an end.

Stefan Zürcher: It was a real pity that we couldn't meet physically.

Bishop Streiff: You spoke of differences between tolerance and respect. Can you explain that again in more detail?

Stefan Zürcher: For respect, we need a counterpart whom we can meet at eye level. I can have tolerance for anyone.

Daniel Sjanta: When we tolerate something, we don't necessarily need a relationship. But for respect, it is urgently needed. In January, we were still talking about needing tolerance, tolerance, tolerance. Now we talk more about needing to have respect for each other.

Daniela Stoilkova: I understand tolerance also as something that happens between persons who are not equal (e.g. children to parents). Respect has something to do with equal personalities.

Bishop Streiff: If there are no further questions on the report, we will go to Appendix 1, the revision of the elements of a definition of marriage.

Stefan Zürcher: We started with the document in Uster in 2019. There we created a first draft, which was available in Vienna. However, we didn't have a chance to get into conversation about it. Now we have created a version 2 of it.

Bishop Streiff: You have seen that the Working Group did not come to a consensus. They have named differences. But there are also elements in it that they have identified together. We find commonalities and differences in this document. It is good that we record both.

Stefan Schröckenfuchs: I am still unsure how we should place such a document in the concrete life of the church. I see the theological perspective, but I miss the pastoral aspect, what it means, for example, to enter into a lifelong covenant. But maybe that is not the goal of this document. I am coming more from the practical side.

Bishop Streiff: This document comes more from the theological side than from the practical side. It helps me to see more how we as a church understand marriage. This is not primarily about a couple who want to get married understanding what marriage is about for them.

Bishop Streiff: What strengths or weaknesses do you see in this document?

Lea Hafner: It was interesting to read this document, especially Pt. 9. But when I read the last two sentences, it's a pity that we can't find a consensus. We are doing a great effort and a good work, but in the end, we still can't find each other, that's a pity. Let's hope that someday it will be possible after all.

Bishop Streiff: Pt. 10 shows where the differences are. It is precisely the practical things that are viewed differently.

Stefan Schröckenfuchs: Do we actually know how many weddings we perform in our church per year? In all EMK congregations in Austria together, we have maybe 1 to 2 weddings a year. We make such a big effort for that. We should think more about what it means to be faithful and to enter into a lifelong covenant.

Henrik Schauer mann: That depends on the age structure of a congregation. In Hungary, we probably have 2 to 3 weddings per congregation. If they are young parishes, there are more, otherwise less.

Jörg Niederer: I have mainly older people in the congregation. That's why I haven't had a wedding ceremony for a long time. But because I am often out and about on foot on Saturday, and because most people in our parish get married on Saturday, I see a lot of weddings. I recognize in this the fact that many people want to receive the blessing in a church. I suspect that there are more than before.

Stefan Schröckenfuchs: But that also has to do with the beautiful photos and the clothes and not necessarily with the blessing from God.

Bishop Streiff: It seems important to me that we include the deeper questions of faithfulness and lifelong covenant in our reflections. How, for example, is it possible to live the peace of God in these relationships despite strife?

Ivana Procházková: I see the document as a realistic reflection of the discussion. We have an agreement in our country that we do not use the seven texts of the Bible in which homosexuality is mentioned. Because we do not have a common view, we do not use them in our discussion.

Bishop Streiff: That is interesting for our further discussion. It is important that we can also say where we disagree. Then we can also consider how we want to deal with it.

We're going to take a break.

Friday, October 22, 2021, 11:15 a.m.

Plenary session at the Lion's Garden Hotel, Budapest

We start with a song: "Rest in me and be still".

Bishop Streiff: We turn to Appendix 2 from the report of the Working Group Theology and Ordained Ministry: "Introduction to the Draft Church Order 2020". Even though the 2020 General Conference could not take place, the issue here is whether there should be parts in the Book of Discipline that are not adaptable or just adaptable. Because of the 2019 General Conference, it was decided not to bring the draft of new church discipline to a vote yet, but to ask different Working Groups for feedback. This has now been done by the Working Group.

Stefan Zürcher: We were concerned with the question of where we can have freedom and where agreement is necessary.

Bishop Streiff: When the postponed General Conference is held in 2020, the proposal will go back to the Annual Conferences for feedback.

Markus Bach: How should I imagine the author(s) of this document? It is signed Michael Nausner and Stefan Zürcher. However, the text always refers to "I". Also, the contents do not always match. Do I have to imagine the individual sections as the voice of the individual members of the Working Group?

Stefan Zürcher: Yes, that is the case. Michael compiled the feedback together with me.

Markus Bach: That then also means that we do not have a voice of the Working Group, but rather the voices of the members of the Working Group before us.

Bishop Streiff: Is there any other feedback that we should take?

Stefan Schröckenfuchs: Based on the experience of the last General Conference, it is hard to predict what the General Conference will do with it.

Bishop Streiff: I sensed a great interest that it would come to a decision at the General Conference. Then, when it was decided that the proposal would not come to a decision, but only to discussion, the interest immediately died out. Many simply wanted to speak and then decide. No one is interested in a long process. But we would have to find a way that we can find freedom for individual solutions. Many members of the General Conference only ask the question whether they should vote yes or no.

Stefan Schröckenfuchs: Won't that also be the case at this General Conference? The point is that the basis for the separation is being laid now, so that we can then take the further decisions at the conference after next on the basis of a new composition. Therefore, I am also of the opinion that we must know for ourselves how we can stay together - and how we can also learn to proceed tactically. Only in this way will we then not be dependent on surprising decisions from the General Conference.

Bishop Streiff: It will be important that we can also get involved to show how we deal with our diversity.

The Executive Committee approves the report of the Working Group Theology and Ordained Ministry with thanks.

Judicial Court of the Central Conference CSE (Report 2.8)

by Christa Tobler, Chairwoman of the Judicial Court

The report of the Judicial court is available in writing.

Markus Bach: There is a vacancy in the composition due to the death of Lothar Pöll on the pastor's side of the members in the Judicial Court. Among the substitute members, there is still a pastoral substitute member, so that the Judicial Court is able to work. We can

therefore wait until the next Central Conference before holding a by-election. However, there has also been a lack of a lay member among the substitute members for some time.

Bishop Streiff: Thank you for that comment.

The Executive Committee receives with thanks the report of the Judicial Court of the Central Conference of Central and Southern Europe.

Working Group Church Discipline and Legal Affaires (Report 2.3)

by Daniel Topalski, Chairman of the Working Group

Bishop Streiff: After the meeting this spring, I spoke with Daniel Topalski about his participation in this Working Group - and how he can handle it if we want to talk about changes to the Church Discipline. I asked him if he could and wanted to take on this work. He answered me that he could not do this. This was before the Eastern Europe Chapter of the WCA was formed. So, looking to the future of our Central Conference, I think we will have to set up an ad hoc group to take up the questions around the Church Discipline. As we work on the future issues, we need to be clear about how we want to proceed here.

There are no questions or additions to the report.

The Executive Committee approves the report of the Working Group Church Discipline and Legal Affaires with thanks.

Working Group Church and Society (Report 2.4)

by David Chlupáček, Chairman of the Working Group

There is no report from the Working Group.

Bishop Streiff: The office checked with him, but no report came. However, no meetings of the Working Group took place either.

Working Group Children and Youth (Report 2.5)

by Boris Fazekas and Ivana Stefanova, Co-Chairs of the Working Group

There is no report from the Working Group.

Bishop Streiff: There was an online meeting of EMYC at the end of September 2021. But we have not heard anything about it.

Stefan Schröckenfuchs: I know that the EMYC is in a comfortable financial situation. I also see that these assets have been there for a long time, and I am already amazed that nothing is happening. How and where do we have the opportunity to give an encouragement so that young people come together? I think this is very important for the future of

our church. Since I was 16 years old, I have always participated in European meetings. The EMYC would have the means for such meetings to continue. But I do not know why these means are not used. We need to think about how to promote the work here.

Bishop Streiff: Would it be helpful if the Secretary would send a message to that effect to the two co-chairs so they can report on it at the next meeting?

Stefan Schröckenfuchs: I don't think that will make any difference. I think it needs people who are convinced of the importance that such cross-border events are carried out. From the financial side, it would be possible that some work could be done. But it is not easy if all the work has to be done in the free time. It could therefore be helpful if, for example, someone in Switzerland would be allowed to use a part of his employment exactly for the care of such international relations and to organize such events. But it is already clear that the current Covid situation is not really helpful either.

Daniel Sjanta: I was a member of EMYC from 2006 to 2016. During that time, we often looked back by handling reports and had little time to create anything. It is difficult to plan something for all of Europe. For example, for us in Serbia, we decided to make a kind of mini-EMYC within our conference. But we also notice that the enthusiasm of previous years is missing.

Stefan Schröckenfuchs: Indeed, the vision is missing. But we are urgently in need of such events.

Daniel Sjanta: I also have very good memories of the meetings. They brought me closer to our church.

Bishop Streiff: I think the last youth meeting of the Central Conference was in Serbia, probably in 2013. That is quite a long time in the youth field.

Lea Hafner: So it would be important to have a report so we know where they stand and where we could support them.

Urs Schweizer: There are members from all our conferences in the Working Group Children and Youth. We should all ask there and give the encouragement to become active in this direction.

Ullas Tankler: The EMYC is a European institution which belongs to the European Council of Methodist Churches. Our questions about the EMYC actually belong to this level. What role does it play at the level of the Central Conference?

Bishop Streiff: It's difficult to answer that question when we don't have a report.

Stefan Schröckenfuchs: I don't want to say that we are dissatisfied. It is rather the result of what has happened. It has something to do with the fact that we have no vision. We have to ask what should be done and what is possible at all. I think some things have changed here. But if we think it's important for young people to meet, we can't afford to have a generation that hasn't had the experience. Are we supporting them enough?

Daniela Stoilkova: 2019 was the last EMYC meeting. I was there. We didn't find any more people who wanted to be involved.

Bishop Streiff: I hear the great desire among us that young people have the opportunity to meet each other. We can't say now how that will happen. Because we don't have a report, we can't really help and can only poke around to find a solution. Many of you have a delegate to EMYC in the Annual Conference. Please reach out to them and encourage them. We can talk in the Annual Conference Switzerland-France-North Africa about whether it is possible to hire them in this area. That would be at least one signal we can send. In the youth sector, I too cannot say exactly who is working where. Are there any other suggestions?

Stefan Schröckenfuchs: The signal is very important. We have to give this a priority. It is not simply a matter of emotional support. It needs that, too. We need to consider whether there is a way we can do something on an employment basis. This is so important for our Central Conference. We need someone we can hire.

Markus Bach: Can you give information about who owns the money you were talking about? Does it belong to EMYC or to our Central Conference Working Group?

Stefan Schröckenfuchs: The money belongs to EMYC. Because the account is managed in our conference, I can see what the balance is.

Bishop Streiff: There is always support for meetings. Whether they take place is not necessarily a question of finances, but much more a question of initiative people.

Ullas Tankler: The EMYC is part of the EMC. There will be an EMC meeting in the spring. Maybe we would need to address these issues there as well. Maybe a new way would have to be found to support them.

Bishop Streiff: I have heard as a mandate to us that we will approach our delegates and we will think about possibilities of employment in Switzerland. But we need the feedback from the Working Group so that we do not do the wrong thing.

Division on Ministries with Young People (Report 3.10)

from Donat Gyrko

There is no report available.

Working Group Episcopacy (Report 2.7)

by Jörg Niederer, Chairman of the Working Group

Jörg Niederer reports on the meeting of the Working Group two days ago in Budapest. In a first round, the Working Group cleaned up the documents for the bishop elections. The modified documents were sent to the Executive Committee by mail and posted on the Dropbox.

Jörg Niederer points out that mainly the dates have changed. A few changes serve the clarity of the procedure.

Stefan Schröckenfuchs: I am completely new to the Working Group in place of Helene Bintl and feel somewhat uncomfortable about immediately taking on the role of a troublemaker who asks the difficult questions. I want to do it anyway.

The procedure for the nomination and election process is very difficult for me. In the nomination procedure, the members of the Annual Conferences have to decide from a list of names whom they want to nominate as bishop. These are persons whom, for the most part, they do not know. Nominations are also to be made without discussion. Also at the Central Conference the election is then to be made without any discussion. I do not think that this is helpful. I would therefore like the whole procedure to be stopped. It is true that the Working Group has done a great job in fulfilling a mandate from the Central Conference to develop a transparent procedure. But we now have to conclude that we are not making satisfactory progress in this way. I can also formulate this in a motion, but first I would like us to talk about it.

Jörg Niederer: We have already discussed this in the Working Group. Some were in favor, others against. We were commissioned as a Working Group by the 2017 Central Conference to carry out a transparent nomination process, and we have been preparing this over the past few years. What Stefan is addressing is a very fundamental question about this process.

Bishop Streiff: We have to look up what the Central Conference actually decided. In the original regulations it said that there is no nomination procedure.

Lea Hafner: I don't really know which is better. But we have done a job. Therefore, we should stay with the previous decision.

Bishop Streiff: What are the arguments of the Working Group for the elaborated nomination process?

Jörg Niederer: We have tried to design the process in such a way that it is recognizable that each and every ordained elder is eligible. If no one is known on the list, no one needs to be on the nomination list. No one need nominate, but newly any voting member of an Annual Conference may nominate. This nomination makes it known to those nominated that they are candidates for the office of bishop. Therefore, they may consider this possibility at an early stage.

Stefan Schröckenfuchs: Do you really think that someone is willing to accept the election just because he/she is on the list as a nominated person? You say that the list should remain open as long as possible. However, I believe that it is already very narrowed only by the fact that the persons are too little known in the Annual Conferences.

Bishop Streiff: It would be interesting to hear whether such a list would be of help in countries other than Switzerland or Austria. In Switzerland, we know each other and can assess who might be considered. But we have to ask what would be helpful for the smaller conferences to find out who could be elected as bishop. Is such a process helpful or not for the small conferences and their country representations?

Daniel Sjanta: For us in Serbia it is clear that we are starting from a bishop from the German-speaking area. We have contacts in Switzerland, so we can get an idea of who we can nominate.

Štefan Rendoš: I think Stefan asked an important question. We don't know other pastors from other countries. But the Working Group has done a good job. Therefore, we should continue as we have planned.

Ivana Procházková: We see it the same way and would like to continue with this nomination process.

László Khaled: We do not know what will happen in November of next year. It will only become clearer at the Central Conference. Whether this process will be helpful in the Annual Conferences is difficult to predict.

Henrik Schauer mann: I have two opinions in my chest. On the one hand, we have worked out a process that can help us. But on the other hand, I wonder if we will even find people who will accept an election. It will be a question whether a qualified nomination is possible.

Rares Calugar: I think it would be most helpful if we just had nominations from Switzerland.

Marjan Dimov: It is difficult for me to say something about it. I don't know all the people. There should be a reduced list of candidates.

Jörg Niederer: In the end, we don't have a shorter list, but we have a list in which some of the people are nominated. From that point of view, this is then also a reduced list.

Bishop Streiff: We will have to clarify this question at a later date. So we can also still find out about the exact wording of the order.

We are going to lunch break.

Friday, October 22, 2021, 12:45 p.m.

Lunch at the Lion's Garden Hotel, Budapest

Friday, October 22, 2021, 2:00 p.m.

Plenary session at the Lion's Garden Hotel, Budapest

Online meeting with the European bishops

via Zoom

Bishop Streiff welcomes the bishops from Europe who have joined via zoom: Christian Alsted, Harald Rückert and Eduard Khegay.

Christian Alsted: Thank you very much for allowing me to be with you. I would like to send greetings from our Central Conference. It is good to be with you. As bishops, we have a good relationship and a regular exchange with each other, which is very helpful at the moment.

In North Eurasia Episcopal Area we are in the process of relaunching the Church after the pandemic. We need to relearn what mission means in this context. I have heard from our superintendents that people are not just running back to church. Those churches that had a lot of new members are having to start all over again in some cases. Families with children in particular are among those who tend to stay away at the moment. Obviously, during the time of the pandemic, they have found other ways to spend Sunday together. This is not an easy time for our leaders. I try to tell them not to compare too quickly to the earlier time. We need to and can consider what we should and want to do. The Church is God's Church and in His hands, just as it was before. But there are also many positive signs in this difficult time of the pandemic. On the other hand, Latvia, for example, is again in a lockdown, so we cannot hold services there at the moment.

As for the further development and situation in our church, many are wondering when and if the General Conference will take place and what that would mean for us. Some conferences are standing close together and are eager to see what the future will look like. However, it will be clear that we will not continue as it had been before. The differences are very great.

Bishop Streiff: What meetings and encounters can you have at the episcopal area level? We are just now realizing how important it is that we can be together, that we can meet. What does that look like in your area?

Christian Alsted: Our Central Conference is divided into two parts, Northern Europe/Baltic and Eurasia, where Bishop Khegay is responsible. We can only meet twice a year at the Central Conference level. The last meeting would have been planned last November, but we could not hold it because of the pandemic, as we could not travel. In Finland, it was possible for pastors to meet occasionally.

Serge Frutiger: With regard to the division in the church, do you also have a kind of round table?

Christian Alsted: Yes, we have. The third and last meeting will be after the General Conference and before the Central Conference. The financial situation makes it difficult for us to meet physically. Therefore, these meetings will take place online. The talks have started well. However, it will be very difficult for us to be able to stay together. The conversation is mainly about how the time after the separation should look like.

Bishop Streiff: Thank you very much for the insight you have given us into your episcopate. I now ask Bishop Kheday to speak to us.

Eduard Kheday: Thank you very much for allowing me to be with you. We are also very affected by the pandemic. I try to encourage people as much as I can. We have a message of hope, and that is what sets us apart from the world.

In Russia, the corona situation is currently very bad. In July, we had a peak with about 20,000 infections per day. Currently we have 36,000 infections. That's why the government has decided to have a one-week lockdown starting next week. A month ago we had 800 deaths a day, now we have over 1,000. There are also many people affected by covid in our communities - community members, family members and friends have fallen ill and some have died. The number of vaccinations in our country is not very high and is only about 32% of the population. For us to get to 50%, we need more than half a year at the current rate of vaccination. In the other countries of my episcopal area, the numbers are even lower. I have been fully vaccinated since June, and so I try to visit the communities. In doing so, I notice how happy people are about it. I was also able to visit district meetings. In Moldova, we were able to rebuild the church after great difficulties. The pandemic has also made it difficult for the partnerships with Methodist congregations in the USA to be lived.

We are trying to go the way of a traditional, conservative church and participate in the preparations of the Global Methodist Church. So we have a place to be involved and find a home when the church splits. My bishopric is very conservative. We cannot approve partnerships of homosexual people.

We are often in prayer, realizing that the pandemic is making the current situation worse. Zoom is good, but we are now also a little tired of zoom.

Bishop Streiff: Thank you for this insight into your experience. Are there any questions about the Eurasian Bishop's Area?

Rares Calugar: Moldova is very close to Romania. We even have the same language. What exactly is the work there - and is there a possibility for cooperation?

Eduard Kheday: Many parishes in Moldova were founded by missionaries at the time. The problem, however, is that once the pastor leaves, there are no other connections and the congregations often fold again. We have just restarted the work and hope to deepen the contact after the pandemic. Perhaps even cooperation with Romania would be possible - in terms of events, theological education, discipleship, etc.

Bishop Streiff: If there are contacts between you, I welcome this very much. I am just happy to be informed about it so that we can be helpful to each other.

Bishop Streiff: Thank you very much Bishop Eduard for your report. We move on to Bishop Harald Rückert from Germany.

Bishop Rückert: Also from my side I would like to send warm greetings to you. It is important that we can be together right now. I would like to share some things with you. We are now living in a post-Corona era. In Germany 69% are now vaccinated once or twice. We are starting to feel like we can move more freely again. However, the number of hospitalized people still needs to be taken into account. It is always necessary to adapt to the current situation. This summer, for example, we were still completely online for the North German Annual Conference. A short time later, however, we were able to hold the East German Annual Conference as a face-to-face event. The largest Annual Conference in Southern Germany took place online during three days, followed by a day with the closed session of pastors, personal meetings as well as a beautiful ordination service. Most of the meetings can currently take place on site again.

Our handling of the pandemic in the congregations is similar to what Christian Alsted told us. We also realize that many pastors and lay people are fatigued. But we have a hope and therefore we are looking forward. For this year, our finances are still relatively good, but that could change next year. We need to find a new normal and cannot just go back to what once was. We have communities that closed in the pandemic and others have grown. It is comparable to the time before the pandemic.

With regard to our dealings with homosexually sensitive people, it is our will that we stay together. We do this in diversity and love. But we are also concerned with issues related to social justice. We try to do what we can.

At the 2017 Central Conference, there was a request to merge all conferences, with the intention that the structures become more flexible and streamlined. Every change also evokes opponents.

It is gratifying that we currently have four new church foundations in process.

A great challenge is the calling of new pastors. We do not have enough of them. In the Southern Conference, we have only five people for 20 congregations that need a pastor. On the one hand, many pastors are currently retiring. But there are also resignations and serious illnesses and even deaths in the ministry community. This situation is very difficult for us. We need to find new ways of being church with fewer pastors. This also requires the willingness to make difficult decisions. This is a great challenge for us.

Bishop Streiff: Thank you very much for your report. Are there any questions?

Markus Bach: What is the current situation with the Covenant?

Harald Rückert: The quick answer is that the federal government is on the right track. But we are in a process and have to develop further. There is a great span in our conference.

For example, there is not only the community covenant, but there have also been weddings of homosexual couples in some churches.

600 people currently belong to the Federation, 30 pastors, but 20 of them are already retired. Seven congregations are also part of it. But it is important to us that they are still part of the EMK. We want to belong together, even if it is not easy. It takes many conversations, prayers, listening and a mutual approach to each other to make this possible.

Ullas Tankler: You said that we have to find a new normal. What does that mean in your context?

Harald Rückert: That's difficult to answer. Some said in 2020 that we could just go back to the old familiar. But that didn't turn out to be true and didn't work. We are in a process of learning what we need, what is relevant and what is unnecessary. For example, we have also had to painfully realize that we are not "system relevant." Truck drivers and locomotive engineers are important. But the church is not relevant. We have too often been concerned only with ourselves, and this is now a bit of a response. It will be important that we not just stay in our church bubble, but become relevant to society again. We are not at the end of our thinking about how to move forward. We have determined that we need to engage in a rediscovery of mission. How do we win people to the joyful message of Jesus Christ?

Bishop Streiff: Many thanks also to you, Harald. I now ask three people to pray for the three bishops, their area and the people. The prayer may be in their own mother tongue. God will be able to understand it.

Prayers.

Bishop Streiff: Before we move on to the next items on the agenda, I would like to briefly inform you about what we found out when studying the decisions of the 2017 Central Conference on the nomination process with regard to the election of a bishop. In a first decision, the Central Conference decided that the Regulations of the Central Conference should state that a nomination process may be made: art. 4.2 "The Executive Committee may establish a preparatory process for the election of a bishop." A second resolution instructed the Executive Committee to adopt a transparent process for the election of bishops: "The Central Conference instructs the Executive Committee to establish and implement a preparatory transparent process for the election of a bishop. " The first resolution is a regulation that has been incorporated into our Central Conference regulations. The second resolution is a mandate to the Executive Committee, and we must provide information on how we have dealt with it.

Report on the European Methodist Council (UMC) (Report 3.5)

represented by Margarita Todorova

Bishop Streiff welcomes Margarita Todorova via Zoom. We can talk about the two reports this way.

Margarita Todorova: What is important for us at the UMC is that we can meet each other again locally. We have a spring meeting and a fall meeting. We plan for the future to have one meeting online and the other as a face-to-face event. The fall meeting just took place - but still online due to the pandemic. Topics of the meeting were climate, migration and peacebuilding.

I would like to point in particular to videos made by young people on climate change:

<https://worldmethodistcouncil.org/resources/>

The Executive Committee notes with thanks the report on the European Methodist Council.

Report on the World Methodist Council (WMC) (Report 3.4)

represented by Margarita Todorova

Margarita Todorova: With regard to the WMC, I can remain brief because no meeting has taken place. I have pointed out the essential things in the report.

The Executive Committee notes with thanks the report on the World Methodist Council.

Bishop Streiff: Thank you very much for giving us information about these two bodies.

We're going to take a break.

Friday, October 22, 2021, 4:30 p.m.

Plenary session at the Lion's Garden Hotel, Budapest

Working Group Liturgy (Report 2.2; 2.2.1; 2.2.2)

by Stefan Weller, Chairman of the Working Group

Bishop Streiff welcomes Stefan Weller via Zoom to discuss his report.

Stefan Weller: Thank you for allowing me to be with you in this way. I am unfortunately not able to be with you due to other commitments. I wish you a blessed meeting. You have read my report. You have seen that the group has changed somewhat. We have

stopped our work in the meantime for the reasons I mentioned. I have also already announced that I will be stepping down as chair of the group. One of our questions is what the Executive Committee plans to do with regard to the future of our Working Group.

Bishop Streiff: I would like to go along your report. The election for the Working Group will take place at the Central Conference. Until now, the Working Group was purely German-speaking. This has now changed. Please take note of that and look for a suitable person for this Working Group.

Bishop Streiff: The second concern is the German translation of the Alternate Pieces for the Lord's Supper from the Book of Worship. Are there any questions about that? If not, I ask you to vote on it.

The Executive Committee unanimously approves the German translation of the Alternate Pieces for the Lord's Supper (Great Thanksgivings) from the UMC Book of Worship and recommend them for use in congregations.

Bishop Streiff: Even though there are now many German speakers helping out for the International Worship Forum in Stuttgart, it is important to remember that it will be conducted in German and English. Are there flyers for this?

Stefan Weller: Yes there will be a flyer which will be published at the beginning of next year. I want to emphasize again that the forum will be bilingual. There will probably be many made up events next year. Nevertheless, we hope that we will have enough registrations.

Stefan Schröckenfuchs: How many visitors do you expect?

Stefan Weller: We expect 100 permanent guests and 20 day guests each.

Bishop Streiff: I would ask Markus Bach to let us know how we can do that with the budget request.

Markus Bach: We still have more than CHF 10'000 available in the total budget for all Working Groups from the last four years. Therefore, we do not have to take a higher amount into the budget and can use the money according to the request if we approve the request.

Bishop Streiff: Can you, Stefan still tell us, if that's a fixed amount or more of a deficit guarantee?

Stefan Weller: We will also make an application to the Central Conference Theological Education Fund (CCTEF). This application will be submitted through the Reutlingen Theological College. If the money from the Central Conference is not needed then, we will of course not call it.

The Executive Committee unanimously approves € 4'000.- as contribution of the CC CSE for the realization of the International Worship Forum from October 13-16, 2022 in Stuttgart.

Lea Hafner: Thank you very much for your great work.

Bishop Streiff: Thank you for being with us.

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

On a common future within the Central Conference of CSE (Report 1.7, Parts A-C)

by Bishop Patrick Streiff

Bishop Streiff invites us to continue working on the document "On the Common Future within the Central Conference of CSE". We will deal with sections A to C. In these sections we try to show what we agree on and what our different views are:

Part A: On same-sex partnership and marriage

The *bishop introduces* this section.

Markus Bach: For me, this compilation is helpful. It makes it clear that we don't disagree on everything but tries to describe where the difference lies. That helps me.

Bishop Streiff: I have tried to write fairly what we have in common with each other and what we do not have in common.

Part B: On pastoral ministries by persons living in a same-sex covenant for life

The *bishop introduces* this section.

Ivana Procházková: I have a question: Does the reference to transfer between conferences correspond to the current Church Discipline?

Bishop Streiff: It corresponds to the current wording in our Church Discipline. However, the handling in the different Annual Conferences may vary somewhat.

Stefan Schröckenfuchs: We should also consider that the Church Discipline only mentions this aspect of homosexuality as an excluding criterion for ordination.

Bishop Streiff: In the BoD, there is only this one situation where a General Conference article can overrule a decision of the closed session of pastoral members of an Annual Conference. Other criteria were deleted in the 1968 union of churches (for example, the use

of alcohol or smoking - whether a pastor drinks alcohol or smokes is now his or her personal responsibility). The criterion of same-sex love is treated differently (these changes are described in a footnote in the Book of Discipline that extends over two pages).

Part C: Consequences of the two disputed issues

The *bishop* introduces this part.

Bishop Streiff: I have deliberately written more concretely and pointedly here than the "protocol" formulates it. The "protocol" is formulated pragmatically, so that one can separate. In my opinion, however, the Christian call to be one precludes us from separating for pragmatic reasons. There is really only one reason for separation: when we are convinced that the other group is no longer true Church of Christ. But I would never say that about the Global Methodist Church.

Daniel Sjanta: What is said here in point 7 is actually what is said by certain people, that a church which accepts homosexuality can no longer be the church of Jesus Christ.

Etienne Rudolph: I thank you for this theological vision. It really describes the situation in France. But how can I teach this to our Church in France? It is not about me, but about the question of unity. I don't know if we can find a way to go here.

Bishop Streiff: I can accept it when people describe a view as so existential that they have to separate from those who have a different view. But it is very difficult for me when people want to separate from us, but then hold on to the fact that we can bless each other for their respective path with God - as if the old church from which they are leaving is still the true church of Christ. In my understanding, however, a separation can only be legitimate if we do not see the other church as the true church of Jesus Christ.

Rares Calugar: I have a hard time with that statement. If we stay together with different opinions, it hinders us in our mission. There are also examples in the Bible of people separating. I have to ask myself: What is important to me? The mission in my country or unity with others? If we put the mission in our own country in the foreground, it does not mean that we would no longer perceive the others as the Church of Jesus Christ. For the mission in our country, this attitude is crucial. I do not deny that the UMC in Germany is Church of Christ, it is their understanding of mission. My vision relates to my country alone.

Stefan Schröckenfuchs: I will try to look at the question from another side. In Austria, we were dealing in the World Council of Churches with the question of whether we want to accept the New Apostolic Church. One of the member churches emphasized that this church was so far away from them that it was difficult for them to do so. The differences are too great, she said. I prefer to ask how we can stay together even though we have different opinions. Separation is never a good thing, but sometimes it is necessary. Maybe my opinion is not so crucial. If some say they can be together under this order, I don't

want to deny at the same time others that they are part of Christ's church. We are all sinners and must learn to deal with it.

Bishop Streiff: I would like to make one additional comment: If it were only a question of church order, then we would have to change the order so that it helps us to fulfill the mission. We need an order that helps us to live our mission in different cultures.

Stefan Schröckenfuchs: Perhaps that would be squaring the circle.

Jörg Niederer: Jesus' prayer for unity emphasizes that the world recognizes that God's love is infinite. That is important for me, that the world recognizes this love. I cannot imagine that through a separation this love becomes recognizable. In every separation there are victims, that bothers me. I hear it from both sides: We want to separate because the other side is wrong. We are much more likely to see the splinter in our neighbor's eye than the beam in our own eye.

Rares Calugar: Does the unit also mean a structural unit? I see it differently.

Jörg Niederer: For me, it's part of it.

Stefan Schröckenfuchs: Sometimes we are also wrong and do the wrong thing.

Bishop Streiff: But then we should not glorify it. Every separation is fraught with guilt.

Bishop Streiff: We will end the discussion here so that we can have dinner. We close with a moment of silence and prayer.

Friday, October 22, 2021, 6:00 p.m.

Dinner at the Lion's Garden Hotel, Budapest

Friday, October 22, 2021, 6:00 p.m.

Round table at the Lion's Garden Hotel, Budapest

Friday, October 22, 2021, 8:30 p.m.

Evening prayer at the Lion's Garden Hotel, Budapest

Lea Hafner and *Barbara Büniger* give an evening prayer. This can be found in the appendix to the minutes.

Minutes of the Executive Committee of Saturday, October 23, 2021

Unauthorized translation - original in German

Saturday, October 23, 2021, 9.00 a.m.

Morning reflection at the Lion's Garden Hotel, Budapest

Ullas Tankler gives a morning devotion on the Kingdom of God and how it can intervene in our lives. It is attached to the minutes.

Saturday, October 23, 2021, 9:30 a.m.

Plenary session at the Lion's Garden Hotel, Budapest

Oral report from the round table of the CC CSE

Stefan Schröckenfuchs, Co-Chairman

Stefan Schröckenfuchs reports on the round table from the previous evening. The planned 60 minutes were not enough. In summary, we can see a way forward. We have discovered that we can have a basis for the future on the basis of a common covenant in which we promise to be for and with each other. Work still needs to be done on this covenant and on what the church order should look like. We have also been thinking about the office of bishop in our communion and have discovered how demanding it is to be a bishop in our Central Conference.

The Round Table will continue to work on what a covenant might look like that we are intentional about entering into with one another. We have determined that there needs to be a group to think about the question of how to deal with the church order.

Bishop Streiff: I suggest that we deal with this question, after talking about a group for the formulation of the church order, as it is foreseen in the next item. However, it will be helpful if this issue is addressed by a group other than the Round Table. It will be important that this group be composed of different cultures.

The roundtable will be able to meet physically because of our approval of the budget. I'm sure that will be helpful for you guys as well.

László Khaled: Can you tell us where we can find the current church order?

Urs Schweizer: You can find it on our homepage www.umc-cse.org under documents of the German speaking area. Please note that the Church Order consists of the first four documents.

On a common future within the Central Conference CSE (Report 1.7, Part D)

by Bishop Patrick Streiff

Bishop Streiff introduces the last part of the document on the common future in the framework of the Central Conference of Central and Southern Europe.

Part D: Helping to deal respectfully with differences that are important, but not fundamental matters of doctrine and ethic

Bishop Streiff introduces item 8.

Daniel Sjanta: That looks good on paper. But the question remains in the room, what exactly will the promise look like? Can or must we define a limit beyond which we can no longer be a church together? The issue of homosexuality is, after all, just one topic about which we think differently. I also often hear that a discussion should be ended by referring to the regulation by the church order. And if we do not want to use the church order, the question arises why we have it.

Bishop Streiff: We have tried in the USA to resolve the conflict with regard to dealing with the issue of homosexuality with the church order. But now we can see that a rigorous enforcement of the church order does not lead to unity.

Daniel Sjanta: That is also my experience. Through this approach, the conflict was brought into our Central Conference. If we want to solve conflicts through the church order, it will not work.

Jörg Niederer: We need to be able to talk about how helpful the church order is for us to be together. What helps us all? What should be part of a binding common church order. And what should be fixed or adapted depending on the situation in a single country.

Bishop Streiff: We need to find out what is the center of our life as Methodists. John Wesley formulates it in the "Marks of a Methodist" with the double commandment of love. This is how Methodist identity becomes visible. We need more of these discussions about who Christ is for me and you and how he defines our lives.

Ivana Procházková: The conflict in our different views comes mainly from the fact that we have to distinguish between subjectivity and objectivity. On the one hand, we have an understanding of objective truth, such as the Bible. But we live this objectivity in a subjectivity that can be very different. Nevertheless, we always invoke objectivity. To be able to overcome the conflict, we have to find an "inter-subjectivity" in which we define our attitude together. This is not an objective truth, but it stands, since it is supported by a community, above the respective subjective truth of an individual. The difficult question will be whether we can find and accept God's truth detached from our own subjectivity in an inter-subjectivity.

Bishop Streiff: It's helpful to hear about how we can find each other.

Bishop Streiff introduces item 9.

Markus Bach: Are there comparable situations within our Central Conference to the UMC in Switzerland, where opinions on this topic are so broadly and differently represented? We did a survey in our congregations a year and a half ago with regard to the attitude towards homosexuality and found that the congregations were divided on both sides. We

had a scoring system from 0 to 10, and most people ranked themselves at the extremes, 0 to 2 and 8 to 10.

Bishop Streiff: I have the impression that the differences as they exist in Switzerland are not so great anywhere else, even if there are definitely differences, as for example in the Annual Conference of the Czech and Slovak Republics. In Serbia, North-Macedonia and Albania, the differences are also great, but mainly in society.

Henrik Schauer mann: I agree with the description in point 9. But regardless of whether we are talking about a church-dividing or non-church-dividing difference in how we look at the topic, I notice that conflicts always arise when a topic becomes a taboo subject. It is always difficult to deal with a subject when one does not dare to express one's opinion because one does not want to attack or defend oneself. It must be possible for us to live and communicate our attitudes.

Rares Calugar: I can also imagine that it is difficult when conservative and liberal opinions clash, for example, in decisions about ordination.

Stefan Schröckenfuchs: A helpful sign in Christianity is the cross. It goes from top to bottom and from left to right. And in the middle is the Crucified One, who holds everything together. We have to accept that we have different opinions. We have to learn to deal with the fact that we are not all the same, even in the same church. Because of this, there are difficult situations of misunderstanding and lack of understanding, and we must learn to deal with them. It would be much easier to establish a church where the issues are definite and clearly determined. The image of the cross helps me to deal with this situation. Especially when it seems to almost tear us apart.

We're going to take a break.

Saturday, October 23, 2021, 11.00 a.m.

Plenary session at the Lion's Garden Hotel, Budapest

Bishop Streiff introduces item 10. With the options, in which fundamental way in the church order should be worked on further, all presents evaluate each individual option with their cards in *yellow* (→ for this I can warm up, here it is bright) or in *blue* (→this suggestion leaves me cold; I do not want to pursue it).

- Delete all qualifying statements on marriage and same-sex relationships in the Church Order (e.g. CC Germany).

Bishop Streiff: The more western countries show the yellow card, the eastern countries the blue one. Personally, I think that this option is not helpful for us because it divides between us and does not bring us together.

Stefan Schröckenfuchs: I am bothered by the term "all" in this option.

Marjan Dimov: In North Macedonia, people ask me about the opinion and attitude of our church. They want to know how the church thinks about something. We don't have a translation of the Church Order, and most of us have no idea what it says. Nevertheless, it is important that we make a statement about marriage. But we can't have two different definitions of marriage in it. But we can't delete everything either.

Ivana Procházková: I see this option as helpful.

- Mention of two different understandings of marriage in the church, both of which may be celebrated (e.g. Methodist Church in Britain).

Some show their attitude with the yellow or blue card and others with both colors.

Markus Bach: I chose yellow for the situation in Switzerland and the blue color in view of the situation in the Central Conference.

Lea Hafner: I would rather paint everything, therefore blue.

- An open understanding of marriage (covenant between two adults) with protection of traditional conscience beliefs (ex. One-Church-Plan GC 2019).

The majority shows the blue card.

- The traditional understanding of marriage (covenant between a man and a woman) in principle, but enabling to expand it with allowing blessings where state legislation allows same-sex partnerships or marriages and the UMC in the country opts for it

The western countries show yellow, the more eastern countries show blue or mixed.

Barbara Büniger: I am actually in favor of it, but I miss a reference to the issues in dealing with ordination.

- For whatever CC-CSE Discipline: enable internal at the level of an Annual Conference or a District Conference for an individual country? (Such internal regulations may become an important document for an UMC in a specific country in its ecumenical interaction with other churches in the country).

Daniel Sjanta: What is the difference with the previous option?

Bishop Streiff: They are close to each other. The difference is that in the 4th option a traditional understanding is assumed, whereas the formulation in the church order does not

play a role in the 5th option. The Central Conference would have to give the Annual Conferences the freedom to find their own regulation independently of the Church Order.

There are some yellow, also mixed and few blue cards.

Jörg Niederer: I have chosen the yellow card. But I am not sure whether this option is really as open as it is formulated here. After the previous options, which were rejected by a majority overall, I find it hard to imagine if the church order would say: Each Annual Conference can decide for itself how to decide on Human Sexuality. After all, this contradicts statements that are now in the Church Order and should remain there.

Markus Bach: I see the difference above all in who ultimately decides what one's own understanding of marriage and dealing with homosexuality should be. In this option, that will be the Annual Conference. In the previous one, it remains a decision of the Central Conference.

Bishop Streiff: Every regulation must also show limits to where freedom goes.

Markus Bach: Can we compare this with the situation in Switzerland in dealing with the law on religion? When modern Switzerland was founded in 1848, there was a great religious dispute between the Reformed and the Catholic cantons. It would not have been possible to enact a law on religion for all of Switzerland because every formulation would have been opposed by either one side or the other. That is why there is now only one sentence in the Federal Constitution, that religion is a competence of the cantons. Each canton must regulate this for itself. But it may not abolish religious freedom.

Bishop Streiff: That is an interesting comparison. Perhaps it could help us further?

László Khaled: Maybe we could also compare it with the situation in the European Union?

Bishop Streiff: The comparison would also fit here, because the EU gives its countries the freedom to decide freely on religious matters. Nevertheless, religious freedom applies to all countries in the EU as well.

László Khaled: I have chosen both colors. On the one hand, this option is interesting to pursue because there is independence for each country. But it also makes it difficult to live with the fact that there are then completely different versions in dealing with homosexuality. It is also difficult that we let everyone do what they want.

Henrik Schauer mann: I, too, chose both colors because I don't see exactly how that can work.

Barbara Bün ger: For me, it would be important where and how we will continue to discuss these issues together. By discussing these questions now, I experience that our relations are deepening. Because we have to listen to each other here and clarify our thoughts, we are also growing together. If we delegate everything to the annual conferences, we lack this growing together. The fact that these issues confuse us so much shows that the rift

between us is deeper than I always thought. If we are looking for a solution now, we also need to change the way we interact with each other. One example is our way of sitting, where we are divided into West and East. It is also a question of the number of delegates so that we can discuss at eye level. Are we really divided by the answers or rather by those who tell us what is right or wrong?

Marjan Dimov: I also showed both cards. The blue card in view of the situation in Northern Macedonia, the yellow in view of the international situation of the Church.

Stefan Schröckenfuchs: I have no idea what this option could look like in concrete terms without the qualifying remarks on marriage and same-sex relationships being deleted. How is it supposed to work then, that each conference can do what it wants, without just the church order giving a corresponding freedom for it? Maybe I don't understand everything either.

Ivana Procházková: I would like to formulate something provocatively: If we separate because of different attitudes, we can continue to "play church". But if we really want to be church and live unity, we have to live the truth. We then need a common understanding of mission, and the question of the goal of our mission. We can indeed say: It is God's kingdom and his justice. But we need to be able to talk about what we mean by that without dividing or splitting. If we divide, each side can only "play church." But if we learn to live a unity in diversity, we come closer to the truth. This common truth must be the goal of our mission.

Bishop Streiff: I understand you to say that unity is the highest goal for us as a church. I heard something similar in Germany when the two different sides promised not to let go of each other despite their differences. They promised not to let each other go.

Rares Calugar: But isn't this way of being church also "playing church"?

Daniela Stoilkova: In what way does this option help us to continue being Central Conference together?

Bishop Streiff: In our church order, we don't have any specifications of what each country must have. But we have countries where something is important for their mission. In order for them to go their way, they need a clear regulation on how they want to deal with such issues.

Daniela Stoilkova: From that point of view, I can't see any negative impact of this option on being together in our conference.

Henrik Schauer mann: This option is different from the 4th option. There the church order makes a statement about marriage, but not here in the 5th option, where each JC decides for itself how to regulate this question. This results in a difference in that in the 4th option a conference would have to decide against a general understanding of the central conference. In the 5th option, it can define for itself how it understands it, without having to be against another position.

Jörg Niederer: That would then speak for option 1 again, that we would have to remove certain statements from the church order.

László Khaled: I would rather not change anything in the church order, but at the same time give the countries the right to change something for themselves.

Bishop Streiff: What I hear from Henrik and from you is not quite congruent for me. We need to get deeper into this discussion to find what is really helpful for us. We don't have to decide now. But it will help us decide what direction we might go. It will also be a question of what guidelines and frameworks we want to give when we allow each other freedoms.

Daniel Sjanta: We must also consider what is allowed within our worldwide church.

Bishop Streiff: We will always find people who tell us that what we are doing is not allowed. There are from both sides. Therefore, we should not ask too much about that, but we have to start from what we recognize as helpful for us.

Bishop Streiff: In section 11 I show that the General Conference decides on the BoD. But the Central Conferences have a possibility of adaptation, as far as the special circumstances and the mission of the church in their area requires it. How far the rights of adaptation go, and which parts of the Church Order are not adaptable, has not yet been conclusively clarified. However, the basic bodies of the church are considered to be the Annual Conferences. This connexional structure of the UMC has its challenges when important but not fundamental differences arise within the church, but it can also offer its opportunities as long as we do not interpret it in a hierarchical, legalistic way.

Bishop Streiff: We should talk about how we move forward now. Who could and would like to continue working on these issues? We can't all work on it, but need a group to continue working on it.

Markus Bach: Shouldn't we think first and foremost of the working group on church order and legal issues? Daniel Topalski, as chairman of the working group, has indeed informed us that he is not available for this. But there are three other people in this working group whom we cannot simply pass over. They are Serge Frutiger, Wilfried Nausner and Petr Procházka.

Jörg Niederer: I also understood the Round Table as being unable to do this work as well. It needs an additional group.

Stefan Schröckenfuchs: Yesterday we talked about not wanting to put pressure on others. Therefore, we cannot simply pass a paper and then say that we now have peace again. There needs to be the conversation about how we can come to an agreement and how that should be done. But nobody actually wants to start a big discussion about this. At least we in Austria do not want to do that.

Daniela Stoilkova: It is also a question of when this question will be included in our conferences. We have to consider this very carefully.

Bishop Streiff: What we need is an order that gives the conferences the possibility to find a solution that helps their mission. We need a form for this in which conferences do not have to decide against the church order. The question is: can we find a group that can help us in this area? Serge is the only person present from the Church Order and Legal Working Group.

Daniel Sjanta: People who are here now should work on this task.

Serge Frutiger: I am here, but I also have to say that I don't know how we could perform this task. I have seen blue cards over and over again when it comes to changing the church order. I don't know how we want to deal with it.

Stefan Schröckenfuchs: Well, I don't see any way that we can make any progress in the round table with these reactions today. It seems that we have fooled ourselves there. I therefore do not want to and cannot continue to lead this round table.

Jörg Niederer: I can already see possibilities. If we were to go through these points again with the knowledge we have gained so far, we would probably see changes in the assessment. We should not give up yet.

Daniel Sjanta: My suggestion would be that we continue to have this conversation with each other, for example monthly or so. We don't delegate it to a group, we work on it together. The roundtable conversation yesterday was very helpful. If we delegate it to a group, we just think afterwards whether they did the job well or not.

Jörg Niederer: I think that's a good idea. We have started a joint process, but probably we still need a smaller group preparing something for a next meeting.

László Khaled: What if we give this task to the Round Table?

Bishop Streiff: I understood the Round Table as wanting to work more on the fundamental understanding of each other. He wants to work on a common vision of being together and not just on a common understanding in dealing with homosexuality. I, too, do not want this one issue to get all our attention.

Barbara Bünger: How about Serge participating in the roundtable with this assignment?

Bishop Streiff: He should not have to take on this mission alone.

Lea Hafner: I make the suggestion that László Khaled takes over the job with him.

László Khaled: I cannot do this because I am already involved in the Round Table.

Bishop Streiff: I see no fundamental obstacle in this.

Stefan Schröckenfuchs: We also have to be mindful of our time constraints. I have the impression that we are actually dependent on an external moderator in the Round Table if we want to make progress. We need a neutral and talented moderator.

Daniel Sjanta: No one is really neutral. I don't know if we can find an external person who can really help us.

Bishop Streiff: With that, we have two concerns before us that we need to clarify. One is the questions of how we want to proceed with our order. We need to figure out what to do with what we have heard now. I suggest that I work with Serge Frutiger and László Khaled to come up with a proposal or proposals that we can then discuss first in the roundtable. In the round table, the discussion can then be held on this. Secondly, we need to find a moderator for the round table. The finances for this can be found. Is it possible that Stefan Schröckenfuchs and Andrzej Malicki are looking for such a person? If you have a suggestion, bring it to the Round Table and tell me what it will cost. I can't suggest a person at the moment.

Stefan Schröckenfuchs: Neither do I. But I want to talk to Andrzej Malicki.

Bishop Streiff: We are really very happy about what you have initiated and carried out so far. We are already in a different place. I can only say clearly that the money for such a moderation is not a problem and is worth it.

László Khaled: I would like to support the thanks to the round table as well.

Ullas Tankler: In the GBGM there are such persons who are trained for this. I can't name any person directly now. But they are there.

We will break for lunch and take up any open agenda items in the afternoon.

Saturday, October 23, 2021, 1:00 p.m.

Lunch at the Lion's Garden Hotel, Budapest

Saturday, October 23, 2021, 2:00 p.m.

Plenary session at the Lion's Garden Hotel, Budapest

Working Group on Episcopacy (Report 2.7)

by Jörg Niederer, Chairman of the Working Group

Bishop Streiff: We will continue with the working group on the episcopate. Before we come back to the question about the nomination process, I have asked Jörg Niederer to first give us an overview of the changed forms.

Jörg Niederer: Most of the changes have to do with the postponement of the Central Conference. In another place we have added the clarification that blank ballots may be cast at the nomination. Regarding the list of ordained elders, we should add that the bishop's office will prepare the valid and purged list of eligible ordained elders and will include this final list in the Central Conference materials.

Bishop Streiff: Thank you very much for your work, which you have now had to do for the second time. If there are no further questions, we will move on to the question of principle concerning the implementation of the proposed nomination process.

Stefan Schröckenfuchs: In order to have clarity as soon as possible about how we want to proceed, I make the following **motion: The nomination process proposed by the Working Group Episcopacy is deleted without replacement. The election of a bishop will take place without nomination.**

Henrik Schauer mann: I support the motion.

Bishop Streiff: Can we take a vote on this?

The Executive Committee of the Central Conference decides with 5 to 4 votes in favor of the motion of Stefan Schröckenfuchs. The other voting members abstained from voting.

Bishop Streiff: This means that the motion is accepted and we will go to the Central Conference in Basel without a nomination process, as in the past. This also means that the motions on the revised documents have become obsolete.

Bishop Streiff: I ask Jörg Niederer to report further from the working group.

Jörg Niederer: In the second part of our meeting, the conversation with the bishop took place. Patrick Streiff looked back on the time since the last executive meeting in Vienna. When traveling was not possible because of Corona, the bishop became more involved in the UMC Switzerland and France, as well as in the restructuring of Connexio, until then, after the vaccination in April 2021, some traveling became possible again. For the bishop, the second postponement of the General Conference in March 2021 was very difficult, because it meant that he will now work much longer as a bishop.

As a Working Group, we asked the question, what if the General Conference should be postponed again? Whenever possible, the bishop should be relieved of his task in this case and not provide for another extension. Even though he himself sees little chance that this could be reasonably possible, out of consideration for him and for Heidi Streiff, this would have to be thoroughly examined. It is very important to Patrick Streiff that a future path of the UMC in the Central Conference of Central and Southern Europe gets on a good track. Only then could Patrick Streiff imagine resigning from the active office of bishop, which would always mean that someone else would experience much more work and burden. One thing is clear: electing a bishop at an extraordinary Central Conference is absolutely impossible. The Church Order is clear and binding here.

Various options for relief were therefore considered:

- A division of labor with a retired bishop.
- An appointment of an executive director/CEO who will partially relieve the bishop.
- The bishop retires and another (European) bishop takes over.

In all these considerations, it depends strongly on whether a clarification is clearly emerging with regard to the future of the Central Conference.

Another possibility seems most promising to the working group: If the General Conference were to be postponed again, an extraordinary Central Conference could be called instead of an ordinary one, at which the questions concerning the future of the Central Conference would be clearly defined and decided upon as far as possible. This would then give Patrick Streiff the opportunity to place his office in other episcopal hands or to be relieved in the process. The convening of such an extraordinary Central Conference could be decided in March 2022 on the occasion of a virtual meeting of the Executive Committee.

In order to further explore and implement these options, with the goal of providing relief to the bishop even if General Conference is postponed again, or to allow for retirement, the Working Group Episcopacy makes the **motion**:

The Executive Committee mandates the Working Group Episcopacy to work with the bishop to plan a course of action in the event of another General Conference postponement.

Bishop Streiff: Are there any questions on that? Are you ready to vote on this motion?

The Executive Committee unanimously approves the motion.

Jörg Niederer: Finally, it remains for us to express our gratitude. Once again, our gratitude goes to Bishop Patrick Streiff and his wife Heidi for their committed and reliable work and their love for the Church, which is also expressed through much sacrifice.

Stefan Schröckenfuchs expresses heartfelt thanks to the bishop on behalf of the Executive Committee. He also expresses a heartfelt thanks to Heidi Streiff. He gives them a chocolate greeting and a voucher for a special dinner next Monday in Budapest.

Bishop Streiff: Thank you very much! But now I also want to thank the Working Group Episcopacy and the chairman very much for their great work.

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

Bishop Streiff: We'll move on to the reports that are still open.

Working Group Women's Work (Report 2.6)

by Monika Zuber, Chair of the Working Group and Barbara Büniger, Coordinator

Barbara Büniger: I have nothing to add and I don't want to drag out the meeting even more.

Lea Hafner: That's a pity. I would like to hear something about your work. You show us so impressively what it means to belong together.

Barbara Büniger: I will be able to report in more detail to the next meeting. There are meetings in the spring and in the summer until then, which we hope to be able to hold. It would be very important that we can meet. Since we meet every three years, we are still on a regular rhythm. It is also good that meetings were possible in the different countries. But also I could not make visits to other countries.

Bishop Streiff: We all hope that these meetings will be possible.

Barbara Büniger: We have a generation change ahead of us. That's a big challenge, because we can't automatically pass on the relationships. We can pass on know-how or structures, but not the relationships. We will still be very challenged there.

The Executive Committee approves the report of the Working Group Women's Work with thanks.

Connectional Table (Report 3.6)

by Stefan Zürcher

Stefan Zürcher: I would just like to point out again the events in November this year on the identity and vision of our church. Please make people aware of this in your conferences.

The Executive Committee notes with thanks the report of the Connectional Table.

In Mission Together (Report 3.7)

by Urs Schweizer

The report is available in writing. There are no questions or additions to it.

The Executive Committee notes with thanks the report of In Mission Together.

General Board of Global Ministries (Report 3.8)

by Andreas Stämpfli

The report is available in writing. There are no questions or additions to it.

The Executive Committee notes with thanks the report of the General Board of Global Ministries.

Report of the European Secretary of the GBGM

from Ullas Tankler

Ullas Tankler: First of all, I would like to express my heartfelt thanks for allowing me to be with you. It was tremendously important for me, and I learned a lot. I would like to share four tips with you:

1. the report of GBGM is separate to In Mission Together (IMT), although IMT is a part of GBGM. I simply want to point out that IMT is a part of GBGM.
2. in GBGM we have changed the system of how financial support will be provided in the future (apart from the Nationals in Mission program). We have in the budget a total amount for Europe that goes into the Fund Mission in Europe (FMIE). From there, the money is then distributed according to the needs throughout Europe. So GBGM supports Europe through the FMIE.
3. we would like to support young people for missionary work, but so far we have found only very few people in Europe who have made use of this offer. There must be young people somewhere who would like to go on a mission trip. Please encourage people in your conferences.

The Institute for Multicultural Ministries is helping us move from a monoculture of whites and for whites to a multicultural for diverse people in our communities. There are some people from your Central Conference who have participated.

Bishop Streiff: Thank you very much, Ullas, for your commitment and the help we always receive through GBGM.

Commission for Theological Education of the Central Conferences (Report 3.9)

from Patrick Streiff

The report is available in writing. There are no questions or additions to it.

The Executive Committee notes with thanks the report of the Commission on Theological Education of the Central Conferences.

Conference of European Churches (CEC) (Report 3.11)

from Daniel Topalski

The report is available in writing. There are no questions or additions to it.

The Executive Committee notes with thanks the report of the Conference of European Churches.

Community of Protestant Churches in Europe (CPCE) (Report 3.12)

by Jørgen Thaarup

The report is available in writing. There are no questions or additions to it.

The Executive Committee accepts with thanks the report of the Community of Protestant Churches in Europe.

CPCE Regional Group South-East Europe (Report 3.12.1)

by Novica Brankov and Martin Obermeir-Siegrist

The report is available in writing. There are no questions or additions to it.

The Executive Committee accepts the report of the CPCE Regional Group South-East Europe with thanks.

Meetings and dates of the CC CSE 2021-2023 (Report 1.9)

from the bishop's office

The *bishop* explains the planned meetings and dates from 2021 to 2023.

Bishop Streiff: In March 2022 we are planning a superintendents' meeting and will probably combine an online meeting of the Central Conference Executive Committee with it. We do not yet know whether it will also be possible to hold a European meeting of the General Conference delegates. It may be that it will be held as an online meeting, but it may not be possible to hold it at all. Please keep these dates of March 23-26, 2022 free. It is possible that a Round Table meeting could also be held then.

Bishop Streiff: What is missing from the list is the European Seminar for Laity in Velletri, Italy, June 11-16, 2022.

Bishop Streiff: Please also note that one day before the Central Conference there will be a final meeting of the current Executive Committee. The members of the current Executive Committee are also invited to the Central Conference, at least as guests, if they have not been elected as members of the Central Conference.

There are no other references to the dates and times.

Bishop Streiff: This brings us to the end of our meeting. Thank you very much for your participation, your contribution. I think that we all felt how helpful our meeting was.

We close with the song "Have faith in God who leads you on paths you do not know".

Afterwards, the bishop will say a prayer and a blessing for the journey.

The Secretary:

Markus Bach

These minutes of the 73rd session of the Executive Committee of the Central Conference of Central and Southern Europe, held in Budapest, Hungary, October 21-23, 2021, were reviewed and declared correct.

The auditor of the protocol:

Lea Hafner and Jörg Niederer

Evening Prayer from October 21, 2021

You are invited to respond by reading what is written in bold

My soul waits for the Lord more than those who watch for the morning, more than those who watch for the morning.

Out of the depths I have cried to You.

O Lord, hear my voice.

With my whole heart I want to praise You.

O Lord, hear my voice.

If you, Lord, should mark iniquities:

**Who could stand? who could stand? I will wait for the Lord,
my soul waits, and in His word do I hope.**

Song: "In Christ there is..."

1 In Christ there is no east or west, in him no south or north,
but one great fellowship of love throughout the whole wide earth.

2 In Christ shall true hearts everywhere heir high communion find.
His service is the golden cord close binding humankind.

3 In Christ now meet both east and west, in him meet south and north.
All Christly souls are joined as one throughout the whole wide earth.

Prayer

Blessed are you, Lord God, creator of day and night:
to you be praise and glory for ever.

As darkness falls you renew your promise to reveal among us the light of your presence.

By the light of Christ, your living Word, dispel the darkness of our hearts that we may
walk as children of light and sing your praise throughout the world.

Blessed be God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit!

Blessed be God for ever.

Reading the Bible: 2 Kings 5 vs 1 to 19

Meditation

This is a well-known story, but it is also a quite surprising one when you look at it closely
because it is full of contrasts, or even contradictions:

- Naaman, leader of the Syrian army, powerful, but he had leprosy!
- A little girl, kidnapped, enslaved, but through whom the story will take a different turn!
- A peaceful letter of recommendation from a powerful king to another king, but whose message is received as a provocation, to search a quarrel!
- A prophet who invites the leader of the army, but does not open the door for him!
- A leader of an army with leprosy who comes full of hope, but who becomes angry when he is not received and hears the prophet's message!
- Servants who normally had nothing to say to their master, but who calm the leader!

- The leader of the army who complies and becomes pure after the 7th time he enters the Jordan, a foreigner who does not know the God of Israel, but who recognizes this God as the only one in all the world!
- Naaman who wants to express his gratitude to the prophet (and not to buy him), but the prophet who refuses (offense of a refusal of a gift?)!
- Naaman who asks permission to take away earth from the land of Israel to make his own little sacred place to worship God alone, but who also asks God's favor when he will have to accompany his King when he goes to worship in the temple of Rimmon!

I told you, a text full of contradictions!

I asked myself what it could mean for me, for us, today.

Ultimately, we cannot verify the historical facts of this story, but to me it is not the historical veracity that is important. I rather wondered what the meaning of this text could be – beyond the historical facts.

What can **we** learn: about ourselves, about others, about God?

Well, first of all, that we are surrounded by a lot of contradictions in our lives as well. In us there are sometimes contradictions that turn around and that we sometimes don't know what to do with. Isn't life made up of aspects that are contrary to each other, that we have to go through without necessarily trying to solve them, but simply accepting them? Or even learn to live with them? This is undoubtedly part of this learning process of self-knowledge and of our limits! And this can lead to living certain contradictions as being salvific!

Then, about others: they also can live in contradictions, can even be part of our own contradictions! Here again, those around us, whoever they may be: someone insignificant like a little slave girl, someone important like a king or a prophet, people like servants... in short, the people we meet, that we rub shoulders with, that sometimes we like, sometimes not at all, sometimes we don't even know them or not really, all these people may have something to tell us! And this at the very heart of our contradictions!

Here again, there are saving contradictions! Are we ready to be attentive to others, to those whom we meet, whom we cross paths with, whom we accompany?

Finally, on God: Doesn't he sometimes reveal himself in the midst of the contradictions we experience? Have you ever lived situations that are full of contrasts and contradictions and suddenly a certainty appears to you? Is it not God speaking to us? This God who accompanies us in our life, in our contradictions and who in his patience and love reveals to us possible paths, ways where life is at the center because he is the God of Life?

As an Executive Committee, as a Central Conference, we have issues and situations that are sometimes complex and full of contradictions...

Our Church itself is going through such situations...

What will be our response?

May God help us to take responsibility for our decisions!

Amen

Silence

Expressions of faith

Lord, You have always given bread for the coming day;

and though I am poor, today I believe.

Lord, You have always given strength for the coming day;

and though I am weak, today I believe.

Lord, You have always given peace for the coming day;

and though of anxious heart, today I believe.

Lord, You have always kept me safe in trials;

and now, tried as I am, today I believe.

Lord, You have always marked the road for the coming day;

and though it may be hidden, today I believe.

Lord, You have always lightened this darkness of mine;

and though the night is here, today I believe.

Lord, You have always spoken when time was ripe;

and though you be silent now, today I believe.

The Lord's Prayer

Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as in heaven.

Give us today our daily bread. Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us.

Lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil. For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours now and for ever. Amen.

Song: Bless, and keep us, God

1. Bless, and keep us, God in your love united,
from your family never separated.

You make all things new as we follow after;
whether tears or laughter, we belong to you.

2. Blessing shrivels up when your children hoard it;
move us then to share, for we can afford it:
blessing only grows in the act of sharing,
in a life of caring; love that heals and grows.

3. Fill your world with peace, such as you intended.
Teach us to prize the earth, love, replenish, tend it.
God, uplift, fulfil all who sow in sadness,
let them reap with gladness, by your kingdom thrilled.

Final Blessing

Lord sometimes we can't sleep because we just don't know what to do. These big decisions are pressing hard. We can't see all the answers but we believe that you are leading us. Help us to hear your voice, help us to see your hand guiding us at every turn. Make the way clear before us and we ask that you would open the right doors for us to walk through. We give it to you again right now, and believe that you are helping us and working on our behalf, even as we sleep.

Lord, You bless us as we rest, restore us as we sleep,
You care for us as we drift off and make our dreaming sweet.
You are the safest place, You are the God of Grace
Forgiven, loved and held by you is each small seed of faith.
You know our thoughts and feelings
You see our deep desires
You understand our weariness.
You walk beside us every day
You stay with us all through the night
On you we can depend.
That is why we trust in you tonight and forever.

Etienne Rudolph

Unauthorized translation - original in German

Morning Devotion from October 22, 2021

GREETING

God said: Let there be light; and there was light.

And God saw that the light was good.

This very day our God has acted! Let us rejoice!

Alleluia! God's name be praised!

SONG (MORNING HAS BROKEN)

PRAYER

Let us pray together.

New every morning is your love, great God of light, and all day long you are working for good in the world. Stir up in us desire to serve you, to live peacefully with our neighbors and all your creation, and to devote each day to your Son, our Savior Jesus Christ. Amen.

PSALM

Psalm 5: To the choirmaster: for the flutes. A Psalm of David. (ESV)

¹ Give ear to my words, O LORD;
consider my groaning.

² Give attention to the sound of my cry,
my King and my God, for to you do I pray.

³ O LORD, in the morning you hear my voice;
in the morning I prepare a sacrifice for you and watch.

⁴ For you are not a God who delights in wickedness;
evil may not dwell with you.

⁵ The boastful shall not stand before your eyes;
you hate all evildoers.

⁶ You destroy those who speak lies;
the LORD abhors the bloodthirsty and deceitful man.

⁷ But I, through the abundance of your steadfast love, will enter your house.
I will bow down toward your holy temple in the fear of you.

⁸ Lead me, O LORD, in your righteousness because of my enemies;
make your way straight before me.

⁹ For there is no truth in their mouth; their inmost self is destruction;
their throat is an open grave; they flatter with their tongue.

¹⁰ Make them bear their guilt, O God; let them fall by their own counsels;
because of the abundance of their transgressions cast them out, for they have rebelled against you.

¹¹ But let all who take refuge in you rejoice; let them ever sing for joy,
and spread your protection over them, that those who love your name may exult in you.

¹² For you bless the righteous, O LORD; you cover him with favor as with a shield.

A moment of silence and reflection

**SONG (O LOVE THAT WILL NOT LET ME GO)
SCRIPTURE**

John 14:15-31 (ESV)

¹⁵ "If you love me, you will keep my commandments. ¹⁶ And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Helper, to be with you forever, ¹⁷ even the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees him nor knows him. You know him, for he dwells with you and will begin you.

¹⁸ "I will not leave you as orphans; I will come to you. ¹⁹ Yet a little while and the world will see me no more, but you will see me. Because I live, you also will live. ²⁰ In that day you will know that I am in my Father, and you in me, and I in you. ²¹ Whoever has my commandments and keeps them, he it is who loves me. And he who loves me will be loved by my Father, and I will love him and manifest myself to him."

²² Judas (not Iscariot) said to him, "Lord, how is it that you will manifest yourself to us, and not to the world?" ²³ Jesus answered him, "If anyone loves me, he will keep my word, and my Father will love him, and we will come to him and make our home with him. ²⁴ Whoever does not love me does not keep my words. And the word that you hear is not mine but the Father's who sent me.

²⁵ These things I have spoken to you while I am still with you. ²⁶ But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, he will teach you all things and bring to your remembrance all that I have said to you. ²⁷ Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you. Not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your hearts be troubled, neither let them be afraid. ²⁸ You heard me say to you, 'I am going away, and I will come to you.' If you loved me, you would have rejoiced, because I am going to the Father, for the Father is greater than I. ²⁹ And now I have told you before it takes place, so that when it does take place you may believe. ³⁰ I will no longer talk much with you, for the ruler of this world is coming. He has no claim on me, ³¹ but I do as the Father has commanded me, so that the world may know that I love the Father. Rise, let us go from here.

Time of prayer and reflection.

We will finish with the Lord's Prayer.

SONG OF BENEDICTION (LEAD ME, LORD)

BENEDICTION

The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all. (2 Cor 13:14)

from: A Liturgy for Morning Prayer, adapt. I UPPER ROOM WORSHIPBOOK

Daniel Sjanta

Evening Prayer from October 22, 2021

The Bible says: In everything, give thanks to God, because that is the will of God for you in Christ.

"Speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord, giving thanks always for all things to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ." EPHESIANS 5:19-20

Therefore let's do what we are asked to do and start with the well known song:

Song: "Give thanks with a grateful heart..."

After a long day with many discussions, worries and trying to understand, but also with many good conversations and reports we will now thank our Lord with a grateful heart. Let us pray:

Dear God,

Thank you for your amazing power and work in our lives, thank you for your goodness and for your blessings over us.

Thank you that you are able to bring hope through even the toughest of times, strengthening us for your purposes.

Thank you for your incredible sacrifice so that we might have freedom and life.

Thank you for your great love and care. Thank you for your mercy and grace. Thank you that you are always with us and will never leave us.

We give you praise and thanks, for You alone are worthy!

Now you are invited to a personal prayer in silence. After that I will conclude your thanksgiving. (short time)

Heavenly Father,

Forgive us for when we don't thank you enough, for who you are, for all that you do, for all that you've given. Help us to set our eyes and our hearts on you afresh.

Renew our spirits, fill us with your peace and joy and love for one another. Amen

In addition to praise and thanksgiving, Ephesians also speaks of encouragement. This is also important. All the more so as we all struggle to find a common path as Central Conference.

Therefore, we ask you to take a piece of paper and write one or two encouraging sentences on it. You can do this in your own language. Afterwards, each of you may take out a piece of paper again. If you don't understand the language in which it is written, you can use a dictionary later or ask someone to translate. Let the encouragement of your brother or your sister in Christ accompany you as a gift into the next week.

Let us close this long day with the song: "May your life on this earth..."

Lea Hafner / Barbara Bünger

Morning Devotion from October 23, 2021

Theme: Kingdom of God – Interruptions

Prayer: Psalm 148

Song Taize: The Kingdom of God

Biblical texts

Luke 19:5 When Jesus came to the place, he looked up and said to him, "Zacchaeus, hurry and come down; for I must stay at your house today."

1 Thessalonians 5:1 Now concerning the times and the seasons, brothers and sisters, you do not need to have anything written to you. 2 For you yourselves know very well that the day of the Lord will come like a thief in the night.

Matthew 13: 44 "The kingdom of heaven is like treasure hidden in a field, which someone found and hid; then in his joy he goes and sells all that he has and buys that field.

Acts 3:6 But Peter said, "I have no silver or gold, but what I have I give you; in the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, stand up and walk." 7 And he took him by the right hand and raised him up; and immediately his feet and ankles were made strong.

Mark 2:14 As he was walking along, he saw Levi son of Alphaeus sitting at the tax booth, and he said to him, "Follow me." And he got up and followed him.

What CONNECTS these stories?

One interesting feature that characterizes the Kingdom of God: interruptions happen.

Sharing

One example of how your life has been recently (in the recent months, or the last year) interrupted?

Were you able to see God in the interruption – then or later?

Kingdom of God as interruption

In the West we emphasize planning and timetable and punctuality a lot. In many other cultures people have learned to be much more flexible.

Prayer (Benedict of Nurnia)

Song: Seek Ye First the Kingdom of God

Blessing

Üllas Tankler

II. Directory of Decisions

of the 73rd 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 approves to the new name "Serbia - North Macedonia - Albania" and commissions the Bishops Office to report this change to the Secretary of the General Conference.

Elections

2. The Executive Committee unanimously elects Ben Nausner to the Executive Committee as the new lay member for the Annual Conference Austria.
3. The Executive Committee unanimously elects Serge Frutiger to the Executive Committee as a new pastoral member for the Annual Conference Switzerland-France-North Africa.
4. The Executive Committee unanimously elects Superintendent Ivana Procházková as a member with advisory vote to the Executive Committee.
5. The Executive Committee unanimously elects Markus Hafner to the pension board of the CC CSE

Financial decisions

6. The Executive Committee approves the financial statement 2020 on the basis of the auditor's report, grants discharge to the treasurer and expresses its sincere thanks for the services rendered.
7. The Executive Committee requests CHF 10'000 to be charged to the 2022 budget to allow the Round Table to meet physically once or twice until the regular Central Conference.
8. The Executive Committee approves the 2022 budget.

Decisions for Working Groups / Office of the Central Conference

Working Groups

9. The Executive Committee unanimously approves the German translation of the Alternate Pieces for the Lord's Supper (Great Thanksgivings) from the UMC Book of Worship and recommend them for use in congregations.
10. The Executive Committee unanimously approves € 4'000.- as contribution of the CC CSE for the realization of the International Worship Forum from October 13-16, 2022 in Stuttgart.
11. The Executive Committee of the Central Conference decides with 5 to 4 votes to delete without replacement the nomination process proposed by the Working Group Episcopacy. The election of a bishop will take place without nomination.
12. The Executive Committee mandates the Working Group Episcopacy to work with the bishop to plan a course of action in the event of another General Conference postponement.

The Secretary: Markus Bach

III. Report of the Office

Report of the Office of the Central Conference

1. Presence and Minutes

1.1 Meetings of the Office

The office met five times since the March 2021 Central Conference Executive Committee online meeting: on March 31, 2021; July 7, 2021; August 26, 2021; October 6, 2021 and October 20, 2021.

This report covers the meetings up to and including October 6, 2021. A supplemental report will be provided for the October 20, 2021 meeting.

1.2 Composition of the Office

In mid-May 2021, Helene Bindl, Vice-Chair of the Executive Committee of the CC CSE and by virtue of this function also a Central Conference Office member, has resigned from all her offices at the CC level. Due to the (hopefully) imminent Central Conference, the Bishop does not propose a subsequent nomination.

The CC-Officers express their heartfelt thanks to Helene Bindl for her many years of dedicated service, in which her wide heart and love for the people of the Central Conference have always been noticeable. We wish her much confidence and peace from God for her path.

1.3 Proceedings of the 71st and 72nd sessions of the Executive Committee

The proceedings report of the 71st meeting of the Executive Committee in March 2020 in Vienna (Austria), written by Secretary Markus Bach, has been made available for download on the website of the CC CSE (<https://www.umc-cse.org/en/downloads--links/documents-studies-and-lectures/minutes-cse.html>). An original German version and a version with English texts are available.

The proceedings report of the 72nd Executive Committee meeting of March 2021 (online) will be made available in a joint document at the same place on the CC CSE website after the proceedings report of the 73rd Executive Committee meeting of October 2021 is finalized.

The CC-Officers thank the secretary Markus Bach from the bottom of their hearts for his so valuable as extensive work, which makes it possible to read and comprehend the proceedings and decisions after the respective meetings. Only a few copies will continue to be printed for the archives in the individual countries.

1.4 By-elections

Since the March 2020 Executive Committee meeting in Vienna, Austria, there have been the following changes to the Executive Committee:

Vice Chairwoman:	Helene Bindl	remains vacant for the time until the next CC.
Lay member AC AT:	Helene Bindl	Ben Nausner
Pastoral Member AC CH-FR-NA:	Claudia Haslebacher	Serge Frutiger

Lay member AC CZ-SK: ~~David Chlupáček~~ vacant
Member with advisory vote: ~~Supt. Petr Procházka~~ Supt. Ivana Procházková

The CC-Officers recommend that the Executive Committee elects the above-mentioned persons as new members (in the case of Supt. Ivana Procházková as a member with an advisory vote) and ask the Secretary to thank the persons leaving the Executive Committee in an appropriate manner for their very varied, dedicated and beneficial service to the Central Conference.

Motions to the Executive Committee:

- 1. Election of Ben Nausner (AC AT) as new lay member.**
- 2. Election of Serge Frutiger (AC CH-FR-NA) as new pastoral member.**
- 3. Election of Supt. Ivana Procházková as a new member with advisory vote.**

1.4 List of deceased (March 2020 to October 2021)

Liljana Sjanta (RS), † 29.6.2020, delegate to the CC 2001, 2005, 2009, 2013

Lothar Pöll (AT), † Sept. 16, 2020, delegate to CC 1985, 1989, 1993, 1997; WG Children + Youth 1981-1985; WG Mission + Evangelism 1985-1989; member of Executive Committee 1989-1997 and 2013-2016; Secretary of Central Conference 1997-2009; Judicial Court 2017-2020.

Martin Hovan (RS), † Oct. 13, 2020, delegate to CC 1973, 1977, 1985, 1989, 1993; member of Executive Committee 1973-2001; WG Liturgy 1981-1985; WG Social Issues 1985-1989.

Willy Wiesendanger (CH), † Aug. 14, 2021, WG Children + Youth 1973-1981 (Chairman 1977-1981); WG Media + Communication 1993-1997 (Chairman)

At the next Central Conference, there will be a memorial service for all those who have died since the 2017 CC.

1.5 CCPI CC-CSE Pension Board

The board of pension is composed of the members of the CC-CSE Council on Finance and Administration with the addition of one person who has additional expertise on pension plans and calculations. The latter position has been filled in a very helpful way by Marcel Rügger since the creation of the CCPI CC-CSE Pension Plan. As he has changed his professional work a moment ago, he has asked not to be re-elected for a new quadrennium but is willing to continue up to the meeting in spring 2022.

The board of pension nominates for election Markus Hafner who has professionally been an employers' member in Boards of Pensions and fulfills this role also at present in the pension foundation to which the UMC in Switzerland belongs. He is also – together with his wife Lea – the conference lay-leader and member of the church council of the Annual Conference Switzerland-France. He has participated at the spring-meeting of the CCPI CC-CSE Pension Board meeting in 2021 and has become familiar with the new task.

Motion to the Executive Committee:

The Executive Committee elects Markus Hafner to the CCPI CC-CSE Pension Board.

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

2.1 Meeting of the Executive Committee in October 2021

Place and implementation

Initially, it was planned to hold the meeting of the Executive Committee in Bratislava. It then became apparent that the local leaders would be happy to cede the meeting venue to another country, and that at the same time the UMC in Romania would have well-suited meeting rooms available through the takeover of the hotel in Cluj with a long-term rental agreement. The CC-Officers therefore agreed to changing the meeting venue and set the corresponding planning in motion in June 2021 – before it became known that the local leadership of the churches in Bulgaria, Romania and the Slovak Republic were taking the first structural steps with a view to separating from the Central Conference CSE by creating an "Eastern Europe Chapter" of the Wesleyan Covenant Association.

At the end of September 2021, the number of cases of covid infection increased dramatically in several countries, including Romania, so that the CC-Officers had to reassess the situation. The CC-Officers considered it important to be able to physically hold the meeting and to ensure that, as far as possible, all those wishing to continue working on a common future for the CC would also have the appropriate travel permits. It turned out that this is possible in Hungary. As a result, the CC-Officers decided at short notice to set Budapest as the venue for the Executive Committee meeting, but to forego meetings with local churches. Therefore, the meeting of the Executive Committee will take place without church services on Sunday, which is why the return trip is already possible on the second half of Saturday afternoon. The meeting is scheduled to last until 14:00.

Finalizing the program

The Preliminary Program for the 73rd Session of the Executive Committee was made available to all members and guests by mail and via Dropbox and was accepted by the CC-Officers as presented. The list of reports (Report 1.0) was finalized.

The agenda and a schedule of meeting times for the Executive Committee meeting can be found in the annex to the report of the Office (Annex 1.1.1). It will be decided by the Office in advance of the meeting and will be available at the meeting.

Spiritual events

The office has asked the following persons to provide a spiritual input:

Thursday,	14.00 h	Spiritual opening	Bishop Patrick Streiff.
	20.15 h	Evening Prayer	Etienne Rudolph
Friday,	9.00 h	Morning Devotion	Daniel Sjanta
	20.30 h	Evening Prayer	Lea Hafner and Barbara Bünger
Saturday,	9.00 h	Morning Devotion	Ullas Tankler

Country reports at the Executive Committee meeting

The CC-Officers request the following individuals to provide a country report during the Executive Committee meeting:

Czech Republic: Ivana Procházková, CZ

Hungary: László Khaled, HU

There will be 15 minutes each for the report and 15 minutes for questions and prayer.

Assignments for the meeting

The CC-Officers commission the following individuals:

As assistant to the CC 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

Provided that the General Conference is held as planned from 29.8.-6.9.2022, the next Central Conference will take place in November 2022. As usual, the members of the Executive Committee will meet in advance, probably starting on Tuesday afternoon, November 15, 2022.

The 19th meeting of the Central Conference of Central and Southern Europe will be held in Basel from Wednesday afternoon, November 16, 2022, to Sunday, November 20, 2022. During the week, we will meet in the Zwinglihaus in Basel. Since Bishop Patrick Streiff will retire at this meeting, the election of a successor will take place (see also the report of the WG Episcopacy). The consecration of the new bishop is scheduled to take place early Sunday afternoon, November 20, 2022, in Basel Cathedral. The office asks all CC delegates to plan their departure only after this service, so that participation in the consecration is possible.

The conference theme already decided by the Executive Committee, "**The fruit of the Spirit is...**" (drawing on Galatians 5:22) is to be retained even after the postponement of the Central Conference meeting to November 2022.

2.3 Meeting in March 2022

At this time, a Superintendents' Meeting is being considered for March 23-26, 2022. The CC-Officers ask the members of the Executive Committee to keep the time from Friday noon March 25, 2022, to Saturday noon March 26, 2022, free for a possible online meeting in order to be able to discuss important matters in the run-up to the General and Central Conference on short notice, if necessary.

3. Financial Issues

3.1 Statement 2020 of the Central Conference and Auditor's report

Iris Bullinger presents the financial statement of the Central Conference for the year 2020 (see Annex 1.2). It closes with a surplus of CHF 18'450.21.

The Auditor's report of the auditor, Adrian Wenziker, on the financial statement 2020 has been submitted in writing (see Appendix 1.3).

Motion to the Executive Committee:

The Executive Committee approves the financial statement 2020 on the basis of the auditor's report, grants discharge to the treasurer and expresses its sincere thanks for the services rendered.

3.2 Budget 2021

The CC budget was expanded from a quadrennium (2017-2020) to a quinquennium (2017-2021) in April 2020. The revenues and expenditures to be budgeted for 2021 were increased on a straight-line basis by one quarter of the quadrennium budget. This 2021 budget was approved in writing in April 2020.

3.3 Budget 2022

Due to the renewed postponement of the General Conference to 2022, the CC-Officers present a budget for 2022 to the Executive Committee in the extended budget 2017-2022 (see Annex 1.4). In doing so, revenues and expenditures have been increased again by another year of 25% (similar to 2021). In contrast to 2021, however, the costs for a Central Conference of CHF 60'000 are included.

Motion to the Executive Committee:

The Executive Committee approves the 2022 budget.

4. Statistical data within the Central Conference

4.1 Compilation

The Bishop's Office submits to the Executive Committee a compilation of statistical data based on the 2020 Annual Conferences (see Appendix 1.5), i.e., it is the statistical data as of December 31, 2019(!). In practically all countries, the statistical figures are collected in a comparable framework. In this respect, this compilation provides a helpful overview, even if it is not yet complete.

Since 2021, Annual Conferences have also been postponed to the fall and in some cases will not take place until after the Executive Committee meeting, the data as of December 31, 2020 are not yet available here.

4.2 Forwarding of statistical information and AC journals to GCFA

On behalf of the General Conference Council on Finance and Administration (GCFA), the CC-Officers request the secretaries of the Annual Conferences to send the journals of the Annual Conferences including statistics **directly** to the GCFA. Personnel information that may not simply be disclosed and made available to the public due to applicable privacy policies may be deleted in advance. The GCFA will then make the minutes available electronically to all General Conference Agencies who need them.

Journal AC 2020 incl. statistics: Upload on <https://bit.ly/GcfaData2020>

Journal AC 2021 incl. statistics: Upload on <https://bit.ly/GcfaData2021>

The Bishop's Office should receive **two printed copies of** each of the minutes.

5. Boundaries and names of the Annual Conferences

5.1 New District Conference

In 2019, the Serbia-Macedonia Annual Conference decided that Albania should become a third district of the Annual Conference. Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, not all steps to constitute the district could be completed, but the process to do so is well underway.

5.2 New name of the Annual Conference

As a consequence of the step mentioned under 5.1 and due to the political decisions on the official country name "North Macedonia", the Annual Conference shall now be called "Serbia - North Macedonia - Albania".

Motion to the Executive Committee:

The Executive Committee approves the new name "Serbia - North Macedonia - Albania" and commissions the Bishops Office to report this change to the Secretary of General Conference.

6. World Methodist Council

At its March 2020 meeting, the Executive Committee gave the CC-Officers the authority to determine the outstanding nominations for the "new" World Methodist Council (2021-2026 or for an adjusted term). The following persons are now to represent the CC CSE in the new term:

- The newly elected bishop
- David Field (CH)
- Superintendent László Khaled (HU)
- Johanna Fazekas (RS)
- Murielle Rietschi (CH)

However, the meetings of the World Methodist Council (including the World Methodist Conference) scheduled for summer 2022 have been postponed to a currently unknown date due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

7. Historical overview of the CC CSE

Bishop Patrick Streiff has previously pointed out that the Book of Discipline of The United Methodist Church is preceded by a Historical Statement, but that such a text is missing from the Discipline of the CC CSE. Since historical knowledge of origins and common heritage can quickly be forgotten, Bishop Streiff has written an appropriate text. The whole picture of the various predecessor churches and their mission should become visible. The CC-Officers are now submitting this text to the Executive Committee (see Appendix 1.6) and are asking its members for their thoughts and comments. A revised version is to be presented to the members of the 2022 CC for approval. Subsequently, the text is to precede the Discipline of the CC CSE.

8. Future of the UMC in the CC CSE

8.1 Round Table

The Round Table, approved in March 2021, has so far met three times online under the moderation of Superintendents Stefan Schröckenfuchs and Andrzej Malicki to work towards the goal of drafting a common vision and mission for the way forward. Representatives from Austria, Poland, France, Hungary, Serbia, North Macedonia and Switzerland as well as the coordinator of the Women's Service in the CC CSE have participated in these discussions. The CC-Officers request that Round Table members may meet physically once or twice prior to the regular Central Conference if deemed helpful and purposeful for joint work by their chairs.

Motion to the Executive Committee:

The Executive Committee requests CHF 10'000 to be charged to the 2022 budget to allow the Round Table to meet physically once or twice until the regular Central Conference.

8.2 Pan-European Working Group on the Future of the UMC in Europe

Especially in Northern Europe, the wish had arisen to form a European working group already before the General Conference in 2022 in order to be able to exchange ideas with regard to the General Conference and to a common future of the UMC in Europe. However, the interest in this was limited in other conferences. Therefore, in late summer 2021, it was decided not to pursue this idea further (see report 3.1). For the CC CSE, the Round Table has priority.

8.3 Establishment of an "Eastern Europe Chapter" of the WCA

In July 2021, Bishop Streiff was informed by board members of the formation of an "Eastern Europe Chapter" of the Wesleyan Covenant Association (WCA). According to the Bylaws, this is an organization for members of the WCA in the area of the Central Conference of Central and Southern Europe. Daniel Topalski was elected as executive director ("president"). The superintendents of Bulgaria, Romania and Slovakia are among the members of the chapter's board. Bishop Streiff has asked Daniel Topalski to comment on this formation at the Executive Committee meeting (Report 3.3).

Bishop Streiff has made it clear to both Eastern Europe Chapter board members and non-members that he views this formation as a first structural step toward separation. He notes the formation with regret. The members of the Eastern Europe Chapter will remain members of the UMC and the Central Conference until the official decision on withdrawal or separation and accordingly also voting members of the corresponding bodies. At the same time, the bishop will see to it that those who continue to work for a common future in the Central Conference are given appropriate support in order to be able to develop viable solutions. He has, therefore, also pledged his full support to the members of the Round Table in their joint process. He also proposes that, until further notice, meeting places for CC working groups should be selected in countries that continue to be interested in a common path for the CC, in order to promote common relations among them.

8.4 Thoughts of the Bishop on the common future of the Central Conference

Bishop Streiff has informed the CC-Officers that he will bring a text on the common future of the Central Conference to the Executive Committee meeting. The document is nourished by his experiences and conversations in the different countries. It is intended to help prepare variants for shaping the Discipline of the CC CSE until the Central Conference in 2022 with the involvement of those countries that are interested in a common future (see Appendix 1.7).

8.5 Structural and financial consequences of separation

The association "Hilfe im Sprengel" (the legal entity of the CC CSE) has prepared a document on what a split of the UMC would mean in structural and financial terms. This text is based on the assumption that the 2022 General Conference will agree to the "Protocol of Reconciliation and Grace" as currently written, and that the 2022 CC CSE will not decide to leave The United Methodist Church by a two-thirds majority. The CC-Officers submits this text to the Executive Committee for its information (see Appendix 1.8).

Markus Bach, Secretary

“Consensus-Based Discernment”

On some topics during the executive meeting in Vienna, the Bishop would like to use “Consensus-Based Discernment”. The deliberation model is inspired by experiences of the World Council of Churches and the World Methodist Council. The Bishop has not yet used it but would like to test it with the option to use it again on certain topics in the central conference meeting in March 2021.

Consensus-based discernment – as understood here - does not mean that a final decision is taken unanimously. It is rather a process of exploring a topic that allows engaging with each other and assuring that each one is heard until it is time to take a decision. When the decision is not unanimous, those opposing or abstaining will testify that their arguments have been heard and seriously considered by everyone.

Goals

- Allow enough questions so that a topic is well understood by every member
- Enhance participation and dialogue, including relevant facts and feelings
- Encourage prayerful listening to all voices, seeking to meet the legitimate concerns that others express
- No member need feel pressured into an unacceptable position
- Manage with courtesy, respect and grace discussions where participants bring deeply held, contending perspectives on matters at the heart of their Christian convictions
- Limit the possibility of domination by any participant or small group
- Explore creative alternatives
- All the considerations are weighed up, taken into account, and possibly incorporated into a proposal before a decision is made
- Encourage decisions to go forward when most are agreed, limiting the power of a few to obstruct decisions

Practices

- Use cards to monitor the mind of the group
- Use of small groups and mixing up people in table groups
- Hearing many times from a minority
- Delegate a group to go and draft new words
- Time out for prayer or silence
- Deferring a decision if not yet ready

If a session uses the "consensus-based discernment"

The bishop will announce whether a session is following regular proceedings of deliberation and decision or the "consensus-based discernment".

In "consensus-based discernment", members will use "Indicator cards".

We will use two colours:

- Yellow: indicating warmth towards an idea and acceptance that there is "light" in it
- Dark Blue: indicating coolness towards an idea and disapproval as being "dark" and not helpful

After a speaker has finished his or her remarks, the members will hold discreetly one of the two indicator cards at their table, indicating the support for the point of view expressed.

If members consider it is time to move on or that the sharing becomes repetitious, they hold the two indicator cards crossed at their table. If a majority does so, it shows a willingness to move forward.

Historical Statement of the Central Conference of Central and Southern Europe

Remark: The BOD begins with A Brief History of the United Methodist Church. The Central Conferences in Europe have developed historical statements that reflect in more detail the history of the UMC and its predecessor churches in their area. The CC-CSE has not yet had such a historical statement. It seems wise to write such a statement in a situation where we do not know what the future will bring as changes to the present CC-CSE. This draft has taken up elements (rarely as exact quotes) from the BOD (brown), the CC-NE&EA and the CC-GE (both green) and added the specifics for the countries of the CC-CSE.

Ecclesial Heritage of Methodism

The ecclesial heritage of The United Methodist Church is rooted in a renewal movement in the Church of England in the 18th century. Before, in the early 1500s, various reform movements emerged in Europe that created forms of western Christianity known as Protestantism, and no more in communion with the Roman Catholic pope. They emphasized a return to the sources of faith: that is, God's action in salvation and Scripture as the authority for doctrine and practice. In England, it was shaped into the particular identity of Anglicanism.

During the late 1600s, renewal movements, often referred to as Pietism, emerged in Europe, emphasizing the Christian experience of new birth, sanctification, societal transformation, and small groups. The movement affected most confessions including Lutheran, Reformed, Anglican, and Anabaptist. Expressions of this movement included the philanthropic and missional work of August Hermann Franke (Germany), the growth and expansion of Moravianism under the leadership of Count Ludwig von Zinzendorf (Moravia), the Religious Societies begun by Anthony Horneck (England), all of which influenced the emerging Methodist movement under the leadership of John Wesley (1703-1791) and his brother Charles (1707-1788).

For all their lives, both Wesley brothers remained faithful priests of the Church of England and considered her as the best of all churches. Early in their theological studies, they decided to live a holy life, pleasing to God. It was their conversion to holiness, loving God with all their heart. In Oxford, the older brother John led a movement of students and they were called – among other nicknames – the “Methodists”. Under the leadership of John and together with Charles and a few other students, they decided to go to the American colonies as missionaries to the Natives. They encountered groups of Pietists. Discouraged in their ministry, both brothers Wesley returned back to England and again met Moravian missionaries, who were preparing to travel to the American colonies. Under their influence, Charles and John Wesley both experienced being reconciled with God by grace alone. They had discovered justification by faith. John felt his heart “strangely warmed”, filled by love from God in a way that transformed him

from a zealous preacher to a love-filled evangelist of Good News to the Poor. It was their second, evangelical conversion.

Another former student among the Methodists at Oxford, George Whitefield, who briefly returned from the American colonies to England, had made a similar experience. He began to preach outside of church buildings in the open field to poor miners, soon gathering several thousands. Many responded in repentance of their sins and wanting to lead a life transformed by Christ. As Whitefield planned to return back to the colonies, he called on his former teacher, John Wesley, and his brother Charles to take over with field preaching. It was the beginning of the Methodist renewal movement within the Church of England. **The goal of John and Charles Wesley was "to reform the nation, particularly the church; and to spread scriptural holiness over the land".** 'Scriptural' meant for them: rooted in justification by faith through grace alone. Whitefield was the initiator of this Methodist renewal, but on the long term, the movement which was connected to the Wesley brothers grew more. It became better organized in "United Societies" and smaller "classes", on both sides of the Atlantic. Publications like the collection of Charles Wesley's hymns and John Wesley's sermons, together with a multitude of tracts shaped the identity of the early Methodists.

Methodism in America from 1760 to its mission to the European Continent

Most other Protestant denominations had established themselves in the American colonies long before the Methodists. **Methodism connected to the Wesley brothers began in American colonies rather late through laypeople emigrating to America around 1760.** Among them was a Methodist laypreacher from Ireland (Philip Embury) who had German family origins. **Methodist laypeople soon asked John Wesley to send preachers.** The Wesley brothers never again travelled to America, but John sent two first preachers in 1769. Others followed thereafter, among them Francis Asbury. The American Revolution profoundly impacted Methodism. **John Wesley's loyalty to the king and his writings against the revolutionary cause did not enhance the image of Methodism among those who supported independence.**

When independence from England was won, Wesley recognised that changes were necessary for American Methodism to thrive. As the Bishop of London had refused ordination of Methodist preachers, John Wesley ordained two of them for the work in the newly formed United States of America. He also sent Thomas Coke, an Anglican priest and Methodist, to America for superintending the work with Asbury. Coke brought with him an abridgment of the "Book of Common Prayer" entitled "*The Sunday Service of the Methodists in North America*" and an abridgment of the Church of England's Thirty-Nine Articles of Religion, both prepared by Wesley.

In December 1784, the famous 'Christmas Conference' of preachers was held in Baltimore. Most of the American preachers attended, probably including African American preachers. At this gathering the movement became organized and then known as **The Methodist Episcopal Church in America.** Its name reflected its Anglican heritage in the 'Episcopal Church' with the specific denominator 'Methodist'. Soon the superintendents, Coke and Asbury, were considered the two first bishops of the church. **A first quadrennial General Conference of all preachers was held in 1792, but because of the**

growth of the movement it became a conference composed only of delegates from each annual conference in 1808.

Two other churches were forming in America, which, in their earliest years were composed almost entirely of German-speaking people. The first was founded by Otterbein, a Reformed pastor, and Boehm, a Mennonite. Otterbein had been present at the 'Christmas Conference' and had participated in the ordination of Asbury. Otterbein and Boehm preached an evangelical message similar to the Methodists. In 1800, the movement was organized into the 'Church of the United Brethren in Christ' (UBC). The second church among German settlers was begun by Albright, a Lutheran farmer, converted by the United Brethren in Christ and nurtured in a Methodist class meeting. He wanted to reach out to fellow German-speakers and established a connection of preachers that was officially organized into the 'Evangelical Association' (EA) in 1803.

Early attempts at merging these churches failed. In the USA, the two churches of German background united in 1946 as 'The Evangelical United Brethren Church' (EUBC) with the 'Evangelical Association' (EA) as the smaller partner. The EUBC in turn joined with the much larger 'The Methodist Church' in 1968 to form 'The United Methodist Church' (UMC). On the European continent, all three churches were present, but their sizes and the history of their unions were different.

The Second Great Awakening was the dominant religious development among Protestants in America during the first half of the nineteenth century. Through revivals and camp meetings, sinners experienced conversion. Circuit-riding preachers and lay pastors knit them into a connection. Methodists were strictly guided by the General Rules, published by John Wesley for his 'United Societies' in 1743. They committed to avoid evil, do good, and use the means of grace supplied by God. And they had to be faithful in attending their local small group ('class'). That formed their initial 'Discipline'. Those who did not remain faithful to the 'Discipline' were not renewed in their membership. Through the itinerant ministry of its preachers, the church spread to the people wherever they settled. Annual conferences were the basic body of the church where ordained, itinerant preachers met once a year. General Conference, meeting quadrennially as a delegated body, kept the unity among the annual conferences and edited the 'Book of Discipline' which initially included the liturgy and requirements for ongoing education of pastors.

In the midst of tremendous growth, there were also tensions, especially over episcopacy, race, slavery and lay membership in annual conference that eventually led to several splits. African Americans created separate churches in order to be fully recognised on equal level to white people. In 1830, issues of lay representation and superintendency led to the creation of the 'Methodist Protestant Church' (MPC). In 1844, the issue of slavery led to the creation of the 'Methodist Episcopal Church South' (MEC South), in the southern States of the USA. In 1920, the MEC South began mission in three war-torn countries of Europe where their northern counterpart had not yet been present. In 1939, the three churches (Methodist Episcopal Church, Methodist Episcopal Church South, and Methodist Protestant Church) united to form 'The Methodist Church'. But celebrating this union in Europe was overshadowed by the outbreak of World War II.

In countries that have been part of the central conference of Central and Southern Europe or its predecessors, the British Methodist mission through its Wesleyan Missionary Society (WMS) was present in Austria, France, Germany, North Africa, Spain and Switzerland; the Brethren in Christ (BC) in Germany; the Evangelical Association (EA) in Austria, France, Germany, Poland, and Switzerland; The Methodist Episcopal Church South (MECS) in Belgium, Czech and Slovak Republics, and Poland; and the Methodist Episcopal Church (MEC) in almost all countries of the central conference.

Methodist mission to the European continent

Migration was the most powerful factor in building a web of relationships for Methodist mission. And in most instances, lay people were instrumental in calling for ordained preachers to help organize the work and spread it further. The mission to the European continent began with British Methodists much earlier than with American Methodists. However, British Methodists often kept to the initial aim of reviving personal faith among Protestants on the continent, similarly to their own origins as a renewal movement within the Church of England and the Church of Ireland. American Methodists usually came a few decades later. They were already a church distinct from their Anglican roots and found it natural to establish a Methodist church through their mission endeavours. Therefore, they often waited until civil laws allowed for the presence of a new denomination.

European Methodism began, as migrants, sailors, merchants, soldiers, and others who had encountered Methodism on the other side of the Atlantic, shared the message back home. Ludwig Jacoby joined the Methodists after immigrating to Cincinnati in 1838. He returned to Germany as an ordained elder in 1849 and began gathering a church in Bremen. In 1845, Sebastian Kurz as a lay preacher of the Evangelical Association went back to Germany on a private initiative and began to preach. Olaf Gustaf Hedström, of Sweden, led the mission of the "Bethel Ship John Wesley" in New York harbour for over 30 years, beginning in 1845. Many seamen and emigrants who experienced conversion in the Bethel Ship, then carried the Methodist revival with them to other parts of the United States as well as to their home countries in Northern Europe. Norwegian seaman Ole Peter Petersen, after hearing Methodists in Boston and responding to an "altar call" in the Bethel Ship began preaching to Norwegians and Danes in America and Norway in 1849. Examples could be multiplied. Migration and through it existing personal relationships through families and old and new friendships heavily influenced the direction of the Methodist mission on the European continent.

Hereafter follows a timeline when Methodist mission began in a country of the central conference of Central and Southern Europe of The United Methodist Church, with the following predecessor churches being instrumental in planting Methodism. An end date is given, if the church ended its presence or entered into a larger union of Protestant churches. The ordering is according to the beginning of the mission. The country name reflects present realities:

- France: WMS (1791-1939 → Reformed), EA (1868ff), MEC (1905-35 → Reformed), MEC only remaining in Alsace)
- Belgium: WMS (1816- ca.1839), MECS (1920-69 → United Protestant Church of Belgium)

- Spain: WMS (1834-1839, 1869ff → Spanish Evangelical Church), MEC (1919-1939 → Spanish Evangelical Church)
- Switzerland: WMS (1840-1900 → MEC), MEC (1856ff), EA (1866ff)
- Germany: WMS (1830-1897 → MEC), MEC (1849ff), EA (1850ff), BC 1869-1905 → MEC
- Bulgaria: MEC (1857ff)
- Austria: WMS (1870-1897, → MEC), EA (1929-34)
- North Macedonia: American Board, congregationalist (1873-1921, → thereafter MEC)
- Albania: MEC (1881 / 1920-?), UMC (1998 / 2008ff)
- Algeria: WMS (1886-1919, → MEC), MEC (1908ff)
- Russia: MEC (1889- ca. 1931 // 1990/91ff)
- Poland: EA (ca. 1895-1945), MECS (1920ff)
- Hungary: MEC (1898ff)
- Serbia: MEC (1899ff)
- Tunisia: MEC (1908ff)
- Czech Republic: MECS (1920ff)
- Croatia: MEC (ca. 1923-26), UMC (1995-2006)
- Slovak Republic: MECS (1924ff)
- Ukraine: MECS (ca. 1925ff)
- Kosovo: MEC (1920s / 1937-1970s)
- Romania: UMC (2011ff)

The establishment of central conference(s) in Europe

Methodist churches all had their missionary societies. In the MEC and MECS, women created their own women societies. A mission field was dependent on the missionary society. However, there was a strong intention to encourage indigenous leadership which was much easier in situations related to strong migration. A Mission in a country soon became a Missionary Conference. When there were enough ordained elders, it became an Annual Conference with its own authority to make decisions, but usually still heavily dependent on financial support from the Missionary Society of the mother church. In the early 1900s, some countries came close to self-support like Switzerland and Sweden.

Annual conferences in territories outside the USA wanted to intensify their contact and cooperation with neighbouring annual conferences in their own region and not only relate to the mission board in the USA. In the MEC, this gave rise to the creation of a 'Central Mission Conference', first in India in the 1880s. It developed into establishing 'Central Conferences' in all regions outside the USA. The MECS and the EA adopted very similar patterns of central conferences.

For the MEC in Europe, a 'Central Council of the Conferences and Missions' met for a first time in Berlin in 1895. In 1900, Bishop John H. Vincent became the first Methodist bishop to take up residence in Europe, in Zurich. Under his presidency, a second MEC Congress met in Zurich in 1903. In 1904, William Burt, an American of British origin, former superintendent in Italy, was elected bishop by the General Conference, became responsible for Europe and took residence in Rome. A third European Congress, held in Copenhagen in 1907, adopted a motion to General Conference for

authorizing the organisation of a Central Conference for Europe. A quarterly magazine 'Methodism in Europe' was edited. The very first Central Conference for all of Europe met in Rome in 1911 under Bishop Burt. In 1912, Bishop John L. Nuelsen was assigned to Europe, after a four years term among German speaking annual conferences in the USA. He had been born in Zurich in a first generation MEC preacher's family. He took residence in Switzerland (office in Zurich, but different places of personal residence). As the majority of Methodist members in Europe were German speaking, they appreciated to hear a bishop speaking in their own tongue, for the first time.

Between 1916-20, Bishop Nuelsen received the help of Bishop Anderson, of Scandinavian descent, for the episcopal supervision in the Scandinavian countries, in France, Italy and North Africa. In 1920, General Conference launched an impressive Jubilee mission initiative for strengthening its worldwide outreach. It increased the total number of bishops from 31 to 38 and gave to 17 of them residence outside the USA. Europe now received officially three bishops, two new ones in addition to Nuelsen. At the second session of the European Central Conference in 1922, the three episcopal areas were organized. Somehow – maybe through the effects of World War I – they became, after the General Conference 1924, three distinct central conferences, each with one bishop. Nuelsen became the bishop for the central conference of Central Europe, residing in Switzerland, with the countries of Germany, Switzerland, Austria, Hungary, and, for some years, also Yugoslavia, Bulgaria and Russia. There was a second central conference of Northern Europe with the newly elected Dane Anton Bast as its first bishop for the Scandinavian countries, and, since 1928 also Russia. The third central conference was for Southern Europe with Bishop Blake who took residence in Paris for the countries around the Mediterranean Sea with France, Spain, Italy, North Africa, and, after 1928, Yugoslavia and Bulgaria. In 1928, Bishop Shephard became the successor for Southern Europe. But he died in 1931 while in office. The central conference of Southern Europe was dissolved in 1932 and parts of it came again to the episcopal region of Central Europe as far as mission fields were not given up due to the economic crisis during the 1930s.

Two other important changes happened in the 1930s:

- (1) In 1936, Germany became a Central Conference of its own. By that time, a central conference had received the authority to elect their own bishop and Germany used that new possibility. With the annexation of Austria by Germany in 1938, the Methodist work was transferred to the Central Conference of Germany. These events drastically reduced the countries belonging to the former central conference of Central Europe.
- (2) In 1939, the union of three churches, the Methodist Episcopal Church (MEC), the Methodist Episcopal Church South (MECS), and the Methodist Protestant Church (MPC) took place, forming 'The Methodist Church'. The MECS in Belgium, Czechoslovakia and Poland had also created a kind of central conference, but with bishops residing in the USA. The MPC never had a mission to the European Continent. A 'Uniting Conference' with representatives from all European countries met in Copenhagen in August 1939, but the outbreak of World War II made it impossible to organize the addition of the three countries of the MECS to Central and Southern Europe.

The central conference of Central and Southern Europe, established in 1954

With the outbreak of World War II, the remaining parts of the two central conferences of Central Europe and of Southern Europe were at first related to the South-Eastern Jurisdiction in the USA. Interim bishops took oversight, as far as episcopal visits were possible. They usually took residence in Geneva and the episcopal area became known as the Geneva Area. There were ongoing discussions on how to organize the European field and viable central conferences, linked to tensions towards Germany but also consequences of Communist take-over in countries of central eastern Europe. Finally, the central conference of Central and Southern Europe was officially established in 1954 in Brussels, Belgium.

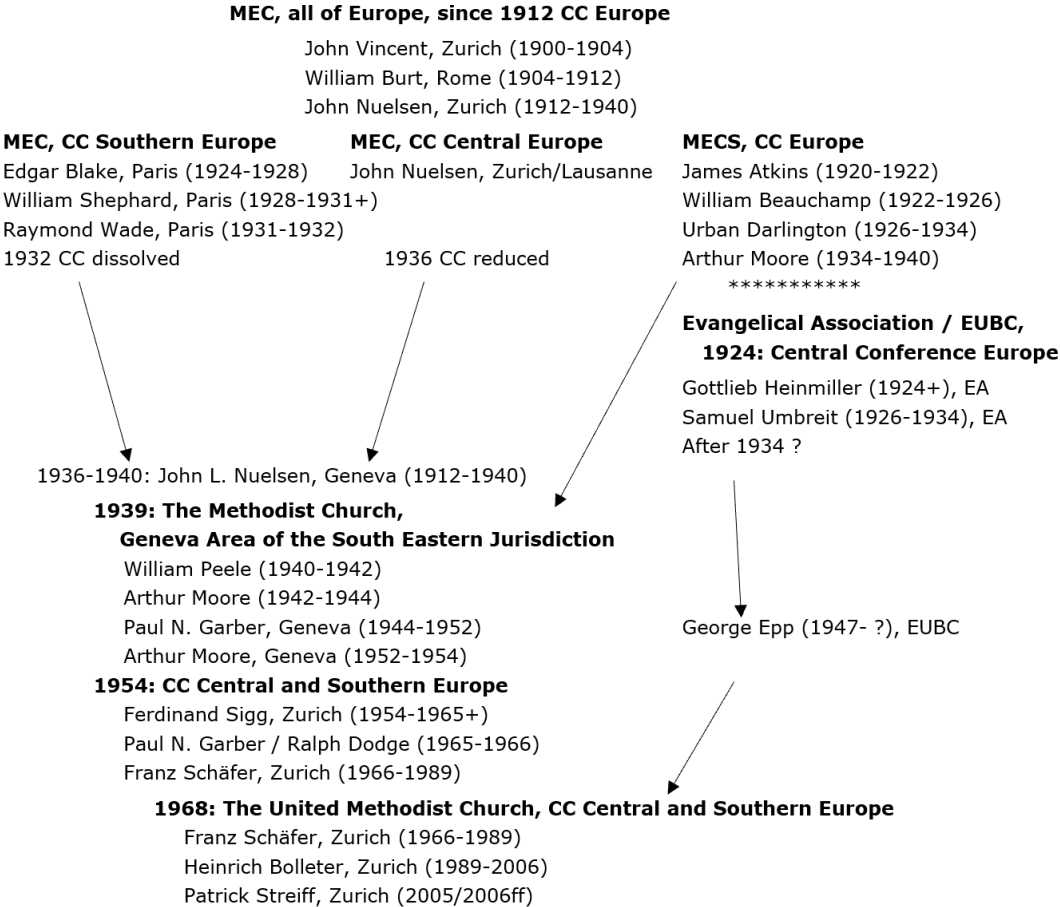
Concerning the formation of central conferences, the Evangelical Association had followed the movement of the larger Methodist sisters. The European field had petitioned General Conference of 1922 to establish a central conference structure for Europe. In 1924, a first central conference of the Evangelical Association for Europe was established with representatives of three annual conferences (North Germany, South Germany, and Switzerland). The presiding bishop always was a US citizen. For a short period he had a residence in Germany, but did not regularly preside at annual conferences. With the world-wide church union of 1968, creating The United Methodist Church, the annual conference of the Evangelical Association for Switzerland and France was united with the annual conference of the Methodist Church in 1972. These were the only two countries where both churches were present within the central conference of Central and Southern Europe. In some regions of Switzerland, the Evangelical Association was numerically almost as strong as the Methodist Church, in France even much bigger.

At its establishment in Brussels in 1954, the central conference of Central and Southern Europe of 'The Methodist Church' was composed of the following countries: Austria, Belgium, Czechoslovakia, France, Hungary, Madeira, Northern Africa (Algeria and Tunisia), Poland, Spain, Switzerland, Yugoslavia, and in principle Bulgaria but without possibility to organize the church under the Communist regime. The bishop again resided in Zurich where an office had remained. The Methodist presence was by far the strongest in Switzerland. Due to its status as a neutral country, stable economy, and very generous Methodist membership, it has had a long history of solidarity with war-torn or otherwise economically much poorer Methodist churches in other countries of the central conference.

The first bishop elected in the newly formed central conference of Central and Southern Europe was Ferdinand Sigg who died in active service in 1965. Travel to communist countries were irregular in that time. Under his successor, Bishop Franz Schäfer (1966-89), travel was mostly allowed to annual conferences, with the exception of Bulgaria. Belgium left the central conference in 1969 for uniting with other Protestant Churches in the country. In March 1989, Bishop Heinrich Bolleter (1989-2006) was elected. No one expected the fast political changes that began in the fall of the same year. In the 1990s, inhabitants of former communist countries in eastern central Europe and the Balkans experienced a revival of interest in faith and joining Christian churches. The presence of the United Methodist Church expanded in the midst of economic and political uncertainties. A new missionary presence began in Albania (in the

1990s) and Croatia (for a limited time), and later in Romania in 2011. All over its existence, the central conference of Central and Southern Europe was a strong means for building relationships between its countries, supporting each other's mission and creating a bond of unity among United Methodists. Since 2006, Bishop Patrick Streiff leads the central conference.

List of bishops with years in supervisory role in countries now belonging to CC-CSE



On a common future within the Central Conference of Central and Southern Europe

Where we come from - Opening remarks

The decisions of General Conference 2019 intended to put in place a Traditional Plan (with legislation not yet completed in 2019) that would have automatically excluded all those from the UMC who would not sign complete adherence. For Central Conferences, the new legislation has not become effective at January 1st 2020, but only with a next central conference acting on its CC Discipline. "Conservative" countries in the CC-CSE did not see a problem with the decisions of the extraordinary GC 2019, whereas more "liberal" parts of the church that opted for a change, were not willing to live under rules that become ever more restrictive. A deep divide became visible also within the CC-CSE.

The executive committee of CC-CSE, in March 2019, finally agreed after much insisting from me as active bishop to continue at least a minimal dialogue and create a study group with at least one representative from each annual conference. In late summer 2019, the study group sent out a consultation paper "Where to go?" for consultation to the church boards of each country. Its leading question was: *"Are you willing to stay within the CC-CSE according to the outline presented here?"* The consultation paper was sent out and responses came in before the publication of a "Protocol on Reconciliation and Grace through Separation and Restructuring" (published in January 2020). The "Protocol" submitted a very different solution to General Conference 2020, supported by all leaders of opposing interest groups in the church, allowing for the creation of a new traditional Methodist Church and separating from the UMC with its own respective assets.

All documents related to the Study Group process, including the summaries of feed-back from each country, - based on a situation before the proposals of the "Protocol" - are published in the minutes of the executive committee of March 2020. Unfortunately, due to the Covid-19 crisis and the lock-down in several countries, attendance at the executive committee meeting in March 2020 was drastically reduced and the report could no more be debated. Shortly afterwards, General Conference was postponed to September 2021. The next executive committee meeting of CC-CSE was set for October 2021 (with postponement of the central conference to March 2022).

In early 2021, the four bishops in Europe developed several documents on how they intend to implement the "Protocol" if it will be accepted by the postponed General Conference. These documents consider seriously the possibility of countries that will decide to separate from the UMC. In March 2021, General Conference was once again postponed to September 2022. A short extraordinary online-meeting of the executive committee of CC-CSE was held (with postponement of the central conference to November 2022). It decided to create a Round Table with representatives of all those countries that want to continue working on strengthening a common work in the CC-CSE.

In spring 2021, the Wesleyan Covenant Association announced its plan to create a traditional "Global Methodist Church" as soon as General Conference has enacted the Protocol.

In summer 2021, an "Eastern Europe Chapter of the WCA" was created within the CC-CSE with individual members of the WCA, lay and clergy – and according to its by-laws possibly also congregations. Among the members of its council are the superintendents of Bulgaria, Romania and the Slovak Republic. As I have clearly stated several times: For me, this act is a first structural step towards separation, not only a discussion group of mutual interest. And I acknowledge that those who join the Eastern Europe Chapter want to invest their energy in working for a future in a new traditional Methodist Church and no more in a common future within the CC-CSE.

Personally, I have always tried to be the bishop of all Methodists in the episcopal area. I have continuously maintained that I see options for staying together in the midst of our differences, if there is a common will and a respectful listening to each other for finding common solutions. I will continue to put my energy and support towards that aim. I regret the deep divide, but respect those who disagree and only see the option of separation. Up to a final decision of separation, they will remain an integral part of the present CC-CSE under the oversight of me as active bishop. The present paper is based on my prayer and search of being the bishop of this whole area and of maintaining – as far as leaders and countries are willing – the "unity in the bond of peace".

My episcopal visitations and dialogues

Do we listen enough to each other? Do I as bishop listen enough? Fortunately, I could again begin to visit some other countries in late spring 2021. Meeting with people gives a different possibility of sharing and listening to each other, deeper and more intensive.

I had an interesting discussion with one of the superintendents who asked me to listen more to the pastors in the country. I was surprised as I thought that I am a careful listener and have a good knowledge of what pastors and laypeople have shared with me. In further discussion I began to realize how tricky the present situation can be: in "traditional" countries, I am regularly asked why others in the West think differently and I try to explain the more "liberal" convictions and the experiences with Methodist families who have homosexual members, and with appreciated, homosexual lay-leaders in our local churches; whereas in more "liberal" countries, I am asked why others in Central Eastern Europe remain so "traditional" and I try to explain the more "conservative" conviction and context. Unawares it has led to a situation where I am perceived as someone who "defends" the opposite view and does not "understand" their own.

In other visits to countries in the episcopal area, I hear again and again concerns and anxieties against changing of the present stance in the Book of Discipline in central Eastern Europe or against keeping everything as it is in some Western countries, in short as follows:

- Our conviction is traditional, and it is the same with all other churches in our country;
- The teaching of the Church needs clarity in fundamental questions of doctrine and ethics;
- The Bible is clear and we should not compromise with truth;

- Even the State Constitution defines marriage as between one man and one woman;
- Western "liberal" thought is seen as a threat, in many countries towards Eastern Europe not only in the religious community but also in the civil community and among political leadership;
- Many (on both sides) would want to stay within the CC-CSE, but not on "any costs" and wonder what the "costs" would be;
- News from the UMC in the USA heighten anxieties about extreme liberal positions and actions that may prevail in a future UMC;
- The mission of the church in their own country shall not be put in danger because of being related to a connectional church that is considered as either "liberal" or strictly "traditional".

Furthermore, my ongoing episcopal visitations confirm how inappropriate labels of "traditional" or "liberal" are. On both "sides", I experience so much excellent missionary ministry in an open Wesleyan spirit. I even experience in several settings in Central Eastern Europe an openness in ministry with the larger community from which more old-standing local churches in Western Europe could learn and get inspired. I also could share inspiring examples from ministries with LGBTQ-Methodists in the West. Labels do not fit for such experiences of the presence and fruit of the Holy Spirit in very diverse settings in the episcopal area. More and more, I am looking whether I see the fruit of the Spirit, the new "cloths" (Colossians 3).

Keeping in mind that there is a high level of mutual respect within CC-CSE and that leaders of one country do not intend to endanger the mission of the UMC in another country, my key question at present is towards all sides who are willing to find a way of staying together in the CC-CSE:

As you strive to continue the mission of the UMC in your own country so that it may prosper, how can you contribute to not endanger the mission of the UMC in another country of the CC-CSE where the context is very different?

And as a consequence (see the last part, section 10) for leaders and countries that are willing to stay together: What options do we have for a future CC Discipline that keeps our connectional relationship and mutual support alive for strengthening our mission in each place?

On Marriage and Human Sexuality (present situation)

Over the last fifty years, first the Social Principles, and later the legally binding parts of the Church Order, have increasingly made restrictive statements about same-sex love. For generations of Methodists, this has now been their church discipline in the UMC.

All such statements are not part of doctrine or doctrinal standards, but of teaching or church government and polity. Furthermore, all such restrictive statements in the Church Order have never referred to a person's homosexual orientation per se, but to the condemnation of sexual relations outside marriage between a man and a woman. The restrictive regulations do not apply to homosexual persons who live in celibacy.

Ordained pastors in full connection are asked, among other things, to support and uphold the church order and polity (see Wesley's Historical Questions for Admission to Full Connection). Many have supported the statements on marriage and human sexuality with full conviction; others (in Western Europe) have indicated either already when such statements were included in the Church Order or when they were admitted as members in full connection with the Annual Conference that they in conscience disagree with them but are willing to respect them and not to act contrary to them.

There have been different convictions of conscience on both sides for a long time. If the common conviction recorded in the Church Order will change, there is a moral obligation to respect the conviction of conscience that was held before. In matters of conscience, changes in the church cannot be accomplished like flipping a switch. Therefore, I add some considerations on how to deal with a possible change in the church order.

Furthermore, the context in which the UMC lives its mission has developed very differently over time. In Central Eastern Europe and the Balkans, it would endanger the mission of the church if a non-traditional understanding of sexual ethics and marriage were written into the church order. In most countries of Western Europe, it would endanger the mission of the Church if the restrictive understanding of the Traditional Plan of General Conference 2019 were to be written into the Church Order. Will we be able to keep our connectional communion (*Koinonia*) in a way that no country is endangered in its mission, but that it enables another country to live a fruitful mission in its context? Will the covenant which has bound us together so far enable us to find a common way into the future?

What we all have in common despite our differences

I only mention this briefly. Any discussion about our differences tends to forget what we have in common. Therefore, in brief what we share in common:

- Our Wesleyan-Methodist heritage (cf. reflections on this heritage in several documents of CC-CSE [in German, but possible to translate into English: CC2009 + Exec2011 on essentials + CC2013 on truth]; cf. also Faith&Order document "Sent in Love" to GC 2020/22;
- A long history of mutual support and solidarity beyond World Wars and political split between East and West; a rich network of relationships through common activities, events, partnerships etc.;
- A connectional structure with a common central conference and a common episcopal area;
- The Constitution of the UMC in the BOD;
- The Doctrinal Standards of the UMC in the BOD, including the Articles of Faith (Methodist Church and EUBC) and the primacy of Scripture;
- The Social Principles of the UMC in the BOD probably have several topics where not all of us agree, but even in the passages on human sexuality they contain many elements on which we agree, with the exception of one passage on marriage and one on homosexuality where we differ;
- The remaining parts of the BOD; with the exception of a restriction on same-sex marriages and a restriction on ordained ministry for "self-avowed, practicing homosexuals", where we differ.

What differences do we have and at what level concerning the unity of the church are those differences?

There are two particular subjects on human sexuality where there are differences among us:

- The definition of marriage;
- The understanding of Scripture concerning same-sex relationships.

Even if the controversy has begun in the 1970's around same-sex relationships, I put the definition of marriage first, as it seems to me that it has a higher ecclesial and doctrinal level. Both topics relate to Christian ethics. Additionally, marriage is an official ecclesial act, regulated with an official liturgy, even if it is not considered a sacrament in the United Methodist Church.

A-D lists the critical areas where we need to achieve clarification – including the option of separating (Part C), even though this will weaken both parts. I have tried in each part to say both, what we have in common and on what we differ. I have tried to present each side in a fair way – others would need to say whether my listening to them has been adequate for presenting their case.

A: On same-sex partnership and marriage

(1) We agree with the whole Christian tradition that the faithful covenant entered into for life between a man and a woman is called marriage and can receive God's blessing in the Church (in all countries of CC-CSE only after a civil marriage unless clergy have also authority of civil servants like in Poland).

(2) We agree that the biblical message condemns any form of sexuality that involves violence, coercion, infidelity, changing partners or children and minors (in Greek NT: *'porneia'*).

(3) What is disputed among us, however, is whether a faithful covenant entered into for life between two people of same sex will continue to be regarded as incompatible with the Bible, because any form of same-sex love is to be regarded as a violation of God's will, or whether such a covenant may also be regarded in the Church as a marriage or marriage-like covenant (using a different title than marriage) that may receive a blessing, because the few explicit biblical passages condemning same-sex acts among men do not concern the same life situation of a covenant for life between two people of the same sex.

B: On pastoral ministries by persons living in a same-sex covenant for life

(4) We agree that the covenant of the ordained in full connection (elders and deacons) of an Annual or Provisional Annual Conference, on the recommendation of the Board on Ordained Ministry, decides whether a person meets the necessary qualifications for pastoral ministry (local pastor, provisional or ordained elder) or diaconal ministry (provisional or

ordained deacon). The decision on this lies within the sovereign authority of each individual Annual Conference. Accordingly, ministry assignments are made only within that Annual Conference and transfers between Annual Conferences shall be made only with the consent of the Bishop and the Chair of the Board on Ordained Ministry.

(5) However, it is disputed among us whether a person living in a same-sex covenant for life cannot fulfil the necessary qualifications because the way of life is considered to be incompatible with the Bible, or whether the same qualifications are necessary for such a person as for a heterosexual person because the few explicit biblical passages condemning same-sex acts among men are not considered to concern the same life situation of a covenant for life between two people of the same-sex.

C: Consequences of the two contentious issues

(6) Furthermore, it is disputed among us whether these differences (A3 and/or B5) have church-dividing consequences (*'status confessionis'*).

If they are seen as a difference in fundamental matters of faith, touching the core of the Christian faith (*'status confessionis'*), that has to do with faithfully being the Church of Jesus Christ, church separation is inevitable, cf. paragraph C7.

If these differences are seen as important, but not fundamental matters in doctrinal and ethical matters (and important in personal conscience commitment in relation to Holy Scripture), any such change in church order needs a respectful handling, rooted in the common confession of faith (see Doctrinal Principles of the United Methodist Church) and in convicted humility, cf. paragraphs D8-11 below.

(7) If these differences are seen as fundamental matters of faith, touching the core of the Christian faith, those separating declare through their act of separating that they do not consider the remaining parts of the UMC as a true Church of Jesus Christ according to the Creeds (otherwise they would not need to separate). Voluntarily separating from a Church means that those separating are convinced of being obliged to cut official connectional relationships to that Church and its leadership because it is no more a true Church of Jesus Christ. You may be willing to keep selected personal relationships, but not official church communion.

D: Helping to deal respectfully with differences that are important, but not fundamental matters of doctrine and ethic

(8) Understanding our difference as important, but not fundamental, means that ecclesial communion can continue and needs to be ordered in a respectful manner. Respectful treatment of non-church-dividing but differing or conflicting convictions of conscience includes:

- An attitude of "convicted humility" on all sides;
- The willingness to express one's own conviction and to listen respectfully to an opposing one;

- The possibility of a joint discussion at the request of both sides to clarify and better understand the similarities and differences;
- The willingness to refrain from any attempt to pressure Methodists with different convictions that they deeply hold;
- As CC-CSE it might be helpful to draw a document that provides “de-escalating” steps in the event of tensions in order to promote or restore respectful interaction and further cooperation.

(9) Different levels at which non-church-dividing differences will be experienced:

- Within the CC-CSE, Annual Conferences hold different views. When an Annual Conference shares a common conviction by a large majority, it respects that the common conviction may be different in another Annual Conference, but both remain united by a common foundation of faith and common cooperation and mutual support within the framework of the Central Conference.
- If within an Annual Conference the associated countries (District Conferences) share different convictions, each country respects that the conviction in the other country may be different, but both remain united by a common foundation of faith and common cooperation within the framework of the Annual Conference and beyond. Internal regulations of the Annual Conference will need to provide appropriate arrangements for this.
- If within a country (District Conference) its pastors and local churches share different convictions, each part respects the conscientious conviction of the other. The cabinet also takes these differences into account in the process of appointments (cf. draft scenario “Kaleidoscope” of the AC Switzerland-France-North Africa in the reality of Switzerland).

What options do we have as CC-CSE to express the “unity in the bond of peace” among all those who are willing to remain together despite important (but not fundamental or church-dividing) differences?

In line with the initial question: ***“As you strive to continue the mission of the UMC in your own country so that it may prosper, how can you contribute to not endanger the mission of the UMC in another country of the CC-CSE where the context is very different?”***

(10) How could the CC-CSE order its life (CC-CSE Discipline and liturgy) in keeping and strengthening the connectational community (“*Koinonia*”) with all those who are willing to continue the common journey?

Different approaches have been tried by other churches or other parts of the UMC. Hereafter are named some options that would need further work in detail. Which of these (or additional) options should we look at and further develop towards the central conference in 2022?

- Delete all qualifying statements on marriage and same-sex relationships in the Church Order (e.g. CC Germany)?
- Mentioning of two different understandings of marriage in the church, both of which may be celebrated (e.g. Methodist Church in Britain)?

- An open understanding of marriage (covenant between two adults) with protection of traditional conscience beliefs (e.g. One-Church Model GC2019)?
- Traditional understanding of marriage (covenant between a man and a woman) in principle, but enabling to expand it with allowing blessings where state legislation allows same-sex partnership or marriage and the UMC in the country opts for it?
- For whatever CC-CSE Discipline: enable internal regulations at the level of an Annual Conference or a District Conference for an individual country? (Such internal regulations may become an important document for a UMC in a specific country in its ecumenical interaction with other churches in the country).

(11) In the connectional structure of the UMC, the General Conference has “full legislative power over all matters distinctively connectional” (Constitution, art. 16) and Central Conferences 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” (BOD 2016, art. 543.7). How far adaptation rights go and what parts of the BOD are not adaptable, is not yet finally clarified (cf. BOD 2016, art. 101). However, the “fundamental bodies of the Church” (Constitution, art. 11) are the annual conferences. This connectional structure of the UMC has its challenges when important but not fundamental differences occur within the Church, but it may also offer its opportunities as long as we do not interpret it in a hierarchical, legalistic way. Paragraph (10) here above has offered a few hints and options that the executive committee should discuss and may decide on what it wants to pursue further for preparing a CC-CSE Discipline to be submitted to the next full CC meeting for adoption.

As CC-CSE, we have in the past supported each other in our respective missions across all differences, without imposing our own convictions on each other. Will we also succeed in this disputed issue to spur each other on in proclaiming Christ and following him to the best of our intentions?

Bishop Patrick Streiff

Consequences of separation

General Remark: This document is based on two major assumptions:

- that the Protocol of Reconciliation and Grace will be accepted by the General Conference in 2022.

- that there will not be a 2/3 majority at the CC-CSE in favor of separation.

On these two assumptions, the CC-CSE will remain part of the continuing UMC. This document then complements those established by the four bishops of Europe.

Thus, the present document informs on consequences of separation from the CC-CSE related to the office of the Bishop in Zurich.

Principle

Every separation within the Christian church is a sad consequence of not being able to live according to God's will "that we are one" as the Father and the Son are one (John 17).

Even if each part tries to live in good faith and behave respectfully towards sisters and brothers who choose a different way, the fact of splitting remains harmful. Every side will be weaker.

Personal relationships have grown in manifold ways with personal friendships or local church partnerships. They may continue and no one should feel a pressure to abandon friendships. But separation into different churches cuts structural relationships. Over time, it makes it more challenging to continue personal relationships with new generations of persons.

As separation into different churches cuts accountability lines and structural relationships, the effective separation date is important. The following details on structural and financial consequences will be linked to the effective separation date(s). Up to such a date, the consequences need to be prepared, calculated, and a detailed agreement between both parties signed. Such agreement would also need to include transitional stipulations. The episcopal office is a legal entity according to Swiss law, called "Hilfe im Sprengel" (HiS).

1. Structural consequences

For a separating country, an exact date will be fixed when the structural connection with the United Methodist Church will cease, according to the decisions of the Protocol ¶ 2556.1c(8), ¶ 2556.5a-d, and ¶ 2556.7f (6 months after decision, may be extended by max. 12 more months).

As of the effective date, separation will cut structural relationships in a definitive way, even if other forms of relationship may develop between separated churches at a later date:

- Towards the Bishop of the area and the supervisory role of the Bishop;
- Towards the episcopal office and its administrative support;
- Towards the episcopal office and its financial support;
- Towards the central conference and its initiatives and working groups;
- Towards the UMC in countries that remain in the CC-CSE;
- Towards the UMC outside of the CC-CSE;
- Towards ecumenical agreements established by the UMC.

The Central Conference Pension Fund has been an initiative of the general church. In the CC-CSE it is administered through the episcopal office. For new churches established according to the Protocol, Wespath remains the entity responsible for pension issues. Therefore, for countries separating from the UMC, the episcopal office will use the guidelines that should come from Wespath for transferring the responsibility and respective assets to the separating country if the country is part of the CC-CSE Pension Plan.

Depending on the specifics of State recognition of a UMC that decides to depart, there may be more or less complicated re-negotiations for a continued State recognition.

Depending on the specifics of ecumenical agreements and/or membership in ecumenical bodies of a UMC that decides to depart, there may be more or less complicated re-negotiations for achieving adequate new agreements and/or membership.

The Protocol allows for USD 25 Mio. of unrestricted assets of the general church given to a future traditional Methodist Church; furthermore, a local church or AC that departs can do so with its own assets. The Protocol does not require that any other assets be given to a departing part of the church.

2. Financial consequences

The episcopal office has a long-standing, faithful tradition of supporting the ministry in economic weaker countries of the CC-CSE. It has been an active organizer and administrator of funds from diverse sources. This role will end for countries that decide to depart from the UMC.

It will be up to the source of funding whether and at what level funding may continue towards a country that decides to depart. Main giving sources that have so far been administered through the episcopal office are in order of importance:

- Connexio hope and develop of the UMC Switzerland-France;
- The Fund for Mission in Europe and OPM;
- The General Board of Global Ministries of the UMC;
- The Methodist Church in Britain;
- The General Board of Higher Education and Ministry of the UMC.

All those organizations are independent of the episcopal office in Zurich. They will have to decide on their own if and how they envision support towards countries that depart from the UMC. Such future support will have to be mutually agreed between both partners without any role of the episcopal office in Zurich.

Additionally, partnerships have been established between individual local churches and/or districts of the UMC in Western Europe and the USA, including through the "In Mission Together"-program of the General Board of Global Ministries of the UMC. For countries departing from the UMC, such partnerships will no more be administered through the episcopal office, but may continue through direct relationships between the partners. Furthermore, support agreements running over several years will end officially with the effective separation date and would have to be re-negotiated between the new partners.

3. Between Hilfe im Sprengel / Office of the Bishop and departing countries

“Hilfe im Sprengel” is the legal body of the office of the episcopal area and according to Swiss law an association. The officers of the central conference are the members of the association. The bishop, the assistant to the bishop and the person for financial administration are the executive organ of the association.

There will be the following consequences on countries that will leave the UMC:

- Where there are restricted assets, designated for a country leaving the UMC and – by mutual agreement – hosted at HiS, such assets will be transferred to the respective country with the obligation to respect the restrictions placed on the funds.
- Assets given to departing countries and liabilities of countries toward HiS (e.g. loans) will be balanced out for the end-payment at the effective date of separation. If loans cannot be paid back at the effective date of separation, written agreements need to be made with departing countries for keeping the promises of paying back the loans.
- For an individual country that leaves the UMC, there can only be one single date in which assets, liabilities and responsibility will be transferred to the departing country, either the effective date of separation or – by mutual agreement – the end of the calendar year in which the effective date of separation has been set.
- As departing countries may have different effective dates of separation, HiS would prefer to reach tri-partite agreements (HiS / departing country / main donor organizations) with Connexio, GBGM, and MCB on whether assets and responsibility are transferred to the departing countries at the end of the calendar year in which the effective date of separation has been set instead of taking effect at varying dates of separation.

The consequences of countries leaving the UMC on the workload in the office can only be evaluated after the final decisions of countries. After such decisions, there will be most probably a period of approx. 12-18 months up until a real lowering of workload will become reality. HiS will be responsible for adequate planning on the contracts of employees in the office of the bishop.

Depending on the situation in Europe among the continuing UMC, there might be a cooperative will to rearrange numbers and borders of the central conferences and its episcopal areas. This will have additional effects on the association HiS, not yet reflected here.

Episcopal Office “Hilfe im Sprengel»

2021

28.-31.10.	Annual Conference of the UMC in PL	Warsaw
1.-5.11.	Council of Bishops	online
4.-7.11.	Annual Conference of the UMC in CZ and SK	Prague
16.-17.11.	UMC-MCB Concordat	online

2022

14.-17.2.	Central Conference Theological Education Fund	USA or online???
11.3.	Methodist e-Academy Network	Philadelphia?
14.-18.3.	UMC-MCB Concordat	Philadelphia?
23.-26.3.	Meeting of the CC CSE Superintendents and/or the CC CSE Delegates to General Conference	venue to be confirmed
25.-26.3.	Meeting of the CC CSE Executive Committee	online
31.3.-3.4.	Annual Conference of the UMC in BG and RO	venue to be confirmed
7.-10.4.	Annual Conference of the UMC in HU	venue to be confirmed
25.-29.4.	Council of Bishops	USA or online
12.5.	European Methodist Council, Spring Meeting	online
12.-15.5.	Annual Conference of the UMC in AL, MK and RS	AL-Pogradec
20.-22.5.	Annual Conference of the UMC in CZ and SK	venue to be confirmed
25.-29.5.???	STAUNEN!	DE-Cuxhaven
26.-28.5.	Annual Conference of the UMC in AT	Salzburg
15.-19.6.	Annual Conference of the UMC in CH, FR and NA	CH-Schaffhausen
23.-26.6.	Annual Conference of the UMC in PL	venue to be confirmed
25.-27.8.	Council of Bishops	US-Minneapolis
29.8.-6.9.	General Conference	US-Minneapolis
7.9.	Council of Bishops	US-Minneapolis
31.8.-8.9.	General Assembly World Council of Churches	DE-Karlsruhe
7.-10.9.	Historical Conference	???
29./30.9.	Fund for Mission in Europe	DE-Hamburg
30.9.-3.10.	European Methodist Council	DE-Hamburg
13.-16.10.	International Worship Forum	DE-Stuttgart
15.-16.11.	Meeting of the Executive Committee of the CC CSE	CH-Basel
16.-20.11.	19th Session of the Central Conference CSE	CH-Basel
22.-26.11.	Session of the Central Conference in Germany	DE-???

2023 (without annual conference dates)

15.-19.3.	Session of the CC Northern Europe/Eurasia	EE-Tallinn
28.4.-1.5.	EmK-Kongress	Germany
30.4.-5.5.	Council of Bishops	US-Chicago
29.6.-1.7.	Meeting of the Executive Committee of the CC CSE	venue to be confirmed

IV. Reports of the Working Groups

1

Working Group Theology and Ordained Ministry

1. The Working Group met on January 31st and February 1st, 2021, online. The following participated: Jana Daněčková, Zoltán Kovács (partly), Michael Nausner, Edward Puślecki (partly), Daniel Sjanta, Christof Voigt (connection person CC Germany; partly), Vladimir Zhelezov and Stefan Zürcher (Chair).
2. Our Working Group received a mandate from the CC office to continue working on the draft *Elements of a Theology of Marriage*. In addition, it dealt with the introductory text of the SCCCM (Standing Committee on Central Conference Matters) on the draft of a *General Book of Discipline 2020*. Finally, we exchanged views on what it means to be church in a time of pandemic.
3. *Further work on the draft Elements of a theology of marriage (Appendix 1):* At the 2019 meeting of the Working Group, an outline of a document on the topic of theology of marriage emerged. Stefan Zürcher formulated a first draft which, with changes, was presented to the Executive Committee in March 2020. We continued to work on it at the end of January/beginning of February 2021. The result is attached as *draft version 2* of 1 February 2021.

Unfortunately, our discussions also showed how seemingly irreconcilable the differences are on the question of homosexuality. For some it is unthinkable to recognise homosexual partnerships as a church in any way, while for others the church should open up this possibility. The hope of finding a common path by limiting the concept of marriage to the union of a woman and a man and finding an alternative term for same-sex partnerships – which was at least faintly hoped for after the 2019 meeting – was not fulfilled.

In the aftermath of the meeting, Michael Nausner put his thoughts into words as follows: „*This Working Group has a long tradition of practicing unity in diversity and mutual trust across cultural and theological differences, which has inspired me. And I think it provides a rather unique setting of continuous spiritual and theological exchange across these differences. Yet, we seem to be at a dead end at this point regarding mutual recognition of our different stands in terms of the full inclusion of our homosexual brothers and sisters in our church. I guess, we mirror the impasse of the global UMC in that respect. While I am grateful for good theological exchange and a frank sharing of experiences in terms of the current situation of the global church, I am at a loss in terms of how to proceed and how I myself can contribute in a constructive way to this process. The fate of the global church, of course, is not in our hands, but I hope that we will be able to continue and even deepen the long and fruitful process of mutual exchange in the beautiful manifoldness of our Christian community.*”

As chair of the Working Group, I echo these thoughts and hopes, and I am committed to continuing our conversation. With this paper, we have nevertheless succeeded in formulating important aspects of an understanding of marriage. It forms a good basis on which we can continue to work.

4. *Comments on the introduction of the SCCC to the draft of a BoD 2020 (Parts VI & VII):* In the Quadrennium 2017-2020 the SCCC worked on a new Part VI of the BoD of the worldwide UMC. This is to be significantly shorter, more clearly structured, easier to understand and limited in content exclusively to those questions and topics which are to apply equally to the worldwide church with its Central Conferences in the various parts of the world ("connectionally essential for a worldwide church"). Everything else that can be adapted is covered in Part VII. In the introduction, the SCCC describes its draft and the prerequisites with the following key words: handbook for our common mission and less code; concentration on the unifying core themes; freedom for the social and cultural characteristics of the different contexts and different practices; consensus-oriented conferring as a spiritual practice based on living relationships supported by mutual trust (covenant), etc. Appendix 2 contains the comments of some members of the Working Group. These reflect the different expectations of the BoD and how to deal with it. Some appreciate the freedom the draft leaves. Others emphasise more strongly that in certain situations there is a need for clear rules to be observed by all.
5. *Church and Pandemic:* At the beginning of the meeting, we shared our personal experiences and those of the Church in the Covid situation. At the very end we came back to this and mentioned different questions that the pandemic poses for us as a church. Some examples: What is God's role in this pandemic? How is health to be understood biblically and theologically? How does it relate to social life and the economy? From a Christian point of view, how should we judge the measures taken by individual states to protect themselves through isolation? What can we do to counter the tendency of the pandemic not only to highlight existing injustices but also to reinforce them? How do we as a church manage to maintain mutual support and solidarity? Or are viruses spreading alongside the virus in a figurative sense: fear, prejudice, nationalism, ...? How should we deal with the difficulty of creating community at a distance and, above all, maintaining relationships with single people? Etc. However, there was not enough time to find in-depth answers together.
6. The next meeting was scheduled for October 1-4, 2021, in Reutlingen D, but had to be planned at the beginning of September as an online meeting. This will now take place on Saturday, October 2. On the one hand, we will discuss the question of how we can promote the mission of the UMC in our own country or Annual Conference against the background of our different convictions on how to deal with same-sex relationships, and at the same time help not to endanger the mission in other countries or Annual Conferences living in other contexts. On the other hand, we will deal with the text *"Being Church Together in a Pandemic" - Reflections from an Evangelical CPCE Perspective*. We will report on this meeting in writing or orally.

Stefan Zürcher
Chair of the Working Group

Elements of a theology of marriage (Draft 2)

1. As the Theology and Ordained Ministries Working Group, our biblical (and cultural) understanding of the term marriage so far is that "marriage" refers to a special form of covenant or union between a woman and a man. It is an expression of God's good creation and one of the images of God's loving and blessing interaction with people and the world. God's willingness to be in community with humanity and all creation as aspects of God's continuous creation of shalom forms the foundation of the theological understanding of marriage outlined in this document.
2. Triune God created human beings in *God's image (imago dei; Gen 1:26)*, as man and woman, male and female (Gen 1:27). But the fullness of God's image was revealed in Jesus Christ. In him God showed his nature, which is holy love. We correspond to our vocation as human beings if we let God renew us in our selfishness and transform us and our community into the image of Jesus Christ. In this way we become more like God, even if only imperfectly, and participate in God's being and in his new covenant in Jesus Christ, live out of God's love, and love God and our neighbours like ourselves.
3. The fundamental characteristic of our bearing the image God is our *relatedness*: We are created for relationship with triune God, then for relationship with our fellow human beings, with ourselves and with the rest of creation, i. e. humans are fundamentally relational beings.
The relationship with God takes form in the Bible as a *covenant* (Gen 9:8-11): By grace, God commits himself to us and at the same time calls us to live according to God's nature and will. Our response and responsibility are to fulfil this vocation.
As social and interdependent beings, we are created to live in partnership with others. We read in Gen 2:18: It is not good for the human being to be alone. We are therefore called to be there for each other as an expression of social holiness and to care for each other in many ways and in manifold forms of relationships. Through this mutual interdependence we are also firmly integrated into the society and culture in which we live.
4. God created the human species as *sexual beings*, male and female (Gen 1:27). Sexuality is part of God's good creation. It is one of the expressions of God's intention that our humanity should unfold in relationships. Sexual intimacy can be an expression of a particularly close relationship between people. When it is, it creates a physical, psychological, spiritual and social bond between them that can strengthen and deepen their relationship. But even those who are not in a sexual relationship can have a fulfilling life. Sexuality is also an important aspect of generational reproduction (cf. Gen 1:28). The power of sexuality has the potential for good and harm.
5. Everything God creates and every gift he gives is good (Jam. 1:17). It is true for the whole creation in its material and spiritual dimension. The ultimate goal of God's salvific actions in the world is that all things in heaven and on earth be gathered together in one in Christ Jesus, our Lord (Ep. 1:10). Christ is the center and the fullness of God's new creation, of the new heaven and new earth which will encompass in itself every human being who is "in Christ".

This new creation, that is initiated and realized by Christ, and the shape of the world incorporated in it can be expressed by the term *shalom* (Isa 9:5; Luke 2:14). *Shalom* is a fundamental characteristic of the new creation which is to come and which has dawned in Jesus Christ.

For believers, *shalom* is already the basis and principle for their relationship to the world and for their actions in the world. The covenantal relationship between a woman and a man is a concrete expression of this overarching divine gift of *shalom* to all of creation. Even though *shalom* is the perfect order of the new creation whose glimpses we see even now in and through the Church (Eph. 3:8-11), it is obscured and still unattainable universally because of the fallen state of the world. It is also obscured due to our inability to respond adequately to God's grace. This is the reason why many of our relationships, even marriages, fail to reflect God's *shalom* in the world.

God grants *shalom*, i.e. an order that enables life, by making a new covenant with us human beings sealed by the blood of Christ, our Lord (Luke 22:19-20; 1 Cor. 11:23-25). This covenant, and thus *shalom* granted by God, is to be proven in our relationship with God and in all our relationships with one another, including this special relationship of the spouses in the marriage covenant.

6. *Good relationships* promote *shalom* of God (Joh 17:21; 1. Cor 13; Mt 5:9): Through good relationships, communities flourish. People flourish because they are not alone but are partners and companions in a variety of relationships: family relationships, friendships, peer group relationships, work relationships, relationships with special interest groups, church relationships. People are there for each other and for others. They also flourish because they are connected with each other as God's co-workers in God's ministry and mission. Good relationships are permeated by God's creative love. People who are filled with God's love contribute as good stewards to the care and preservation of creation. As co-designers, they shape the appearance of the earth and give new life to it for example through procreation. Through good relationships between Christians a part of God's new creation is already flourishing here and now. In the community of the Body of Christ, people are strengthened and nourished. All people can be each other's companions, they can shape such relationships, and experience how they and others flourish and find fulfilment through these diverse relationships. Where such flourishing and fulfilment is visible, it witnesses to God's grace and love, and we have reason to praise God for this gift.

7. *Jesus' attitude* towards people, his behaviour, and his actions were deeply rooted in and grew out of his relationship with God. In his relationships we see how God envisages relationships. Characteristics of such relationships are: self-giving love, mercy, grace, and forgiveness, commitment and faithfulness, loyalty, sincerity, equality and reciprocity in terms of care, protection and respect, and the desire that others may flourish. It should be noted that these characteristics vary in different relationships depending on the persons involved (e.g. parent-child relationship, superior - subordinate, marriage...). But in principle we are called to orient ourselves in our relationships to these characteristics, to learn from Jesus Christ and from one another, and to practice them. At the same time, we are aware that we live in a fallen world. *Shalom* granted by God is always marred by our fallen state – in our relationships as well. That is why there are disturbances and fractures in relationships. But we live by the mercy and forgiveness of Christ. From this we draw the strength and the ability to live mercifully and forgivingly ourselves, and to dare and make possible new beginnings again and again.

8. There are many forms of relationships between people. *Marriage* is only one of them, albeit a specific one and a unique covenant. The liturgy of the service of marriage speaks of marriage as a gift of God and as a holy, lifelong covenant. The Bible relates marriage in various places to God's covenant with his people, or to the relationship between Christ and the Church. Sometimes marriage is used as an image of God's covenant with humankind, sometimes Christ's relationship with his church is used to illustrate how man and woman should relate to each other in marriage (Eph 5). It should be noted, however, that, according to Paul, not only marriage, but also being single is a charism and must therefore be valued just as much.

Like all relationships between people, marriage should show the characteristics listed above. Furthermore, it is intended to be permanent and exclusive (monogamy). In it two people unite of their own free will with body, heart, spirit and soul. God's grace enables them to be companions for one another in love, trust, care and tenderness, to inspire and encourage one another. For Christians the relationship in marriage is inspired by the mutuality of relations intrinsic to God. Marriage is also the place for sexual intimacy and the best precondition for children to grow up. Such marriages strengthen families, build Christian community, and support human society.

Marriages also suffer from the fact that God's shalom is always hidden under discord. Marriages break up, partners separate and get divorced. Some divorcees remain single, others marry again. Some divorced mothers and fathers have to carry the parental duties alone. This makes it all the more important for them to have viable relationships in which they experience other people, who accompany them and help them to flourish in community.

9. The *form and understanding* of marriage are always also expressions of particular times and cultures and are subject to constant development. Already in the Bible – and even more so outside it – we find manifold forms of marriage of man and woman, some of them side by side: monogamy, polygamy, marriages with concubines, levirate marriages, etc. There is no normative binding form of marriage in the Bible, and in the course of the centuries it has changed continuously – and very differently depending on the context. For example, the United Methodist Church is teaching, that marriage is a covenant between a woman and a man.

At the same time today's world confronts us with many new circumstances: The legal position of women is clearly different from when they were seen as property. Marriage is no longer a contract arranged under private law between two families, but a state-recognised legal form which married couples can have confirmed and blessed by the church. Procreation has lost much of its importance in favour of mutual companionship, care and human flourishing.

Marriage as a mutual commitment in love between the couple is a relationship in which grace and love may be experienced and expressed, a relationship where two people may enjoy a life-long unity of body, heart, spirit and soul; comfort and companionship; enrichment and encouragement; tenderness and trust. This in turn will allow them both to grow towards maturity, so that children may be nurtured, family life strengthened, and human society enriched.

10. As a result of the social changes in recent decades, the question of *same-sex* marriage has become the focus of discussion in Western European and North American societies. There are same-sex couples, even Christians, who want to enter into a lifelong, monogamous partnership in loving fidelity and mutual care like heterosexual couples, who want to place

their relationship under God's presence and blessing, and who thus want to have their relationship recognised as a marriage in church.

There is a diversity of convictions, in the church as well, especially in a worldwide one like ours. The traditional understanding of church is that marriage can only be concluded between a woman and a man. A growing number of people in and outside the church are of the opinion that marriages can also be concluded between two persons of the same sex, that is, between two adult persons.¹

Even the opinions in our working-group differ on this question. For some, it is conceivable, even desirable, for a same-sex couple to marry and also be married in church, notwithstanding the discussion whether or not homosexual and heterosexual unions should be called the same. For the others, marriage is marriage only as a union of man and woman.

11. In September 2019 as working-group we proposed to examine whether it would be helpful for our continuing together in our Central Conference to treat both forms of partnership, those between man and woman and those between man and man or woman and woman, in the same way, but not with the same term, i.e. to apply the term "marriage" only to the partnership between man and woman and to look for another term for the same-sex partnership.²

In this year's discussion we have to recognise that we could not find a consensus on this, and we do not see a way right now to overcome the differences on the issue of homosexual partnerships in our working group. But we still hope for a way forward where our unity in Christ can overcome our differences.

¹ Excluded are marriages between siblings, parent - child, grandparent - grandchild.

² As an example, we refer to the proposal of Andreas Krebs. He proposes to speak of the „sacrament of the covenant of life“, distinguishing marriage between man and woman as one manifestation of the covenant of life, and same-sex partnership as another (cf. in the book mentioned below, 134). On the question of the blessing of same-sex partnerships, compare the theological debate in the Old Catholic Church in Germany, in: Krebs, Andreas/Ring, Matthias (Hg.): Mit dem Segen der Kirche. Die Segnung gleichgeschlechtlicher Partnerschaften in der theologischen Diskussion, Bonn 2018.

Discussion Notes on the Introduction to the Draft of a General Book of Discipline 2020

- Admittedly, the revision of the Book of Discipline (BoD) was commissioned many years ago, long before the possibility of separation became so obvious. The work is hanging in the air. Now is not the time. The process can only be taken further after the next General Conference, possibly with new people who may then also break it off.
The question of trust plays a big role. The new BoD should be shorter and more concise. Adjustments are allowed in Central Conferences and Annual Conferences. If it becomes shorter, it becomes more vague. Some people then become suspicious. Especially in our situation of conflict around same-sex partnerships, there is a lack of trust. People with a traditional attitude have problems with the BoD: What do we need it for if people don't follow it, e.g. the guidelines regarding the issue of same-sex partnerships. Whatever is proposed is therefore received with a lot of mistrust.
- I like the understanding of the BoD as a "guide" or "manual" for mission. This comes closer to the original meaning again. The further development of the BoD away from a code that wants to regulate all details in a legalistic way towards a common guide for mission that leaves room for the so different social and cultural contexts is essential for the future of our church, although of course certain things also need to be clearly regulated. In this process, as described in the introduction, relationships and conferencing characterised by trust are absolutely necessary – which is not the case in the current situation, which is why it makes sense that the General Conferences does not vote on the new BoD this year.
- The recognition that the BoD is too focused on the US situation is important. The theological and legal points in the current BoD are too mixed. Some legal guidance is necessary, but is helpful to separate it from the theological discussion.
We are a large, worldwide church. The experience is that the number of laws increases with the number of members. This was also the case with the Roman Catholic Church and its canon law. It would be naïve to want to return to the beginnings. We cannot organise a large church the way we organise a small church. Most questions should be solved through discussion in conferences. The law should only be there in the background.
- The application of the BoD is necessary in some situations. We also have other normative books, i.e. the Bible, which we should also use without questioning them. The BoD works in the same way, even if it does not have the same authority as the Bible. The BoD is too extensive. Much of it has no relation to our mission, to our organisation. Maybe it is a good thing to have a shorter version of the BoD outside the US. We are united by doctrine, order and mission. The BoD expresses this unity. What it contains is determined by the GC. It should be normative for the whole church. I have trouble with the attempts to question the BoD, even the theological parts that date back to Wesley's time. Wesley said: Whoever wants to join us has to follow our rules. Wesley's way of interpreting Scripture became authoritative. We should not change that. As a whole, the BoD contains a condensed version of what we believe, how we are organised and how we carry out our mission.
If things work, that is of course good. Sometimes it is better to have precise guidelines on procedures that can be followed to resolve a situation in the community. We have had such situations, and we have been grateful for the BoD in those situations. A world-wide church like

ours needs such laws. It is useful to have a law book when dealing with moral issues or problems that need to be judged by a judicial council. We need to keep the legal parts. They must then be followed by everyone. Otherwise they are useless. Those who destroy canon law destroy the faith between us.

- I appreciate the work that has been done so far. I was involved in it a couple of years ago trying to tease out the theological content of chapter V *Administrative Order*. We tried to draft a compact "Theology of Agency" as a theological framing of the more technical description of the various church agencies. In the current BoD the theological and administrative texts are very much intertwined and exceedingly redundant and thus at times confusing. In the report of the SCCCM I especially appreciate the commitment that "human made categories, borders, or national labels" should not separate us as people of The United Methodist Church (p725). I also welcome the intention to include in a new chapter VI everything that is "connectionally essential for a worldwide church" and that a new chapter VII should contain what is adaptable for the various Central Conferences (p727). I also share the lament of the writers of the report that the special General Conference 2019 led to a crisis of trust which made it difficult to present a BoD that allowed for regional freedom. It is regrettable, I agree, that the BoD from having been a "guide for mission" has developed into a "very detailed legal book". While I acknowledge that a large denomination needs clear regulation, the incoherence of much of the current BoD tends to rather create confusion than clarity. But above all, I subscribe to the vision that the BoD should mainly aid our church to find ways of reaching consensus in our conferencing instead of trying to win over each other by votes. Indeed: "Can the members of our church regain the spiritual practice of a covenantal community" (p728)? I wholeheartedly agree that we need a BoD that has a slim legal frame and a clear theological focus on guiding the "spiritual practice of a covenantal community".

Discussion notes:

Michael Nausner/Stefan Zürcher

2

Working Group Liturgy

1. Situation and composition of the working group

The working group met online on September 30, 2020, at which time Sylvia Minder and Peter Cailey were bidden farewell. Stefan Weller was asked to continue working until the postponed Central Conference in 2022 and to keep the chair. He is willing to do so, but is now only actively working on the International Worship Forum 2022 project (see below). The remaining members are Jana Křížova (CZ), Esther Handschin (A) and Erika Stalcup (CH District Francophone).

Regarding the future composition of the working group: If the Central Conference MSE continues to have a similar structure in the future and work on liturgical issues is still desired, a fourth person from Switzerland who can communicate in German and English would be helpful.

2. Promotion of the celebration of the Lord's Supper

The alternate pieces for the Lord's Supper (Great Thanksgivings) from the UMC Book of Worship have been translated into German by Esther Handschin. Subject to approval by the Methodist Publishing House, these texts are available for use. We ask the Executive Committee to approve the translations and recommend them to congregations for use.

Communion liturgies have been written in a "basic language" more easily understood by people today, in cooperation with the Specialist Group for Worship and Agenda of the CC Germany. These German texts, which were not authorized by the Central Conferences, are available on the homepage www.emk-gottesdienst.org. There they are inserted into a "syntax" (tabular overview) which makes the basic elements of a communion celebration more understandable. We suggest that those responsible for the organization of services be made aware of these texts and their arrangement as an opportunity for further training and experimentation.

A study on the practice of the Lord's Supper is underway at the Community of Protestant Churches in Europe (CPCE), to be completed by 2023.

3. International Worship Forum 2022

The International Worship Forum, already announced in the last report, will take place in Stuttgart from October 13-16, 2022. The theme "Transforming Worship" has a double meaning: "Worship will be transformed" and: "Worship transforms us".



GOTTESDIENST VERÄNDERT
TRANSFORMING WORSHIP

International Worship Forum
13.-16. Oktober 2022, Stuttgart

Working in the preparation group for our Central Conference are: Erika Stalcup, Esther Handschin, Stefan Weller. Other members are: Wilfried Röcker (Bildungswerk ZKD), Holger Eschmann (Theologische Hochschule Reutlingen), Annette Gruschwitz (chairwoman of the ZKD), Thomas Roscher (representative for liturgy of the ZKD).

The forum will be held in German and English.

Keywords for the planned presentations and workshops: Methodist understanding of worship and communicating the CC decisions; current challenges for worship through pandemic and digitalization; popular culture and worship; the social, healing and mystical dimensions of worship; worship for younger generations, worship in small groups, and more.

A flyer with program, registration form and description of workshops is planned for early 2022.

We ask the CC Executive to budget € 4.000,- for the realization of this event.

Furthermore, we ask all members of the Executive to draw attention to the International Worship Forum in their area and to encourage participation.

Motions to the Executive Committee:

1. The Executive Committee approve the German translations of the Alternate Pieces for the Lord's Supper (Great Thanksgivings) from the UMC Book of Worship and recommend them for use in congregations. (Text in German see attachment 1)

2. The Executive Committee budgets € 4.000,- as contribution of the CC CSE for the realization of the International Worship Forum from October, 13-16, 2022 in Stuttgart. (Preliminary cost calculation see attachment 2)

Basel on August 30, 2021

Stefan Weller

Attachment 1:

German Translations of the Alternate Pieces for the Lord's Supper from the Book of Worship

1. Advent (BOW, p. 54)

In Wahrheit ist es würdig und recht, dir, heiliger Gott, immer und überall zu danken. Du bist der Schöpfer des Himmels und der Erde. Du hast uns nach deinem Bild geschaffen und uns den Odem des Lebens eingehaucht. Als wir uns von dir abwandten und unsere Liebe versagte, blieb deine Liebe unverändert fest. Du hast uns befreit und einen Bund mit uns geschlossen, in dem du allein unser Gott sein willst, und hast durch deine Propheten zu uns gesprochen.

Sie haben ausgeschaut nach dem Tag, an dem das Recht strömen wird wie Wasser und die Gerechtigkeit wie ein nie versiegender Bach. Dann werden die Völker keine Schwerter mehr gegeneinander erheben und nicht mehr lernen Krieg zu führen.

Darum preisen wir deinen Namen mit deinem Volk hier auf der Erde und allen himmlischen Heerscharen und stimmen ein in ihren immerwährenden Lobpreis:

Sanctus

Ja, heilig bist du und gesegnet ist dein Sohn Jesus Christus. Du hast ihn gesandt in der Fülle der Zeit als ein Licht zu erleuchten die Heiden. Du zerstreust, die hoffärtig sind in ihres Herzens Sinn und erbarmst dich über die, die dich fürchten von Geschlecht zu Geschlecht. Du stößt die Gewaltigen vom Thron und erhebst die Niedrigen. Du füllst die Hungrigen mit Gütern und lässt die Reichen leer ausgehen. Dein einziggeborener Sohn war als ein Diener unter uns, der Immanuel, Gott-mit-uns. Er erniedrigte sich selbst, um deinem Willen gehorsam zu sein und nahm den Tod am Kreuz auf sich.

Durch sein Leiden, Sterben und Auferstehen hast du deine Kirche ins Leben gerufen und uns von der Macht der Sünde und des Todes erlöst. Du hast einen neuen Bund mit uns geschlossen durch Wasser und Geist. Als Jesus in den Himmel aufgenommen wurde, versprach er, in der Kraft des Wortes und des Heiligen Geistes immer bei uns zu sein.

Der Herr Jesus, in der Nacht ...

Weihnachten / Weihnachtszeit (BOW, p. 56)

In Wahrheit ist es würdig und recht, dir, heiliger Gott, immer und überall zu danken. Du bist der Schöpfer des Himmels und der Erde. Du hast uns nach deinem Bild geschaffen und uns den Odem des Lebens eingehaucht. Als wir uns von dir abwandten und unsere Liebe versagte, blieb deine Liebe unverändert fest. Du hast uns befreit und einen Bund mit uns geschlossen, in dem du allein unser Gott sein willst, und hast durch deine Propheten zu uns gesprochen.

In der Fülle der Zeit hast du deinen einziggeborenen Sohn Jesus Christus hingegeben, damit er unser Retter sei. Bei seiner Geburt haben die Engel gesungen: Ehre sei Gott in der Höhe und Friede auf Erden bei den Menschen seines Wohlgefallens.

Darum preisen wir deinen Namen mit deinem Volk hier auf der Erde und allen himmlischen Heerscharen und stimmen ein in ihren immerwährenden Lobpreis:

Sanctus

Ja, heilig bist du und gesegnet ist dein Sohn Jesus Christus. So wie Maria und Josef von Galiläa nach Bethlehem gingen und keinen Raum fanden, so ging Jesus von Galiläa nach Jerusalem und wurde verspottet und abgelehnt. Wie Jesus in der Armut eines Stalles geboren wurde, hast du durch die Taufe seines Leidens und Auferstehens deine Kirche ins Leben gerufen und uns von der Macht der Sünde und des Todes erlöst. Du hast einen neuen Bund mit uns geschlossen durch Wasser und Geist. Wie dein Wort Fleisch wurde, geboren von einer Frau in dieser längst vergangenen Nacht, so in der Nacht, als der Herr Jesus verraten wurde, nahm er das Brot, ...

Neujahr, Epiphania, Taufe Jesu, Bundeserneuerung (BOW, p. 58)

In Wahrheit ist es würdig und recht, dir, heiliger Gott, immer und überall zu danken. Du bist der Schöpfer des Himmels und der Erde. Bevor du die Berge gegründet und die Erde geformt hast, warst du von Ewigkeit her der einzige Gott.

Du hast Licht aus der Dunkelheit gerufen und Leben auf diese Erde gebracht. Du hast uns nach deinem Bild geschaffen und uns den Odem des Lebens eingehaucht. Als wir uns von dir abwandten und unsere Liebe versagte, blieb deine Liebe unverändert fest. Du hast uns befreit und einen Bund mit uns geschlossen, in dem du allein unser Gott sein willst, und hast durch deine Propheten zu uns gesprochen.

Darum preisen wir deinen Namen mit deinem Volk hier auf der Erde und allen himmlischen Heerscharen und stimmen ein in ihren immerwährenden Lobpreis:

Sanctus

Ja, heilig bist du und gesegnet ist dein Sohn Jesus Christus. In ihm hast du dich selbst offenbart, du unser Licht und unser Heil.

[für Epiphania: Du hast einen Stern gesandt, um die Weisen an den Ort zu führen, wo Christus geboren ist. In deinen Zeichen und Verheißungen durch alle Zeiten hindurch und an allen Orten hast du dein Volk von den fernsten Orten zu diesem Licht geleitet.]

oder

[für den Sonntag der Taufe Jesu: In der Taufe und in der Mahlgemeinschaft hat er sich mit den Sündern zusammengetan. Dein Geist hat ihn gesalbt den Armen das Evangelium zu verkündigen, den Gefangenen zu predigen, dass sie los sein sollen, den Blinden, dass sie sehen sollen, den Zerschlagenen, dass sie frei und ledig sein sollen und zu verkündigen, dass die Zeit gekommen ist, dein Volk zu erlösen.]

Durch sein Leiden, Sterben und Auferstehen hast du deine Kirche ins Leben gerufen und uns von der Macht der Sünde und des Todes erlöst. Du hast einen neuen Bund mit uns geschlossen durch Wasser und Geist. [Als Jesus in den Himmel aufgenommen wurde, versprach er, in der Kraft des Wortes und des Heiligen Geistes immer bei uns zu sein.]

Der Herr Jesus, in der Nacht ...

Früh in der Fastenzeit (BOW, p. 60)

In Wahrheit ist es würdig und recht, dir, heiliger Gott, immer und überall zu danken. Du bist der Schöpfer des Himmels und der Erde. Du hast alles, was lebt ins Dasein gerufen und gesagt, dass es gut sei.

Vom Staub der Erde hast du uns nach deinem Bild geschaffen und uns den Odem des Lebens eingehaucht. Als wir uns von dir abwandten und unsere Liebe versagte, blieb deine Liebe unverändert fest. Als der Regen 40 Tage und 40 Nächte lang auf die Erde fiel, hast du die Arche auf dem Wasser getragen und Noah und seine Familie gerettet. Du hast einen Bund mit jedem lebendigen Wesen auf dieser Erde geschlossen. Du hast dein Volk während 40 Tagen und 40 Nächten zum Berg Sinai geführt und uns deine Gebote gegeben. Du hast uns zu deinem Bundesvolk gemacht. Als dein Volk deinen Bund brach, hat dein Prophet Elia 40 Tage und 40 Nächte gefastet, und auf deinem Heiligen Berg hat er deine sanfte Stimme gehört.

Darum preisen wir deinen Namen mit deinem Volk hier auf der Erde und allen himmlischen Heerscharen und stimmen ein in ihren immerwährenden Lobpreis:

Sanctus

Ja, heilig bist du und gesegnet ist dein Sohn Jesus Christus. Als du ihn uns gegeben hast, um uns von unseren Sünden zu retten, hat dein Geist ihn in die Wüste geführt, wo er 40 Tage und 40 Nächte gefastet hat, um sich für seinen Dienst zu stärken. Als er gelitten hat und am Kreuz für unsere Sünden gestorben ist, hast du ihn zum Leben erweckt und er hat sich während 40 Tagen den Aposteln gezeigt. Du hast ihn zu deiner rechten Seite erhöht.

Durch sein Leiden, Sterben und Auferstehen hast du deine Kirche ins Leben gerufen und uns von der Macht der Sünde und des Todes erlöst. Du hast einen neuen Bund mit uns geschlossen durch Wasser und Geist.

Wenn wir uns als dein Volk für das Fest der Auferstehung vorbereiten, führe du uns zur Buße der Sünden und zur Reinigung unserer Herzen, dass wir während dieser 40 Tage der Fastenzeit gestärkt und beschenkt werden mögen durch die Bestätigung des Bundes, den du durch Christus mit uns geschlossen hast.

Der Herr Jesus, in der Nacht ...

Später in der Fastenzeit (BOW, p. 62)

In Wahrheit ist es würdig und recht, dir, heiliger Gott, immer und überall zu danken. Du bist der Schöpfer des Himmels und der Erde. In Liebe hast du uns für dich bereitet. Wenn wir in Sünde gefallen und das Böse und der Tod über uns gekommen sind, blieb deine Liebe unverändert fest.

Du hast deinem glaubenden Volk geboten, seine Herzen zu reinigen und sich mit Freude auf das Osterfest vorzubereiten, damit wir — erneuert durch dein Wort und Sakrament und eifrig im Gebet und im Tun der Gerechtigkeit und Barmherzigkeit — zur Fülle der Gnade gelangen, die du für die bereitet hast, die dich lieben.

Darum preisen wir deinen Namen mit deinem Volk hier auf Erde und allen himmlischen Heerscharen und stimmen ein in ihren immerwährenden Lobpreis:

Sanctus

Ja, heilig bist du und gesegnet ist dein Sohn Jesus Christus, den du in der Fülle der Zeit gesandt hast, um die Welt zu erlösen. Er entäußerte sich selbst, nahm Knechtsgestalt an und wurde den Menschen gleich. Er erniedrigte sich selbst und wurde gehorsam bis zum Tode, ja zum Tode am Kreuz. Er nahm unsere Sünde und unseren Tod auf sich und gab sich hin, ein vollkommenes Opfer für die Sünde der ganzen Welt.

Durch sein Leiden, Sterben und Auferstehen hast du deine Kirche ins Leben gerufen und uns von der Macht der Sünde und des Todes erlöst. Du hast einen neuen Bund mit uns geschlossen durch Wasser und Geist.

Der Herr Jesus, in der Nacht ...

Gründonnerstagsabend (BOW, p. 64)

In Wahrheit ist es würdig und recht, dir, heiliger Gott, immer und überall zu danken. Du bist der Schöpfer des Himmels und der Erde. Du lässt Brot aus der Erde hervorgehen und lässt die Frucht des Weinstocks wachsen.

Du hast uns zu deinem Ebenbild geschaffen, um uns aus der Knechtschaft zu befreien. Du hast einen Bund mit uns geschlossen, in dem du allein unser Gott sein willst. Du hast uns in der Wüste mit Manna gespeist und uns Trauben geschenkt als Zeichen für das gelobte Land.

Darum preisen wir deinen Namen mit deinem Volk hier auf der Erde und allen himmlischen Heerscharen und stimmen ein in ihren immerwährenden Lobpreis:

Sanctus

Ja, heilig bist du und gesegnet ist dein Sohn Jesus Christus. Als wir uns von dir abwandten und deine Gabe missbrauchten, hast du dich uns in ihm geschenkt. Er entäußerte sich selbst, damit unsere Freude vollkommen sei. Er speiste die Hungrigen, heilte die Kranken, aß mit den Sündern und Verlorenen, wusch den Jüngern die Füße und feierte ein heiliges Mahl als Zeichen seiner bleibenden Gegenwart.

Durch sein Leiden, Sterben und Auferstehen hast du deine Kirche ins Leben gerufen und uns von der Macht der Sünde und des Todes erlöst. Du hast einen neuen Bund mit uns geschlossen durch Wasser und Geist.

Der Herr Jesus, in der Nacht ...

Ostern / Osterzeit (BOW, p. 66)

In Wahrheit ist es würdig und recht, dir, heiliger Gott, immer und überall zu danken. Du bist der Schöpfer des Himmels und der Erde. Du hast uns zu deinem Ebenbild geschaffen und uns den Odem des Lebens eingehaucht. Als wir uns von dir abwandten und unsere Liebe versagte, blieb deine Liebe unverändert fest. Du hast uns befreit und einen Bund mit uns geschlossen, in dem du allein unser Gott sein willst. Du hast uns in das Land der Verheißung gebracht, wo Milch und Honig fließen. Du hast uns den Weg zum Leben gezeigt.

Darum preisen wir deinen Namen mit deinem Volk hier auf der Erde und allen himmlischen Heerscharen und stimmen ein in ihren immerwährenden Lobpreis:

Sanctus

Ja, heilig bist du und gesegnet ist dein Sohn Jesus Christus.

Durch sein Leiden, Sterben und Auferstehen hast du deine Kirche ins Leben gerufen und uns von der Macht der Sünde und des Todes erlöst. Du hast einen neuen Bund mit uns geschlossen durch Wasser und Geist. Durch deine große Gnade sind wir neu geboren zu einer lebendigen Hoffnung durch die Auferstehung deines Sohnes von den Toten und zu einem unvergänglichen Erbe, das unbefleckt ist und nicht verwelkt. Einst gehörten wir nicht zu deinem Volk, aber nun sind wir dein Volk, das die wunderbaren Taten in Christus verkündet. Er hat uns aus der Finsternis in sein wunderbares Licht gerufen.

Als Jesus Christus in den Himmel aufgenommen wurde, versprach er, in der Kraft des Wortes und des Heiligen Geistes immer bei uns zu sein.

Der Herr Jesus, in der Nacht ...

Am Tag als du Jesus von der Toten auferweckt hast, haben ihn seine Jünger daran erkannt, wie er das Brot gebrochen hat. In der Kraft deines Heiligen Geistes bricht deine Kirche weiterhin das Brot und teilt den Kelch aus.

In Erinnerung an dein machtvolles Wirken in Jesus Christus bringen wir uns selbst dar in Lobpreis und Dank als ein heiliges und lebendiges Opfer. In Gemeinschaft mit seinem Opfer für uns verkünden wir das Geheimnis des Glaubens. ...

Pfingsten (BOW, p. 68)

In Wahrheit ist es würdig und recht, dir, heiliger Gott, immer und überall zu danken. Du bist der Schöpfer des Himmels und der Erde.

Am Anfang schwebte dein Geist über den Wassern. Du hast uns zu deinem Ebenbild geschaffen und uns den Odem des Lebens eingehaucht. Als wir uns von dir abwandten und unsere Liebe versagte, blieb deine Liebe unverändert fest. Dein Geist kam über die Propheten und Lehrer und salbte sie, dein Wort zu verkünden.

Darum preisen wir deinen Namen mit deinem Volk hier auf Erde und allen himmlischen Heerscharen und stimmen ein in ihren immerwährenden Lobpreis:

Sanctus

Ja, heilig bist du und gesegnet ist dein Sohn Jesus Christus.

Bei der Taufe am Jordan kam dein Geist auf ihn herab und erklärte ihn zu deinem geliebten Sohn. Durch die Kraft deines Geistes, wandte er sich von den Versuchungen der Sünde ab. Dein Geist salbte ihn, den Armen das Evangelium zu verkündigen, den Gefangenen zu predigen, dass sie los sein sollen, den Blinden, dass sie sehen sollen, den Zerschlagenen, dass sie frei und ledig sein sollen, und zu verkündigen, dass die Zeit gekommen ist, dein Volk zu erlösen. Er heilte die Kranken, speiste die Hungrigen und aß mit den Sündern. Durch sein Leiden, Sterben und Auferstehen hast du deine Kirche ins Leben gerufen und uns von der Macht der Sünde und des Todes erlöst. Du hast einen neuen Bund mit uns geschlossen durch Wasser und Geist.

Als Jesus Christus in den Himmel aufgenommen wurde, versprach er immer bei uns zu sein, in der Kraft des Wortes und des Heiligen Geistes, wie am Tag von Pfingsten.

Der Herr Jesus, in der Nacht ...

Am Tag als du Jesus von der Toten auferweckt hast, haben ihn seine Jünger daran erkannt, wie er das Brot gebrochen hat. In der Kraft deines Heiligen Geistes bricht deine Kirche weiterhin das Brot und teilt den Kelch aus.

In Erinnerung an dein machtvolles Wirken in Jesus Christus bringen wir uns selbst dar in Lobpreis und Dank als ein heiliges und lebendiges Opfer. In Gemeinschaft mit seinem Opfer für uns verkünden wir das Geheimnis des Glaubens. ...

Nach Pfingsten / Zeit im Jahreskreis (BOW p. 70)

Leicht erweitert gegenüber der Grundform, EM 772 (geändertes kursiv)

In Wahrheit ist es würdig und recht, dir, heiliger Gott, immer und überall zu danken. Du bist der Schöpfer des Himmels und der Erde. Du hast uns nach deinem Bild geschaffen und uns den Odem des Lebens eingehaucht. Als wir uns von dir abwandten und unsere Liebe versagte, blieb deine Liebe unverändert fest. Du hast uns befreit und einen Bund mit uns geschlossen, in dem du allein unser Gott sein willst, und hast durch deine Propheten zu uns gesprochen. *Sie haben ausgeschaute nach dem Tag, an dem das Recht strömt wie Wasser und die Gerechtigkeit wie ein nie versiegender Bach.* Dann werden die Völker keine Schwerter mehr gegeneinander erheben und nicht mehr lernen Krieg zu führen.

Darum preisen wir deinen Namen mit deinem Volk hier auf der Erde und allen himmlischen Heerscharen und stimmen ein in ihren immerwährenden Lobpreis:

Sanctus

Ja, heilig bist du und gesegnet ist dein Sohn Jesus Christus. Dein Geist salbte ihn, den Armen das Evangelium zu verkündigen, den Gefangenen zu predigen, dass sie los sein sollen, den Blinden, dass sie sehen sollen, den Zerschlagenen, dass sie frei und ledig sein sollen, und zu verkündigen, dass die Zeit gekommen ist, dein Volk zu erlösen. Er heilte die Kranken, speiste die Hungrigen und aß mit den Sündern. Durch sein Leiden, Sterben und Auferstehen hast du deine Kirche ins Leben gerufen und uns von der Macht der Sünde und des Todes erlöst. Du hast einen neuen Bund mit uns geschlossen durch Wasser und Geist. *Durch seine Aufnahme in den Himmel hast du ihn erhöht, zu deiner Rechten zu sitzen und mit dir zu regieren.*

Der Herr Jesus, in der Nacht ...

Erntedank (Thanksgiving) (BOW, p. 76)

In Wahrheit ist es würdig und recht, dir, heiliger Gott, immer und überall zu danken. Du bist der Schöpfer des Himmels und der Erde. Auf deine Weisung hin kommen und vergehen die Jahreszeiten. Du lässt Brot aus der Erde hervorgehen und lässt die Frucht des Weinstocks wachsen. Du hast uns nach deinem Bild geschaffen und uns den Auftrag gegeben, deine Welt zu bewahren. Die Erde hat ihre Schätze hervorgebracht, und aus deiner Hand haben wir Segen um Segen empfangen.

Darum preisen wir deinen Namen mit deinem Volk hier auf der Erde und allen himmlischen Heerscharen und stimmen ein in ihren immerwährenden Lobpreis:

Sanctus

Ja, heilig bist du und gesegnet ist dein Sohn Jesus Christus. Obwohl er reich war, wurde er arm um unseretwillen. Als er hungrig war und in Versuchung geriet, hat er es abgelehnt Brot für sich selbst zu schaffen, damit er zum Brot des Lebens für andere wurde. Als viele Menschen hungrig waren, hat er ihnen zu essen gegeben. Er hat das Brot mit den Ausgestoßenen gebrochen, aber die Gierigen hat er aus dem Tempel verjagt. Durch sein Leiden, Sterben und Auferstehen hast du deine Kirche ins Leben gerufen und uns von der Macht der Sünde und des Todes erlöst. Du hast einen neuen Bund mit uns geschlossen durch Wasser und Geist.

Der Herr Jesus, in der Nacht ...

Welt-Ökumene-Sonntag (BOW, p. 72)

In den USA wird dieser Sonntag am ersten Sonntag im Oktober gefeiert. Die Liturgie kann auch in der Woche der Einheit der Christen (18. bis 25. Januar oder in der Pfingstoktav gefeiert werden.

In Wahrheit ist es würdig und recht, dir, heiliger Gott, immer und überall zu danken. Du bist der Schöpfer des Himmels und der Erde. Aus einem Menschen hast du alle Völker und Nationen geschaffen, damit sie überall auf der Erde leben.

Darum preisen wir deinen Namen mit deinem Volk hier auf der Erde und allen himmlischen Heerscharen und stimmen ein in ihren immerwährenden Lobpreis:

Sanctus

Ja, heilig bist du und gesegnet ist dein Sohn Jesus Christus. Durch sein Leiden, Sterben und Auferstehen hast du deine Kirche ins Leben gerufen und uns von der Macht der Sünde und des Todes erlöst. Du hast einen neuen Bund mit uns geschlossen durch Wasser und Geist. Er hat uns beauftragt seine Zeuginnen und Zeugen bis an die Enden der Erde zu sein und als seine Jüngerinnen und Jünger alle Völker zu rufen. Heute ist seine Familie in aller Welt versammelt, um an seinem heiligen Mahl teilzuhaben.

Der Herr Jesus, in der Nacht ...

Gieße deinen Heiligen Geist über uns aus, die wir hier versammelt sind, und über diese Gaben, damit das Brot uns zum Brot des Lebens und der Kelch uns zum Kelch des Heils wird, so dass auch wir, erlöst durch sein Blut, Leib Christi für die Welt sein können. *Erneuere unsere Gemeinschaft mit deiner Kirche auf der ganzen Welt und stärke sie in jedem Volk und unter allen Menschen, damit sie deine treuen Zeuginnen und Zeugen werden.* Durch deinen Geist mache uns eins mit Christus, eins miteinander und eins im Dienst für die Welt, bis Christus kommt und wir an seinem himmlischen Festmahl teilnehmen. Durch deinen Sohn, Jesus Christus, im Heiligen Geist sei dir, allmächtiger Vater, Ruhm und Ehre jetzt und allezeit.

Allerheiligen und Gedenkgottesdienste (BOW, p. 74)

In Wahrheit ist es würdig und recht, dir, heiliger Gott, immer und überall zu danken. Du bist der Schöpfer des Himmels und der Erde. Du bist der Gott Abrahams und Saras. Du bist der Gott von Miriam und Mose. Du bist der Gott Josuas und Deboras. Du bist der Gott von Ruth und David. Du bist der Gott der Priester und Propheten. Du bist der Gott Marias und Josefs. Du bist der Gott der Apostel und Märtyrer. Du bist der Gott unserer Mütter und Väter. Du bist der Gott unserer Kinder und Nachkommen. Und so preisen wir deinen Namen mit deinem Volk hier auf der Erde und allen himmlischen Heerscharen und stimmen ein in ihren immerwährenden Lobpreis.

Sanctus

Ja, heilig bist du und gesegnet ist dein Sohn Jesus Christus. Durch sein Leiden, Sterben und Auferstehen hat du deine Kirche ins Leben gerufen und uns von der Macht der Sünde und des Todes erlöst. Du hast einen neuen Bund mit uns geschlossen durch Wasser und Geist.

Der Herr Jesus, in der Nacht ...

Gieße deinen Heiligen Geist über uns aus, die wir hier versammelt sind, und über diese Gaben, damit das Brot uns zum Brot des Lebens und der Kelch uns zum Kelch des Heils wird, so dass auch wir, erlöst durch sein Blut, Leib Christi für die Welt sein können.

Erneuere unsere Gemeinschaft mit allen deinen Heiligen, besonders denjenigen, an die wir uns heute erinnern haben, ...

Umgeben von dieser großen Wolke von Zeuginnen und Zeugen des Glaubens bitten wir dich:

Stärke uns, um den Lauf zu vollenden, der vor uns liegt, indem wir auf Jesus, den Anfänger und Vollender unseres Glaubens schauen.

Durch deinen Geist mache uns eins mit Christus, eins miteinander und eins im Dienst für die Welt, bis Christus kommt und wir an seinem himmlischen Festmahl teilnehmen. Durch deinen Sohn, Jesus Christus, im Heiligen Geist sei dir, allmächtiger Vater, Ruhm und Ehre jetzt und allezeit.

Attachment 2: Budget Transforming Worship

Evangelisch-methodistische Kirche // Transforming Worship

Kalkulation / Haushaltsplan 2022

13.10.2022-16.10.2022

am 29. Juli 2021 / CB + WR



		HHP in € 2022	HHP in € 2022
	Tagesgäste	20	20
	Konzert	20	20
Pos.	Dauerteilnehmende	100	100
	Einnahmen		Anfrage Zuschuss
	Beiträge Teilnehmende		
1	TN-Beitrag €150,00*100 Personen	15.000,00 €	15.000,00 €
2	Tagesgäste € 80,00*2*20 Personen	3.200,00 €	3.200,00 €
3	1 Konzert € 20,00 *20 Personen	400,00 €	400,00 €
4	Spenden/Kollekten	400,00 €	400,00 €
	Zuschuss EmK		
5	Beitrag SJK	0,00 €	3.000,00 €
6	Beitrag OJK	0,00 €	0,00 €
7	Beitrag NJK	0,00 €	0,00 €
8	Beitrag ZK MSE	0,00 €	4.000,00 €
9	Beitrag ZK Deutschland	0,00 €	6.000,00 €
10	Beitrag Bildungswerk	0,00 €	1.000,00 €
11	UMC Zuschuss WR fragt Holger Eschmann	0,00 €	2.000,00 €
12	Sonstige Einnahmen	0,00 €	0,00 €
		19.000,00 €	35.000,00 €
	Ausgaben		
20	Kirche Feuerbach, Technik, Deko, Reinigung	3.500,00 €	3.500,00 €
21	Werbung, Versand	8.000,00 €	8.000,00 €
22	Honorare	1.250,00 €	1.250,00 €
23	Fahrtkosten Team/Referenten/Dolmetscher	4.000,00 €	4.000,00 €
24	U / V Team/Referenten/Dolmetscher BBZ	2.500,00 €	2.500,00 €
25	Konzert	2.000,00 €	2.000,00 €
26	Arbeitsmaterial Programm	500,00 €	500,00 €
27	Vorbereitung, Nacharbeit	1.000,00 €	1.000,00 €
28	Verpflegung 150 Personen X 30 € x 2,5 T	11.000,00 €	11.000,00 €
29	Co2 Ausgleich	100,00 €	100,00 €
30	Porto, Telefon, Internet	250,00 €	250,00 €
31	Sonstige Kosten	200,00 €	200,00 €
32	Annehmlichkeiten	200,00 €	200,00 €
33	Übersetzungsanlage	500,00 €	500,00 €
34			
	SUMME AUSGABEN	35.000,00 €	35.000,00 €
	voraussichtliches Defizit/Gewinn	-16.000,00 €	0,00 €

3

Working Group on Church Discipline and Legal Affairs

The Working group did not receive any specific tasks to work on from the Executive Committee. That is why the Working group did not hold any meetings so far.

The working group consists of following members:

Petr Procházka (CZ)

Serge Frutiger (CH)

Wilfried Nausner (AT – MK/AL)

Daniel Topalski (BG) – Chair

Daniel Topalski

September 2021

4

Working Group Church and Society

The working group did not submit a report.

5

Working Group Children and Youth

The working group did not submit a report.

6

Working Group Women's Work

Review

1. Working Group (WG) Women's Work

In 2020 we didn't meet as Working Group.

2. Leadership development

Of course, the Covid 19 pandemic also had an impact on the work with and for women in the countries of our Central Conference. The responsible women have dealt with it differently. Women's seminars, which fell in a time with fewer restrictions, could be held. Others had to be deleted without replacement. Still others were replaced by meetings in a single day. There were meetings where women could participate physically or online. The women in France found that this variant fits very well for their situation in a large country with long distances. It does not replace physical meetings, but complements them in a profitable way. Basically, it can be said that the need for community is great and the number of participants in the events is greater than in other years. New (and younger) women could also be involved in the preparations.

3. Language Courses

In 2020, no finances were required for language courses.

4. The future of Women's Work in the CC CSE:

The statement that was written at the Consultation in 2019 is still valid for us:

„Whatever happens, we stay together.

We want to support each other. This mutual support is unique to us. We need it.

We are not focused on what divides us, but on what unites us.

In doing so, we are dependent on direct encounters between each other.

These encounters and the resulting deep connections are good for us, encourage us and we enjoy it.

The relationship with women from other cultures and life circumstances has a positive effect on our faith. These relationships help us to develop personally, our opinions and the work with and for women in our church“.

Outlook

1. World Federation of Methodist and Uniting Church

Lilla Kardosné Lakatos, Vice President in the Europe Continental Area, resumes the situation of women in her area during the COVID 19 pandemic as follows: " Praying for each other is common, even if there is no pandemic, so we just continued to lift up each other in prayer in our homes. The very sad thing what we all have missed, I'm sure, is the personal contact, Seminar or any other meeting. I was taking part in the Local Arrangement Committee for the next World Assembly of WFMUCW. We were in the midst of planning and organizing along with our Swedish sis-

ters when the virus has arrived to Europe. The Executive of the World Federation made the decision first to postpone the Assembly which was planned for August 2021 in Göteborg, Sweden. And this August the Executive had another online meeting. The decision is now that the 14th World Assembly will be an online event.

This Summer a global online event was held by the WFMUCW on the 13th and 14th of August. It was a nice way to "come together". The title was 'A New Vision for a sustainable future'. A report from Alison Judd (President) is on the Federation homepage, and the whole program is available too on YouTube.

2. CC women seminar and Consultation

We as Working Group Women's Work will meet to prepare a consultation in 2022. The date is not yet clear.

Thanks

We thank all those who support women and their ministry in the Church. The time of the pandemic has placed more responsibilities on women and their domestic work again. Deprived of mutual support, they have less strength and experience more frustration. The Church is the place of their spiritual and mental growth and rest. Let it also be a sign of hope, instead of divisions, a sign of changes and an optimistic look into the future. Salvation in Christ transforms us as it happens now, in our daily lives and in mutual love.

September 2021

Monika Zuber, Barbara Büniger

7

Working Group on Episcopacy

The following persons of the Executive Committee are members of the Working Group Episcopacy:

New: Stefan Schröckenfuchs (AT)
Desislava Todorova (BG-RO)
Jörg Niederer, Vorsitz / Chair (CH-FR-NA)
Stefan Rendoš (CZ-SK)
Henrik Schaueremann (HU)
Andrzej Malicki (PL)
Daniel Sjanta (RS-MK)

The members of the Standing Committee will start their work on October 21, 2021, just before the session of the Executive Meeting.

The Committee will concentrate upon the following points:

1. Preparation for the election of the new Bishop at the Central Conference of 16-22 November 2022 in Basel³. The documents on a nomination and election process will be again discussed at the meeting. An updated register of electable Ordained Elder in Full Connection will be available for the 2022 Annual Conferences.
2. To prepare the meeting and conversation with the bishop
3. The conversation with the bishop
 - o setting the priorities of the bishop
 - o special challenges due to the change of bishop and the pending decisions on the Protocol on Reconciliation and Grace Through Separation and Restructuring
 - o on the personal and professional conditions
 - o change process from the previous to the new bishop (Retirement, election and installation of the new bishop)

Jörg Niederer
November 2021

³ Beschluss 2017: Die Zentralkonferenz beauftragt das Exekutivkomitee, einen vorbereitenden transparenten Prozess für die Wahl eines Bischofs / einer Bischöfin festzulegen und durchzuführen.



Working Group on Episcopacy

To the members of the Annual Conferences of the
Central Conference of Central and Southern Europe

At the 2022 sessions of the Annual Conferences, the nominations for the election of the new bishop at the Central Conference 2022 will take place.

Please find enclosed a list of all eligible pastors; all of them being ordained elders in full connection and in active service.

The list was compiled according to the following criteria:

Since the mandatory retirement age of a United Methodist Bishop is 72, and taking into consideration that the term of office needs to be at least 4 years, this means that the future bishop may not be older than 68 at the time of election (Book of Discipline par. 408.1b). The enclosed list therefore only includes ordained elders in active service who will not yet be 68 (i.e. born in November 20, 1954 or later) at the time of the Central Conference 2022. There is no minimum age and no minimum number of years of service as an ordained elder in full connection. The retired ordained elders who will not yet have completed their 68th year of age at the time of the Central Conference 2022 are not eligible and therefore not included in the list. Ordained deacons, pastors on honorable location, guest members, and associated members are not eligible and not listed either.

The information in the enclosed list is reflecting the situation as per January 1, 2022.

- The first column shows whether the pastor is a delegate to Central Conference 2022. Alternate delegates are marked with an asterisk (*).
- The second-to-last column provides the information whether someone has officially attended a meeting of the Central Conference or Executive Committee of the Central Conference in the past, whether he/she has been entrusted by the Central Conference with a particular task, or whether he/she is/has been a member of a working group of the Central Conference.
- "Experience in the Global Church" means official responsibilities beyond the Central Conference. This box is checked if the person has attended a General Conference, was entrusted by the Central Conference with an international task (General Board, global area of work), was a member of the European Methodist Council (EMC) (for persons under 35 also a member of EMYC – European Methodist Youth & Children), or served as member of the World Methodist Council (WMC) or the World Federation of Methodist and Uniting Church Women (WFMUCW).
Missionary assignments (e.g. with Connexio) or involvement in the "In Mission Together" (IMT) partnership program are not included.

Further important information can be found in the "Procedure for the Nomination and Election of a Bishop of the Central Conference of Central and Southern Europe 2022".

St. Gallen, September 30, 2021

For the Working Group on Episcopacy: Jörg Niederer

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

Preliminary Remarks

- A) The election of the delegates to the 2022 Central Conference has taken place at the Annual Conference meetings in 2019 (also in the AC Switzerland-France-North Africa).
- 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 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. This relates to both those that are already available and those that still need to be created.
- 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.
- D) To relieve the pressure on the nominees, the time between the information of the nominees by the Working Group Episcopacy and the meeting of the Central Conference will be deliberately kept short (see 5. below).

Nomination Procedure

1. The voting members of the 2022 Annual Conferences will nominate the candidates for the ministry of a bishop.
2. At the meetings of the 2022 Annual Conferences of the Central Conference of Central and Southern Europe, all voting members will receive an up-to-date list of all eligible clergy members (ordained elders in full connection) of the Central Conference with the additional information on Annual Conference affiliation, age, admission into full connection, current appointment, Central Conference experience, experience on the level of the worldwide Church. In addition, they will receive the bishop's task profile.
3. From this list, each voting member (lay and clergy members) can suggest in writing and without discussion up to three persons for nomination for the election to the episcopacy.
4. The nomination forms will be folded, collected and – unopened, without comments, vote count or provision of information to the delegates of the Annual Conference – put into an envelope that will be sealed. This sealed envelope will be handed over to the Working Group on the Episcopacy of the Central Conference.
5. The Episcopacy Working Group will open the envelopes at the beginning of September 2022 and will collate the results.

6. Eligible clergy members will be considered nominated if at least 10% of the voting members of their own Annual Conference or at least three voting members from other Annual Conferences have mentioned their names.
7. The nominees will be informed about the nomination and the number of people that suggested their names. At this stage already, they will receive the personal information form (see below), on which they can provide biographical details for the attention of the Central Conference.
8. 14 days prior to the gathering, delegates to the 2022 Central Conference will receive an up-to-date list of all eligible clergy members, indicating (according to part 6) whether they have been nominated by their own Annual Conference (yes / no), whether they have been nominated by other Annual Conferences (yes / no), and whether the persons have been informed by the Episcopacy Working Group about the nomination.

Election Procedure

9. The first ballot will take place on the first or second day of the Central Conference meeting. Nomination is not a condition for election. All persons who have, at the time of the election, the status of an ordained elder in full connection within CC-CSE, and not yet retired and under age 68, 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 taking place in that ballot.
10. The result will be communicated to the 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.
11. 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.
12. Any eligible person may withdraw from the election after each ballot. However, this person is not allowed to recommend another person for election.

This proposal for the procedure for nomination and election of a bishop at the 2022 Central Conference of Central and Southern Europe was approved on March 8, 2019, by the Executive Committee of the Central Conference of Central and Southern Europe and dates were adapted on October XX, 2021, by the Office of the Central Conference.

Nomination paper for Annual Conferences

I suggest the following 0-3 Ordained Elders for the nomination for the election to the episcopacy. (See list of ordained elders in full connection 2022 in the CC CSE)

Ich schlage folgende 0-3 Ordinierte Älteste für die Nomination zur Wahl ins Bischofsamt vor. (Siehe Liste Ordinierte Älteste in voller Verbindung 2022 in der ZK MSE)

1.
2.
3.

I suggest the following 0-3 Ordained Elders for the nomination for the election to the episcopacy. (See list of ordained elders in full connection 2022 in the CC CSE)

Ich schlage folgende 0-3 Ordinierte Älteste für die Nomination zur Wahl ins Bischofsamt vor. (Siehe Liste Ordinierte Älteste in voller Verbindung 2022 in der ZK MSE)

1.
2.
3.



Working Group on Episcopacy

Personal sheet for the nominated candidates for Bishop

First name and surname:

...

Born on/in:

...

Citizenship:

...

Ordained as an elder on:

...

List of appointments with years:

...

Theological Education:

...

Further training / Important further training:

...

Important tasks in the area of the Annual Conference:

...

Important tasks in the area of the Central Conference:

...

Important tasks in pan-European or worldwide areas:

...

Language skills: (specify language level)

Muttersprache:	...	C2: Mastery or proficiency
Deutsch:	...	C1: Effective operational proficiency or advanced
Englisch:	...	B2: Vantage or upper intermediate
Weitere Sprachen	...	B1: Threshold or intermediate
		A2: Waystage or elementary
		A1: Breakthrough or beginner

Family situation:

...

What is particularly important to me for the ministry as a bishop?

...

8

Judicial Court of the Central Conference of Central and Southern Europe

1. Composition

According to Para. 12(1) of the "Rules of Order of the Central Conference of Central and Southern Europe - CC CSE", the Judicial Court is composed of five members and four reserve persons. At present, there is one vacancy on each of these two levels.

2. Activities

According to the "Rules of Order of the Central Conference of Central and Southern Europe - CC CSE", the Judicial Court has the following tasks:

a) According to Para. 12(4), the Judicial Court „shall make all judicial decisions in accordance with the constitution, excluding the jurisdiction of the Judicial Court of the General Conference.“ This concerns legal questions that arise in the application of the rules and by-laws as well as in the application changes made thereto by the Central Conference.

In the reporting period, the Judicial Court has not been applied to.

b) According to Para. 12(5), the Central Conference shall be entitled to assign further tasks to the Judicial Court. It did not do so at its last meeting.

In the reporting period, no such tasks have been assigned to the Judicial Court.

Zurich, 24 August 2021

Prof. Dr. Christa Tobler, LL.M.
(President of the Judicial Court CC CSE)

V. Other reports



The United Methodist Church in Europe

The Central and Southern Europe Central Conference

The Germany Central Conference

The Northern Europe and Eurasia Central Conference

Copenhagen 27. August 2021

Dear executive committees / central conference councils in Europe

Grace and peace during this challenging time as we deal with the implications of Covid-19 and begin to restart and reshape our churches and ministries.

In May, the three documents developed by the European bishops regarding the future of our denomination in Europe has been made available and you could share it among leadership and annual conferences throughout Europe over the past months.

Part of this material was a proposal to form a preparatory working group for envisioning the future cooperation in Europe prior to the postponed General Conference, this working group would have members from all annual conferences in Europe.

While this proposal has generated interest in a few annual conferences, most annual conferences have found that such a working group is not needed before the postponed General Conference. Based on the feed back from annual conferences we have decided not to pursue this proposal any further at this time.

However, the bishops will continue to meet regularly and to report back to the executive committees/central conference councils. All other parts of the material presented to you and to the annual conferences will continue to shape our work until and after the postponed General Conference.

We hope you will understand this decision though you may not all agree.

We wish you grace, wisdom and courage from Christ, as you provide leadership in the church.

Bishop Christian Alsted

Bishop Harald Rückert

Bishop Patrick Streiff

Round Table of the Central Conference CSE

1) Members of the Round Table

- Countries / ACs who have followed the invitation to the Round Table: AUT, CHE, FRA, HUN, MKD, POL, SRB
- Other: ALB (clear signal to remain in CC) and CZE (will not participate at this moment, possible participation „If the constellation would change to wider openness in the future“, North Africa (will not participate for now due to complicated situation in NA)
- BGR, SVK, ROU decided not to send a representative for the round table.
- Andrzej Malicki (POL) and Stefan Schröckenfuchs have been elected as co-chairs.

2) Meetings

- 1) The round table meet twice (June and September) by zoom
- 2) At the second meeting, the impact of the creation of the „Wesleyan Covenant Association Eastern Europa Chapter“ has been discussed
 1. The bishop informed about the creation of an Eastern Europe Chapter and the leading persons from BGR, SVK and ROU (as given by mail on July 22).
 2. The creation of this body is to be interpreted a step towards separation: The WCA is the driving force behind the founding of the Global Methodist Church and its breakaway from the United Methodist Church.
 3. This is underlined by the fact that the representatives of the participating countries refused to be part of the round table on the future of the CC CSE.
 4. The expected detachment of at least 3 countries from the CC CSE has consequences for the entire conference. In view of these circumstances, it is the task of the Round Table to find a common way forward for the future.

3) Discussion about a joint future in the light of the new development

- 1) None of the countries / conferences present at the round table has joined the WCA EEC.
- 2) There are strong voices in the UMC in France for a break from the UMC.
- 3) In all other countries / conferences there is generally a high or very high willingness to remain together as a central conference. However, it is expressed several times that this cannot be done at any price.

4) Conclusion and next steps

- 4) Overall, the question arises for all countries how it can be ensured that the mission is not endangered by outside influence; and how this can also be ensured for the future. The challenge, however, is that the needs (change or retention) in the various countries are almost diametrically opposed. Cohesion will therefore not be possible unless all those involved are already willing to meet each other. The goal of staying together costs everyone something. Love sometimes requires making sacrifices.

- 5) The members of the round table should therefore discuss the following questions with their church governing bodies until the next meeting:
 1. What must (at least) be ensured in order not to endanger your own mission? (What is "... not at any price ..."?)
 2. What can we do to strengthen the mission in those countries whose reality is different from ours. (What is our sacrifice for our brothers and sisters in other conferences?)
 3. What kind of guarantee can we give each other or do we need so that we can be sure that the promises we are making now will also be sustainable in the future.

5) Next meeting

Wednesday, October 13, 2021

For the Protocol

Stefan Schröckenfuchs and Andrzej Malicki

Round Table Central Conference CSE

3rd Meeting from October 13, 2021, Zoom

1) Present

Andrzej Malicki, Daniel Sjanta, Barbara Büniger, Lea Hafner, Lazlo Khaled, Stefan Schröckenfuchs

2) Discussion

The present members of the round table discussed about these questions, as given by our last meeting:

1. What must (at least) be ensured in order not to endanger your own mission? (What is "... not at any price ..."?)
2. What can we do to strengthen the mission in those countries whose reality is different from ours. (What is our sacrifice for our brothers and sisters in other conferences?)
3. What kind of guarantee can we give each other or do we need so that we can be sure that the promises we are making now will also be sustainable in the future.

The present members shared the following thoughts:

- not all were able to speak on behalf of their leadership boards, due to the short time. Especially from Switzerland, the delegates could only speak on behalf of themselves and their opinions.
- all members expressed their willingness to respect the conscientious choices of our brothers and sisters. Conscientious decisions other than our own should not lead to separation, but should deepen our respectful conversation about differences and similarities.
- all members expressed their willingness not to force one another to change others convictions.
- it is noticeable that trust is growing among the members of the round table. We trust each other that no-one wants to force others to change convictions or ways of doing things.
- managing to stay together is more important to some having a „perfect order“
- there seems to be growing understanding that the diversity within our central conference is rather a strength than a problem, as long as we do not force one another that „everyone should play the same instrument in this orchestra“.
- there seems to be a common understanding that the question of human sexuality is only one of several questions but not the core of faith or the most important thing in church. Rather, we see a growing polarization in church and society, that we don't want to promote additionally. Of course, we all have our opinions in this question, but we should still focus on other things; and we do not need to fight one another.
- there seems to be a growing understanding that in some countries the language of condemnation of homosexuality leads to problems for their mission, whereas in other countries a change of language of the definition of marriage as a covenant between a man and a woman would lead to problems.
- there seems to be a growing understanding that due to the different circumstances in our countries, a solution could be that some questions (reasons that make ordination impossible, prohibitions on blessings, strict condemnation of homosexuality) are not clarified by the central conference „Kirchenordnung“ (church order/BOD).

- some deletions could also lead to a higher stringency within the church order (e.g. if the decision on the ordination of a candidate is in all respects exclusively incumbent on the commission for ordained ministries).
- Bylaws on the level of annual conferences could be helpful for clarification in various ACs.
- there are still doubts as to whether agreements or promises can hold between us if they are called into question by external influences (decisions of the general conference, election of a new bishop).
- for this reason it seems to be crucial to keep and strengthen the praxis of adoption of the BOD in the process of translation, even if this means to become more autonomous from central conferences decisions.
- it is our common understanding, that the valid church order in our central conference is the german „Kirchenordnung 2005“ as published on the central conference webpage. This would be the basis for possible adoptions in the future.
- it seems to be our common understanding that our Kirchenordnung should rather be thinner than thicker.
- in addition, we need something like a covenant in which we celebrate the mutual promise to honor each other's traditions and not build up mutual pressure. A culture of remembrance will save us from making the experience of the Israelites in Egypt, "when a new Pharaoh came who knew nothing about Joseph ..."
- the work of the round table could be to focus on such a covenant, and to reflect on the tasks and aims of our central conference.
- in addition, it will be necessary to install a team that could work on suggestions which changes / deletions in the church order are possible in order to best serve the different needs in the various countries of our Central Conference.
- the bishop in his report 1.7(10) to the Executive members „on a common future within CC-CSE“ gave an oversight about possible scenarios or ways for our CC.

3) Next steps / meetings:

- sharing the insights of our discussion with other executive members from those countries, who are at the round table (not in the executive plenary, but on an evening) - at the executive meeting in Budapest, 21.-23. oct.
- receiving mandate from the executive to install a team that shall work on suggestions for our CC church order
- online meeting in December or January if needed
- physical meeting just before the Superintendents / Executive meeting in march 22 in Basel (21. or 22. March 22)
- additional physical meeting before central conference 22

For the protocol

Stefan and Andrzej

Eastern Europe Regional Chapter of the Wesleyan Covenant Association

On July 3, 2021, a regional chapter of the Wesleyan Covenant Association for Eastern Europe was established. The organizing meeting adopted the bylaws and elected the chapter's council:

Rev. Dr. Gabriella Kopas – Chairwoman
Rev. Jessica Morris – Ivanova – Secretary
Hristina Stoimenova – Treasurer
Rev. Dr. Daniel G. Topalski - President
Rev. Rares Calugar
Rev. Štefan Rendoš
Rev. Vatroslav Župančić

Thirty-eight founding members established the chapter – clergy and lay.

Bishop Patrick Streiff was informed about the new chapter via e-mail a few days after the organizing meeting. On July 14, 2021 the bishop invited Gabriella Kopas, Daniel Topalski, and Jessica Ivanova to a Zoom meeting to clarify the goals of the regional chapter.

The chapter is open for every Eastern European United Methodist within the Central Conference of Central and Southern Europe, and beyond who subscribe to the statement of faith and moral principles, Sections 4, 5, and 6 of Article I of the bylaws, and are willing to cooperate in their ministry through the WCA and to work for the realization of the WCA's goals.

The president represents the chapter in its external relations and exercises leadership and oversight of the spiritual and temporal affairs of the Eastern Europe WCA.

September 2021
Dr. Daniel G. Topalski

World Methodist Council (WMC)

There hasn't been a World Council meeting this year. Here is some important information:

1. The 22nd World Methodist Conference is postponed again. Whether it will be postponed by 1 or 2 years it is still to be decided. A new date for the Conference will be set in the Spring of 2022. There are discussions for the postponement of the World Methodist Council too but that has not been decided yet. The theme and place for the World Conference will remain the same, "On the Move", and the issues of Migration, Justice and Hospitality are evident to be more pertinent now than when the theme was initially chosen. More information on the Conference will be published as available in the "First Friday Newsletter", on the web pages of the Council and Conference, and Twitter.
2. The World Methodist Peace Award is given annually by the World Methodist Council to individuals and organizations who have contributed significantly to peace, justice and reconciliation. The recipients for the 2020 and 2021 Peace Awards are respectfully the late Bishop John K. Yambasu from Sierra Leone and Rev. Olav Pärnamets of Estonia.
3. A new venture is under consideration by the Steering Committee – a Peace Study School.

More information on the World Methodist Council can be found in the World Council's newsletter entitled "First Friday Letter": <http://firstfridayletter.worldmethodistcouncil.org>

Rev. Margarita Todorova

European Methodist Council (EMC)

The restrictions of the pandemic led to a decision of holding two European Methodist Councils in 2021 – a Spring meeting on 23rd April 2021 and an Autumn meeting on 14-15th October 2021. The first one was held online and the second one was planned to be held in person in Tallinn. However, the pandemic situation forced us to decide to hold that one online too.

The idea behind the decision of having two sessions was to have one of them more business oriented and the other one more group discussion oriented.

Here are the main issues discussed and decisions made:

1. Nominations for the Executive – In view of the delayed General Conference and the respective Central Conferences, therefore the delay of electing new members for the European Council, the member churches should point out alongside with their nominations that the person may have to serve a shorter period of time in the Executive. A gender balance has to be observed. Member churches are encouraged to nominate women as well as men as members to the Council so that there could be a good number of women among whom nominations to the Executive can be made.
2. CPCE meeting – a new President has been elected, there have been also discussions on human sexuality. David Turtle expressed his desire to step down because his lack of knowledge of German makes it difficult to engage fully in the work of CPCE. A replacement should be elected. One nomination of a German woman – theologian is coming to the Autumn meeting, Rev. Dr. theol. Annette Gruschwitz. She is suitable for the position. It is possible that she would be chosen as a member to the EMC after the German Central Conference is held. Until then she will be invited to attend the EMC meetings and give reports.
3. CCME – not knowing whether Gretje will continue to be in the European Council she may have to be replaced as the Council representative for CCME. It is not necessary that person to be a member of the Executive but he/she must report to the Executive.
4. The discussion groups at the Spring Council meeting shared stories and challenges brought by the Pandemic as well as how we see the future.
5. The Wesleyan Theology working group produced a substantial document on Wesleyan Theology in Europe. It is to be distributed electronically but some 200 hard copies are to be printed out for the World Conference venue.
6. Autumn EMC meeting: to be held online 14-15 October 10.00 – 13.00 Central European time. Business will be kept as short as possible. There will be a session on Estonia – a country report. The themes for the meeting will be the WMC themes on climate change, migration, peacebuilding. Bishop Rosemary Wenner is working on finding people to lead those sessions.
7. Every month on a Friday there is a half an hour online coffee meeting for the members of the Council who could attend. It is a time of sharing, mutual support and encouragement.
8. The 2022 EMC is to be held 30.9. – 3.10.2022 in Hamburg, Germany.

Rev. Margarita Todorova

Connectional Table

U.S. Regional Conference

In the March 2020 report to the Executive Committee in Vienna, I reported on the Connectional Table's proposal to create a U.S. Regional Conference. In October 2020, the Connectional Table decided to support the leadership of the Christmas Covenant Central Conference Outreach Team on Christmas Covenant legislation that includes Central Conferences. He sees this as an expression of his own commitment to institutional justice and to dismantling historic, systemic colonialism. The thrust of the Christmas Covenant in terms of regionalization and contextualization of the UMC is very much in line with the main concerns of the Connectional Table.

Conversations on Identity, Vision, Connexionalism and Mission

In April 2021, the Connectional Table unanimously decided to use the time until the General Conference, which has been postponed again, to have conversations in our church about our identity and core values, vision and mission. These conversations should help the church to identify and align with future challenges.

In the meantime, a group of people from all three European Central Conferences has been formed to prepare such conversations for this November. The topics will be the future of the UMC in Europe: Who are we, what is our mission, what unites us and where are we going together? All persons interested in these questions are invited, especially young Methodists and delegates to the Central Conferences. Five rounds of conversations are planned (three in English, two in German). They will take place online.

Nänikon, September 2021
Stefan Zürcher

In Mission Together (IMT)

Statistics

Currently, there are 34 IMT partnerships on our list. Some of them are very active – despite Covid-19. Others would probably be of limited vitality even without the pandemic. It is, however, certainly not helpful for the IMT partnership program if travels between the USA and Europe continue to be considerably restricted. And while there are encouraging examples that traveling and being in mission together is possible even now (both for individual and for whole teams), we have heard from many people who are longing for more freedom and security to meet with their partners again.

Leadership

In 2020, Matt Elliott, who started to serve as IMT Partnership Coordinator in 2017, expressed his wish to place this responsibility in other hands. We are grateful to Linda Rody from Virginia that she was and is willing to provide leadership to this program. We are also sincerely thankful to GBGM for approving this position in spite of the challenges of these days and thus for continue supporting IMT. But our biggest thanks go to Matt Elliott for his service over the course of the past years. **Matt** is a man who is **M**ission-minded, an **A**ttentive listener, he is **T**rustworthy, and he is a **T**eam-player. And while **EEB** usually stands for Eastern Europe and the Balkans, all of us experienced Matt to be an **E**mpathetic, **E**ncouraging **B**rother. He did not only ensure that the transition to Linda went as smoothly as possible, but he also expressed his wish to keep in touch with us over here.

Further Development of the IMT Program

In Spring 2021, we had several online meetings with the IMT Mission Coordinators. These meetings were devoted to moments of sharing, but also moments of thinking about the IMT program.

- One suggestion relates to the program as a whole. Against the background that it increasingly seems to be a challenge to commit to an IMT partnership (particularly for smaller churches and not only because of Covid-19), we thought of introducing three categories of partnerships:
Project Partnership — Serving-alongside Partnership — Covenant Partnership
Each further step includes a bigger commitment, but each step is mission. Or to say it better: Each step is being in mission together.
- A second suggestion is to change the names to make them more specific. On the one hand, the «Mission Coordinators» (i.e. the European representatives of the countries) are actually not those «coordinating the mission in their country». Their primary role is connected to the IMT program. Therefore, we suggest to name them **IMT Country Coordinators**. On the other hand, we think that the position of the «Advocates» (i.e. the ones serving in the Annual Conferences of the USA) might be better and more positively described with **IMT Ambassadors**. The conversation on these name changes will have to go on and particularly to include our friends in the USA.
- A third suggestion is to work on improving our communication – preparing a flyer that can be distributed, working on an IMT EEB website where country information and opportunities for volunteers can be published, etc. – The fact, however, that we have not done some further steps on this mirrors a reality all of us are facing: To do something really well needs time. And time is a rare commodity.
- So far, there have been some conversations on a next EEB Mission Summit, but no decisions have been taken yet – neither on a date nor on a location.

Urs Schweizer

General Board of Global Ministries

Mission Goals of Global Ministries

- Make disciples of Jesus Christ
- Strengthen, develop, and renew Christian congregations and communities
- Alleviate human suffering
- Seek justice, freedom, and peace

Vision for Global Ministries

As the mission and humanitarian assistance agency of The United Methodist Church, Global Ministries is the leading United Methodist body equipping, strengthening, and transforming people and communities for God's mission around the world.

In its work making disciples of Jesus Christ, Global Ministries facilitates mission so that churches and faith communities grow and flourish; justice, freedom, peace, health, and well-being prevail across racial, cultural, national, and political boundaries; and people of all faiths live in dignity and security, including where they face humanitarian disasters and their aftermath.

Based on its accessibility, adaptability, and cultural versatility in all global contexts; the faith and trust of its constituents, including donors; the rigor, integrity, and transparency of its financial stewardship; the diverse technical expertise of its global staff; and its demonstrated success attentively and cost-effectively collaborating with other United Methodist general agencies and the ecumenical organizations working in the same mission fields, Global Ministries desires to be the partner of choice for conferences, congregations, and others who want to participate in God's mission, keeping in mind that God's mission is far greater than we are. We can only help facilitate it.

Achievements 2020-2021

Among achievements during 2020-2021, the agency launched a comprehensive review of all programs and the development of strategic plans and performance indicators for each of them.

Guided by the agency's mission goals, this process included careful attention to five new guiding touchstones. Each of the touchstones is crucial for the agency's evolution at this time in the life of the church: 1. Sharpened focus for all programs, including program consolidations and realignments as needed. 2. Increased accountability among staff to deliver on achievable goals. 3. Increased collaboration within and beyond the agency. 4. Strengthened tools and commitment to gauging and reporting impact at all levels. 5. Strengthened communication within and across the units.

Complementing the agency's mission goals, as well as the agency's theology of mission, the five touchstones are helping ensure sound missional and fiscal management. Even more important, they are helping the agency further succeed in its vision for participating effectively in God's mission.

Missionaries

United Methodist missionaries and those who are called to serve as volunteers come from many nations and backgrounds and witness and serve in dramatically different locales and cultures. Reflecting the teachings of Jesus who commanded us to witness to the ends of the earth (Acts 13:47), they serve around the world in a range of activities and professions. 2020-2021 achievements: 300 missionaries served in 70 countries despite the pandemic. 21 long-term missionaries and seven young adult Global Mission Fellows participated in virtual training and commissioning. From 300 applicants, sixty young adults were invited to participate in the GMF program. Mission Discovery Events were offered to individuals interested in mission volunteer opportunities.

Evangelism and Church Revitalization

Global Ministries works to share the good news of God's love by planting new churches across the global regions. A key emphasis is on building relationships and capacities among global mission partners, across the wide Methodist family, to help how they lead and grow their church in their regions.

An ongoing strategy in countries with limited or no previous expression of Methodism is to organize and nurture Mission Initiatives. Since their inception, Mission Initiatives have played an effective role not only establishing new faith communities but also providing community outreach. Mission Initiatives have been previously established in Africa (Cameroon, Senegal, Central African Republic), Asia (Cambodia, Laos, Mongolia, Nepal, Thailand, Vietnam), Eurasia (Latvia, Lithuania, Russia), and Latin America (Honduras).

2020-2021 achievements: Global Ministries is further strengthening plans to ensure formal strategies are in place facilitating how each Mission Initiative can become over time an autonomous church, UMC district or conference, or other ecclesiastical body. Additionally, the agency has begun development of new tools for monitoring progress and measuring impact of Mission Initiatives and is encouraging increased communications across the agency and the connection among those with expertise to help advice the Mission Initiatives.

Global Health

Global Ministries' vision of abundant health for all focuses on efforts to promote physical, emotional, and spiritual well-being. Programs support preventive, promotive, and curative health care for economically vulnerable communities with a focus on women and children. The programs collaborate with communities and health workers through community and facility-based health programs and offer support to 120 United Methodist health facilities. In general, Global Ministries' global health programs prioritize work that meets the needs of the marginalized. The sense of urgency and the need for comprehensive services and partnership have greatly increased due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

2020-2021 achievements: Offered virtual COVID-19 prevention training for all Health Boards in Africa and other global partners, and granted over \$3.5 million to assist partners' response to COVID-19; created communication strategies on COVID prevention, management, and preparation for vaccine rollout, with United Methodist Communications and the Health Boards; participated with partners on the equitable distribution of vaccines; incorporated water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH) into Global Health Unit programming to improve services at

United Methodist health facilities, in addition to community interventions; and facilitated ongoing virtual capacity-building training with partners on supervision, financial management, health information systems and technical aspect of programs.

Humanitarian Relief and Recovery

In the area of Humanitarian Relief and Recovery, Global Ministries provides support for disaster response for affected communities, from immediate relief through recovery stages, via the agency's non-sectarian United Methodist Committee on Relief (UMCOR). Working with United Methodist, Methodist/Wesleyan, faith-based, and NGO partners, UMCOR focuses on reducing the severity and intensity of harm to communities caused by storms, flooding, fires, civil unrest, and other events.

2020-2021 achievements: UMCOR responded to the severe 2020 hurricane season in Central America with eight projects in five countries, assisting 2,300 households with food, hygiene, and shelter. Provided flood relief to over 20,000 individuals across ten projects in Africa. UMCOR provided COVID-related support, including public health education, medical supplies/equipment, vaccination campaigns, and children's educational materials, to seventeen partners in twelve countries: Bangladesh, El Salvador, India, Indonesia, Mongolia, Myanmar, Nepal, Philippines, Sri Lanka, Syria, Uganda, and Ukraine.

In addition to UMCOR disaster response, Global Ministries continues to focus on Global Migration, reflecting a longstanding commitment. The United Methodist Church recognizes that migrants often suffer along their journey, including physical, emotional, economic, and spiritual trauma and loss, and sometimes legal jeopardy. In 2020-2021, Global Ministries granted \$1.2 million in support of Church World Service to expand work aiding migrants on their journeys through transitional shelters and resettlement; \$100,000 to ACT Alliance (120 countries) for its migration and displacement program staffing; and funding for humanitarian and psychosocial support for internally displaced persons in El Salvador through Comcavis Trans, an agency that focuses on human rights for transgender persons.

Two additional programs of increasing importance, related to relief and recovery, include Environmental Sustainability and the Yambasu Agriculture Initiative. The Environmental Sustainability program was established to steward the church's care for God's creation and set a foundation for ambitious climate action. Key achievements in 2020-2021 included integration of environmental sustainability into church-based ministries ministry through environment-focused projects, tools, and leadership development, as well as adoption of a goal of net-zero emissions for global economies.

New for 2020-2021, the Yambasu Agriculture Initiative is named for the late Bishop John K. Yambasu. Reflecting Bishop Yambasu's vision, the initiative recognizes that the church in Africa has the potential to be self-sustaining using its vast land holdings. Working across African episcopal areas, Global Ministries is supporting the church as it creates commercial farming enterprises bringing new economic and employment opportunities, empowerment and transformation, and food security.

Challenges

In the year ahead, Global Ministries will continue adjusting and responding to the pandemic. For the agency itself, this will entail further development of policies enabling staff who work from home or other remote settings as they continue in ministry with their partners regionally and worldwide. At this juncture, many of these new policies have already been woven into the

life of the agency and have so far demonstrated the feasibility of effective ministry even during times of physical constraint.

Programmatically, the agency will continue sharpening its programs with the future of the church in mind. After the year of assessment noted above, seventeen programs have emerged. The effectiveness of these programs, with their newly developed strategic plans and performance indicators, will be a focus for the agency as it responds to changes that may occur across the denomination because of the General Conference, currently scheduled for August 29-September 6, 2022, in Minneapolis, Minnesota, USA. Collaboration among the general agencies, to help accentuate their individual and collective impact, will also continue to be a focus in the coming year.

Andreas Stämpfli

Commission on theological education in central conferences (CCTEF)

The commission met another time, but only online in an abbreviated meeting on 15-17 February 2021. Unfortunately, the minutes are still not out, which is not due to the good secretary (Irene Buchmüller), but to the many things that are left undone with the current reorganisations and reductions of staff in General Conference agencies.

After a decline in 2019, US apportionments have recovered slightly for 2020, but not to the original levels of earlier years. As a result, the 2020 apportionments at the February 2021 meeting allowed for distribution to projects of around USD 1.8million (previous year 1.7 million). As in previous years, USD 50,000 was allocated to each of the four bishop areas in Europe. As the General Conference has been postponed from 2020 to 2022, the current budget will be extended by two years until the General Conference can decide on a new budget. So - provided the apportionment in the USA do not drop too drastically - we can also expect an amount of approximately USD 50,000 for projects from the CC-CSE for 2022 and 2023.

In Europe we try to pay at least 10% of the project money into the Endowment Fund for Theological Education in Central Conferences in order to build up long-term support. The Endowment Fund has decided to start already, in the sense of a "first gift", to contribute 1% each year to CCTEF projects (USD 11'000 for the first time in 2021) and to continue to add the remaining interest income to the fund capital.

At the meeting I also proposed that news reports of realised projects are made for promoting the support of theological education in Central Conferences (both for CCTEF before the next General Conference and for the Endowment Fund). Unfortunately, the continuation of this work could also not be implemented by the General Board of Higher Education and Ministry as planned.

The following project sums have been approved for our Central Conference (in USD):

Bulgaria	3,000
Poland	5,000
Serbia	2,350
Slowakia	2,500
Czech Republic	7,000
Hungary	17,000
For Endowment Fund	13,150
Total	50,000

It is expected that the next meeting will take place in February 2022 and will distribute funds collected in the USA in 2021. Projects for theological education in the CC-MSE will continue to be funded exclusively through CCTEF and no longer through Connexio or other sources. Submission of projects will be possible from approximately November 2021. Superintendents will receive a reminder email.

Bishop Dr. Patrick Streiff

Conference of European Churches (CEC)

In my report, I emphasize the activities of CEC in the area of human rights (mainly freedom of religion and beliefs), where I am involved as a member of the Thematic groups on human rights.

The Conference of European Churches (CEC), together with the European Jewish Congress (EJC) Security and Crisis Centre (SACC), Faith Matters, and the European Buddhist Union, has received a €3 million grant from the European Commission to assist in the protection of places of worship in Europe.

The outcome of this interfaith partnership, representing Christian, Muslim and Jewish communities across Europe, is called Safer and Stronger Communities in Europe (SASCE).

It is the first time that four European religious organizations will be working together on a European Commission-funded joint project to enhance security.

The SASCE project aims to increase security in and around places of worship and within and between communities. The four organizations will develop tools to strengthen security awareness and crisis management. A network of coordinators will disseminate the tools through training and briefings for religious communities and broader communication campaigns.

CEC's Thematic Group on Human Rights plays a pivotal role in implementing the project led by CEC Executive Secretary Dr. Elizabeta Kitanovic. Continuing with CEC's previous work on the topic, several related CEC activities will add to the project, such as an upcoming publication on protecting holy sites and worship places.

This topic also formed the thematic background for CEC's next 2021 Summer School on Human Rights and Freedom of Religion or Belief and Security. The event prepared by CEC's Thematic Group on Human Rights explored how places of worship are targeted by intolerance and hatred, even violence and destruction, putting religious freedom at stake. The Summer School highlighted that believers must be able to visit and worship at such sites and that the state and society are obliged to protect their rights. In addition, the Summer School conducted training for community members and leaders, highlighting the critical task of the state to offer protection to religious communities, including preventive measures – especially in contexts where threats are already tangible. Finally, an interfaith Guide for Law Enforcement was presented as part of the SASCE project.

September 2021

Dr. Daniel G. Topalski

Community of Protestant Churches in Europe (CPCE)

The ordinary CPCE council meeting took place in Athens on September 23-25, 2021. Proxy member Jorgen Thaarup participated and represented the Methodist churches in the council. Same information for the EMC and the UMC Central Conference's Councils:

The consequences for the 75 European member churches of the Covid-19 pandemic were discussed and analysed. A report of our common experiences is sent out to the churches from the general secretary Maria Fischer. Our presence in Athens gave us opportunity to visit the Greek Evangelical Church's well expanded work with incoming refugees, and the CPCE council addressed the refugees' situation in Europe and again invited churches and governments to take care for the incoming refugees and not send back people in deep crisis to war zones.

Several theological projects of studies are well started up. One of them is the study of the Lord's Supper. Attached to this report is an overview of study processes in the CPCE for the second period of this term of office, 2018-2024.

The coming 50th Anniversary of the Leuenberg Konkordium are in the planning process and many different activities will stress the purpose of our community of protestant churches in Europe. More churches are in contact with the administration in Wien for the reason to become members of the CPCE. However, the theological studies and common positions have led to some churches have withdrawn their membership of the CPCE. It has been the theological positions on openness for women in ordained ministry, and the position that human sexuality, and different positions on ethical items, cannot be a subject for church splitting. Attached to this report is an overview of planned 50th Anniversary activities.

The council voted Rev. Dr. Anette Gruschwitz from Marburg new member of the CPCE council in replacement of outgoing Rev. David Turtle as the Methodist member of the council.

The new general secretary Maria Fischer is the first full time general secretary in the history of CPCE. His work has lifted the effect of the CPCE up on a new level, and the council is very happy with the situation at the office in Wien. Another change at the office in Wien is the retirement of the long-time study secretary, Professor Martin Friedrich, who has been a key writer behind many study documents since the beginning of the CPCE. The retirement of Martin Friedrich means that a living memory of the CPCE will not be there longer at the end of this year.

Next CPCE General Assembly will be in Sibiu in Romania in beginning of September 2024. The Methodist Rev. Rares Calugar is member of the Local Host Committee.

September 2021

Jørgen Thaarup, Proxy Member of the CPCE Council

Attachments:

1. CPCE council agendas for 2nd half of term
2. CPCE study programs for next 2 years
3. CPCE plans 50th anniversary activities

**Council sessions re. General Assembly
2nd half of 2018-2024 term of office**

General Assembly			Documents
4 th session	2021	Online	27-29 January 2021
Presentation of a venue			
5 th session	2021	Athens	23-25 September 2021
Set venue			Interim review of work directives from Basle
Set timing of the conference			
Project outline			
Determine scope of participants and number of delegates			
Convene steering group, local committee, hosting committee and worship committee			Set deadlines for submitting documents to Council sessions
6 th session	2022	Strasbourg	16-18 March 2022
Subject and aims of the General Assembly			
Set dates for the conference			
7 th session	2022	Oslo	28-30 September 2022
Resolution of slogan for the General Assembly			Handle results of work on projects so far
Working methods at the General Assembly			Christian talk of God - release for response process
Financial plan			
8 th session	2023	Debrecen	22-23 March 2023
Finalise number of delegates and conference fee before sending out invitations			Presentation of commemorative volume "50 years of the Leuenberg Agreement"
Resolution of logo for the General Assembly			Study of the Lord's Supper - release for response process
Resolution of liturgical concept			Guide (Sexuality & gender) - approval of text
9 th session	2023	Sibiu	September 2023
Legal texts for the General Assembly			
Inspection of premises			
Set study groups			
Appoint experts			
Online registration period			
10 th session	2024	Place?	February 2024
Appoint Council's delegates			Christian talk of God - release for General Assembly
Appoint legal adviser, Nominating Committee, Drafting Committee			Lord's Supper - release for General Assembly
11 th session	2024	Sibiu	August/September 2024
Resolution of list of proposed candidates for the Nominating Committee and Drafting Committee			
Resolution regarding chairing and secretarial duties for plenary sessions			
Resolution of group allocations			

CPCE Study Programs for next 2 years

2021			
October / Oktober	5.	online	Autumn Academy of CRC / Herbstakademie der KKR
	8.-10.	Rom	Corona-Learnings II/ Was lernen wir von Corona II
	23.-25.	London	Advisory Board Migration/ Fachbeirat Migration
November	3.	online	Delegation for dialogue with the PCPCU / Delegation für den Dialog mit dem Einheitsrat
	25./26.	Frankfurt	Lord' s Supper / Theologie und Praxis des Abendmahls
	28.	Reykjavik	CPCE entry event with Iceland / Feierlichkeiten zur Aufnahme Islands in die GEKE
2022			
February/ Februar	25.-27.	Warschau	European Regional Pre-Assembly for WCC 11 th General Assembly / Europäische Regionalversammlung zur Vorbereitung der 11. ÖRK-Vollversammlung
March/März	16.-18.3.	Straßburg	6 th Council Meeting/ 6. Ratssitzung
April	27.-29.04.	Luxemburg	Meeting of the NW Regional Group /Treffender NW Regionalgruppe
May/Mai	1.-2.	St. Gallen	Anniversary and General Assembly CRC / Jubiläum und Vollversammlung KKR
	9.-12.	Wroctaw	South Eastern Europe Regional Group Conference / Regionalgruppenkonferenz Südosteuropa
	11.-15.	Wien	Young Theology Forum in Europe / Forum junge Theologie in Europa
June/Juni	1./2.	Paris	Regional Group Leaders' Meeting / Regionalgruppenleitertreffen
September	31.8. - 8.9.	Karlsruhe	WCC General Assembly / ÖRK -Vollversammlung
	28.-30.	Oslo	7 th Council Meeting/ 7. Ratssitzung
October/ Oktober	6./7.	Wien	Women in Church Leadership / Frauen in kirchlichen Leitungssämtern
	26.-30.	Cambridge	Conference Young Theologians / Konferenz Junge Theologen
November	8.-11.	Cluj-Napoca	Liturgical Consultation / Gottesdienstkonsultation
2023			
February/ Februar	20.-22.	Hildesheim	Consultation Lord's Supper / Konsultation Abendmahl
	22.-26.	Debrecen	Council Meeting and Scientific Conference "50 Years LA"/ Ratssitzung und Wiss. Tagung "50 Jahre LK"
June/Juni	7.-11. 6. tbc	Nürnberg	38 th Protestant Kirchentag /38. Evangelischer Kirchentag CEC General Assembly / KEK-Vollversammlung
September	13.-19.9	Krakow	General Assembly of the LWF /Vollversammlung des LWB

**Project dossier for 50th Anniversary
of the Leuenberg Agreement
(Status at: July 2021)**

A) Publications

Project	Working title	Format	Subject matter/ Target group	Responsible / Partner(s)	Dates
A-1	Commemorative publication 50 years of the Leuenberg Agreement and 65 years with Martin Friedrich, with essays by Friedrich	German/English, EVA-Leipzig	Academic interest, anniversary gift	Friedrich/ Fischer	Publication in October 2022, presentation at academic conference
A-2	Conference proceedings from the academic conference in Debrecen	German/English, EVA-Leipzig?	Academic interest	Produced / coordinated by University of Debrecen / academic advisory board	Start in summer 2023, complete before GA 2024
A-3	Commemorative brochure: The CPCE's reception during 50 years of Leuenberg	Multiple languages	General target audience, presenting areas of work and processes	Head office and CPCE's committees	For the anniversary
A-4	History of the CPCE 1981-2006	In an academic series	Critical external representation not commissioned by the CPCE	Christian Witt	Presentation of work at academic conference

B) Central events

Project	Working title	Format	Subject matter/ Target group	Responsible / Partner(s)	Dates
B-1	Academic conference	Combined with Council session including proxies	Theme for the conference to be forward-looking	Reformed University of Debrecen / academic advisory board	March 2023, Debrecen
B-2	Gathering of synod members		incl. visit to European institutions in Strasbourg, involving more young people	Baden Regional Church	2023, Bad Herrenalb
B-3	German Evangelical Church Congress (Kirchentag)	CPCE stand, events, celebration of Lord's Supper	Broad audience		7-11 June 2023, Nuremberg
B-4	Consultation on the Lord's Supper		Delegates from member churches		22-24 February 2023, Hildesheim
B-5	CEC Pre-assembly		Delegates from member churches prior to CEC General Assembly		Spring 2023, Vienna

B) Decentralised events

Project	Working title	Format	Subject matter/ Target group	Responsible / Partner(s)	Dates
C-1	Pastoral colleges		Opening up pastoral colleges to participants from other member churches		Throughout the year
C-2	Annual General Assembly of the Evangelical Federation			Evangelical Federation	Stuttgart
C-3	Synods		Synod meetings on CPCE topics / synod members / Council members visiting synods	Member churches	
C-4					

D) Digital and operational projects

Project	Working title	Format	Subject matter/ Target group	Responsible / Partner(s)	Dates
D-1	Templates for worship in many languages				
D-2	Draft Celebration of the Lord's Supper				
D-3	Anniversary logo	(including email signature and stamp for franking)	General communication		
D-4	Microsite / website	With numerous testimonials / video messages (incl. young people)			
D-5	Online calendar of events				
D-6	Video and social media				
D-7	Anniversary film				

CPCE South-East Europe Group 2020-2021

In 2019 the Regional Group South-East Europe of the Community of Protestant Churches in Europe (CPCE) began its work on the thematic field of church and democracy in Salzburg (Austria). The work should have continued in 2020 in Wrocław/Breslau (Poland). This was not possible due to the Corona pandemic.

Instead, the group met for a video conference on June 29, 2020. In this conference the members shared with each other their personal situation and the current situation of the churches in this exceptional situation.

In terms of content, we discussed three topics:

1. "Balancing of interests": social-ethical reflections in the thematic field "Church and Democracy": question of justice, interests of so-called "weak", in the Corona crisis.
2. "Church as servant": Ecclesiological reflections on the (changed?) task of church in times of Corona (new needs, grassroots initiatives, strengthening/weakening of church leadership and church institutions).
3. "The vulnerable human being": anthropological reflections on a (new?) human self-understanding.

From June 22-24, 2021, the group continued to work on the theme of Church & Democracy through a video conference: the servant role of the Church in society was the focus of the keynote presentations, discussion groups, and plenary sessions.

Although we regretted very much that we could not have a meeting in a common place again this year, the consultations of the online meeting were extremely fruitful and the fraternal togetherness very good even over the distances (and partly poor internet connections).

The following interim summary can already be given: There are differences in the understanding of democracy and the role of the church in the different churches and countries. However, there is great unanimity in the view that the church has a servant role in society. Only as a servant is the church truly the body of Christ in the world.

Daniel Topalski (Bulgaria) and Frank Moritz-Jauk (Austria) participated from our side in an online consultation "Spiritual Offerings in the Digital Space", which was organized by CPCE together with the Center for Evangelical Theology East (ZETO) from June 17-19, 2020. The topics were new media of proclamation, online services as liturgical events in the context of congregational life, online services and church leadership.

Pastor Novica Brankov (UMC in Serbia)

Pastor Martin Obermeir-Siegrist (UMC in Austria)

VI. Statistics

Based on the Annual Conferences 2020

Bezirke Gemeinden Glieder Gottesdienste										
	Bezirke	Gemeinden	Bekennende Glieder	Getaufte Glieder	Freunde	Total Pers.	Gottesdienstbesuch Erwachsene	Gottesdienstbesuch Kinder	Bekennende Glieder pro Bezirk	Bekennende Glieder pro Gemeinde
nach Ländern										
Albanien	3	6	195	2	80	277	200	60	65.0	32.5
Algerien	4	5	146	0	32	178	185	20	36.5	29.2
Belgien	1	1	45		15	60	25	15	45.0	45.0
Bulgarien	9	30	1137	44	706	1887	831	275	126.3	37.9
Frankreich	17	17	1045	7	478	1530	933	162	61.5	61.5
Kroatien	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		
Makedonien	7	11			2000	2000			0	0.0
Österreich	7	8	735	498	349	1582	287	57	105.0	91.9
Polen	20	37	1895	255	251	2401	?		94.8	51.2
Rumänien	2	3	32	2	110	144	64	17	16.0	10.7
Schweiz	69	105	4820	436	3436	8692	3916	807	69.9	45.9
Serbien	9	14	416	107	256	779	375	45	46.2	29.7
Slowakische Republik	7	13	222	157	134	513	220		31.7	17.1
Tschechische Republik	15	22	881	202	489	1572	621		58.7	40.0
Tunesien		1				0				
Ungarn	12	28	498	571	876	1945	1273	305	41.5	17.8
Total	182	301	12'067	2'281	9'212	23'560	8'930	1'763	61.4	39.3
<i>Vorjahr 2019</i>	183	305	12'262	2'295	9'000	23'557	8'832	1'876	67.0	40.2
<i>Differenz +/-</i>	-1	-4	-195	-14	212	3	98	-113	-5.6	-0.9
nach Konferenzen										
Prov. JK Österreich	7	8	744	498	349	1591	287	57	105	92.9
Prov. JK Bulgarien-Rumänien	11	33	1192	46	816	2054	895	292	142.3	50.6
JK Schweiz-Frankreich-Nordafrika	90	129	6215	443	3961	10619	5059	989	212.8	243.6
JK Tschechien-Slowakei	22	35	1131	359	623	2113	841	0	90.4	64.1
Prov. JK Ungarn	12	28	516	571	876	1963	1273	305	43.0	18.4
JK Polen	20	37	1924	255	251	2430	?		96.2	52.0
Prov. JK RS-MK-AL	19	31	631	109	2336	3056	575	105	33.2	20.4
	181	301	12353	2281	9212	23826	8930	1748	723	541.9

**Pfarrpersonen
Mitarbeitende**

nach Ländern	Personen in voller Verb. zur JK aktiv	Mitglieder auf Probe + a.o. Mitglieder aktiv	Lokalphstoren aktiv	Laienmitarbeiter aktiv	Volle Verbindung + a.o. Mitgl. i. Ruhestand	Clergy aktiv	Clergy total	Beginn der Arbeit
Albanien	0	1	2	1	0	3	3	1922/1990
Algerien	0	0	1	2	3	1	4	1886
Belgien	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1920/2008
Bulgarien	7	2	9	0	2	18	20	1857/1989
Frankreich	8	2	2	1	11	12	23	1791/1868/1907
Kroatien	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1923/1995
Makedonien	1	0	3	3	2	4	6	1873/1921
Österreich	5	1	2	1	1	8	9	1870
Polen	21	4	0	2	4	25	29	1895/1920
Rumänien	2	1	0	0	0	3	3	2011
Schweiz	54	6	23	0	48	83	131	1840/1856/1866
Serbien	8	0	3	1	0	11	11	1898
Slowakische Republik	5	1	3	17	1	9	10	1924
Tschechische Republik	10	0	2	1	6	12	18	1920
Tunesien	1	0	0	0	0	1	1	
Ungarn	10	0	2	2	6	12	18	1898/1905
Total	132	18	52	31	84	202	286	
<i>Vorjahr 2019</i>	133	20	63	31	86	216	302	
<i>Differenz +/-</i>	-1	-2	-11	0	-2	-14	-16	

Bekennende Glieder:	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	Differenz
Prov. JK Österreich	748	738	732	742	746	744	-2
Prov. JK Bulgarien	1'297	1'290	1'277	1'220	1'195	1192	-3
JK Schweiz-Frankreich	7'107	6'932	6'812	6'605	6'407	6215	-192
JK Tschechien-Slowakei	1'147	1'157	1'125	1'160	1'179	1131	-48
Prov. JK Ungarn	456	467	479	477	509	516	7
JK Polen	2'248	2'146	2'083	2'105	1'925	1924	-1
Prov. JK Serbien-Maked.	497	489	467	457	434	631	197
Albanien und Kroatien	132	142	142	169	169	-	-169
Total	13'632	13'361	13'117	12935	12564	12353	-211
+ Bulgarien							
+ Makedonien	1'000	1'000	1'000	1'200	1'200	1'200	0
Total Gesamt	14'632	14361	14117	14'135	13'764	13553	-211
<i>Änderung in %</i>	-4.23	-1.85	-1.7	+0.13	-2.62	-1.53	

VII. Financial Reports

Statement 2020

Treasurer: Iris Bullinger

Einnahmen	Budget 2017 - 2020		Rechnung 2017	
Beiträge Jährliche Konferenzen				
Schweiz	180'000.00		45'000.00	
Übrige Länder	61'000.00	241'000.00	15'207.48	60'207.48
Diverse Einnahmen		2'000.00		9'322.00
Total Einnahmen		243'000.00		69'529.48
Ausgaben				
Zentralkonferenz inkl. Protokoll	60'000.00		45'784.76	
Sitzungen Büro/Exek. inkl. Prot.	55'000.00	115'000.00	0.00	45'784.76
AG Theologie u. Ord. Dienste	8'000.00		1'927.75	
AG Kirche und Gesellschaft	3'000.00		0.00	
AG Kinder und Jugend	3'000.00		0.00	
AG Liturgie	3'000.00		785.60	
AG Kirchenordnung	3'000.00		0.00	
AG Frauendienst *	0.00		0.00	
AG Bischofsamt	1'000.00		0.00	
Reserve für a.o. Aufträge	2'000.00	23'000.00	0.00	2'713.35
Superintendententreffen	30'000.00		2'836.83	
Seminare	0.00	30'000.00	0.00	2'836.83
Beiträge der Zentralkonferenz an:				
Weltrat	15'000.00		2'921.40	
Europäischer Rat	29'000.00		6'149.73	
Jugendrat (EMYC)	20'000.00	64'000.00	4'386.80	13'457.93
Verschiedenes				
Druckkosten	2'000.00		0.00	
Bibliothek / Archiv	30'000.00		7'500.00	
Übrige Kosten	2'000.00	34'000.00	1'739.30	9'239.30
Total Ausgaben		266'000.00		74'032.17
Einnahmen		243'000.00		69'529.48
Ausgaben		266'000.00		74'032.17
Einnahmen-Überschuss				
Ausgaben-Überschuss		-23'000.00		-4'502.69

* Die Kosten der AG Frauendienst werden vom FrauenNetzwerk der EMK Schweiz getragen.

Einnahmen	Rechnung 2018		Rechnung 2019	
Beiträge Jährliche Konferenzen				
Schweiz	45'000.00		45'000.00	
Übrige Länder	15'250.00	60'250.00	17'061.51	62'061.51
Diverse Einnahmen		370.85		291.20
Total Einnahmen		60'620.85		62'352.69
Ausgaben				
Zentralkonferenz inkl. Protokoll	0.00		0.00	
Sitzungen Büro/Exek. inkl. Prot.	16'181.36	16'181.36	28'738.86	28'738.86
AG Theologie u. Ord. Dienste	3'216.40		1'907.64	
AG Kirche und Gesellschaft	0.00		0.00	
AG Kinder und Jugend	0.00		0.00	
AG Liturgie	2'638.40		2'133.45	
AG Kirchenordnung	0.00		0.00	
AG Frauendienst *	0.00		0.00	
AG Bischofsamt	0.00		0.00	
Reserve für a.o. Aufträge	0.00	5'854.80	0.00	4'041.09
Superintendententreffen	5'293.70		15'515.70	
Seminare	0.00	5'293.70	0.00	15'515.70
Beiträge der Zentralkonferenz an:				
Weltrat	2'999.99		2'928.45	
Europäischer Rat	6'652.47		6'322.44	
Jugendrat (EMYC)	4'755.60	14'408.06	4'598.40	13'849.29
Verschiedenes				
Druckkosten	527.90		340.65	
Bibliothek Archiv	7'627.50		7'500.00	
Übrige Kosten	9'040.15	17'195.55	511.48	8'352.13
Total Ausgaben		58'933.47		67'497.07
Einnahmen		60'620.85		62'352.69
Ausgaben		58'933.47		67'497.07
Einnahmen-Überschuss		1'687.38		
Ausgaben-Überschuss				-5'144.38

* Die Kosten der AG Frauendienst werden vom FrauenNetzwerk der EMK Schweiz getragen.

Einnahmen	Rechnung 2020		Konsolidiert 2017-2020	
Beiträge Jährliche Konferenzen				
Schweiz	45'000.00		180'000.00	
Übrige Länder	13'414.51	58'414.51	60'933.48	240'933.48
Diverse Einnahmen		176.75		10'160.80
Total Einnahmen		58'591.26		251'094.28
Ausgaben				
Zentralkonferenz inkl. Protokoll	0.00		45'784.76	
Sitzungen Büro/Exek. inkl. Prot.	14'681.22	14'681.22	59'601.44	105'386.20
AG Theologie u. Ord. 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	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	2'499.85		23'146.08	
Seminare	0.00	2'499.85	0.00	23'146.08
Beiträge der Zentralkonferenz an:				
Weltrat	2'790.45		11'640.29	
Europäischer Rat	6'158.85		25'283.49	
Jugendrat (EMYC)	4'290.40	13'239.70	18'031.20	54'954.98
Verschiedenes				
Druckkosten	311.75		1'180.30	
Bibliothek / Archiv	7'500.00		30'127.50	
Übrige Kosten	1'908.53	9'720.28	13'199.46	44'507.26
Total Ausgaben		40'141.05		240'603.76
Einnahmen		58'591.26		251'094.28
Ausgaben		40'141.05		240'603.76
Einnahmen-Überschuss		18'450.21		10'490.52
Ausgaben-Überschuss				

* Die Kosten der AG Frauendienst werden vom FrauenNetzwerk der EMK Schweiz getragen.

Balance Sheet of December 31, 2020

	Fr.	Fr.
Aktiven		
Zahlstelle EMK	185'587.21	
Guthaben	461.30	
Passiven		
Kreditoren / Trans. Passiven		9'051.85
Rückstellungen		0.00
Eigenkapital		158'546.45
Ergebnis		+ 18'450.21
Total	186'048.51	186'048.51

Plan-les-Ouates, 28. Januar 2021, 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 5-year period between the two Central Conferences.

The accounts for 2020 close with a profit of CHF 18'450.21 (cumulative profit for 2017 - 2020 of CHF 10'490.52). The stated equity capital as of December 31, 2020 amounts to CHF 176'996.66.

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 2020 financial statements and balance sheet as at December 31, 2020 and requests that the Treasurer, Iris Bullinger, discharge should be granted and thanked for her clean and diligent work.

Zurich, September 27, 2021

*The auditor:
Adrian Wenziker*

Budget 2022

Einnahmen	Budget 2017-2020		Budget 2021 + 25% (exkl. ZK)	
Beiträge Jährliche Konferenzen				
Schweiz	180'000.00		45'000.00	
Frankreich	18'000.00		4'500.00	
Österreich	13'000.00		3'250.00	
Bulgarien	6'000.00		1'500.00	
Makedonien	3'000.00		750.00	
Serbien	3'000.00		750.00	
Ungarn	6'000.00		1'500.00	
Slowakei	3'000.00		750.00	
Tschechien	3'000.00		750.00	
Polen	6'000.00		1'500.00	
Nordafrika	0.00	41'000.00	0.00	60'250.00
Gaben und Zinseinnahmen		2'000.00		500.00
Total Einnahmen		243'000.00		60'750.00
Ausgaben				
Zentralkonferenz inkl. Protokoll	60'000.00		0.00	
Sitzungen Exekutive inkl. Protokoll	55'000.00	115'000.00	13'750.00	13'750.00
AG Theologie und Ordinierte Dienste	8'000.00		2'000.00	
AG Kirche und Gesellschaft	3'000.00		750.00	
AG Kinder und Jugend	3'000.00		750.00	
AG Liturgie	3'000.00		750.00	
AG Kirchenordnung und Rechtsfragen	3'000.00		750.00	
AG Frauendienst	0.00*		0.00	
AG Bischofsamt	1'000.00		250.00	
Reserve für a.o. Aufträge	2'000.00	23'000.00	500.00	5'750.00
Superintendententreffen	30'000.00		7'500.00	
Weitere Tagungen	0.00	30'000.00	0.00	7'500.00
Beiträge der Zentralkonferenz an:				
Weltrat	15'000.00		3'750.00	
Europäischer Rat	29'000.00		7'250.00	
Jugendrat (EMYC)	20'000.00	64'000.00	5'000.00	16'000.00
Verschiedenes				
Druckkosten	2'000.00		500.00	
Bibliothek / Archiv	30'000.00		7'500.00	
Übrige Kosten	2'000.00	34'000.00	6'500.00	14'500.00
Total Ausgaben		266'000.00		57'500.00
Einnahmen		243'000.00		60'750.00
Ausgaben		266'000.00		57'500.00
Einnahmen-Überschuss				3'250.00
Ausgaben-Überschuss		-23'000.00		

Budget 2022

Einnahmen	Budget 2022 + 25% (inkl. ZK)		Budget kummuliert 2017-2022	
Beiträge Jährliche Konferenzen				
Schweiz	45'000.00		270'000.00	
Frankreich	4'500.00		27'000.00	
Österreich	3'250.00		19'500.00	
Bulgarien	1'500.00		9'000.00	
Makedonien	750.00		4'500.00	
Serbien	750.00		4'500.00	
Ungarn	1'500.00		9'000.00	
Slowakei	750.00		4'500.00	
Tschechien	750.00		4'500.00	
Polen	1'500.00		9'000.00	
Nordafrika	0.00	60'250.00	0.00	361'500.00
Gaben und Zinseinnahmen		500.00		3'000.00
Total Einnahmen		60'250.00		364'500.00
Ausgaben				
Zentralkonferenz inkl. Protokoll	60'000.00		120'000.00	
Sitzungen Exekutive inkl. Protokoll	13'750.00	73'750.00	82'500.00	202'500.00
AG Theologie und Ordinierte Dienste	2'000.00		12'000.00	
AG Kirche und Gesellschaft	750.00		4'500.00	
AG Kinder und Jugend	750.00		4'500.00	
AG Liturgie	750.00		4'500.00	
AG Kirchenordnung und Rechtsfragen	750.00		4'500.00	
AG Frauendienst	0.00		0.00	
AG Bischofsamt	250.00		1'500.00	
Reserve für a.o. Aufträge	10'500.00	15'750.00	13'000.00	44'500.00
Superintendententreffen	7'500.00		45'000.00	
Weitere Tagungen	0.00	7'500.00	0.00	45'000.00
Beiträge der Zentralkonferenz an:				
Weltrat	3'750.00		22'500.00	
Europäischer Rat	7'250.00		43'500.00	
Jugendrat (EMYC)	5'000.00	16'000.00	30'000.00	96'000.00
Verschiedenes				
Druckkosten	500.00		3'000.00	
Bibliothek / Archiv	7'500.00		45'000.00	
Übrige Kosten	6'500.00	14'500.00	15'000.00	63'000.00
Total Ausgaben		127'500.00		451'000.00
Einnahmen		60'250.00		364'500.00
Ausgaben		127'500.00		451'000.00
Einnahmen-Überschuss				
Ausgaben-Überschuss		-66'750.00		-86'500.00

VIII. 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 Bünger (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)
-------	--

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 Bünger (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
-----------------------	--------

Ecumenical Youth Council in Europe (EYCE)

Member Executive Committee	Boris Fazekas (RS)
----------------------------	--------------------

Worldwide level:

Standing Committee on Central Conference Matters

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

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)
------------	--------------------

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)
--	------------------------

IX. Addresses

Last update: March 2022

Bishops:

Streiff Patrick Badenerstrasse 69, Postfach 2111, CH-8021 Zürich 1
Bishop 0041-44-299 30 60, bischof@umc-cse.org

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

People of the Central Conference:

Absolon Pavol Ul. Ludvika van Beethovenova 14, SK-917 08 Trnava
00421-904-50 66 77, pablo.absolon11@gmail.com

Ambrusz István Új utcá 8, HU-4400 Nyíregyháza
0036-30-416 91 40, ambruszi@t-online.hu

Bach Marian Bahnstrasse 31, CH-8610 Uster
0041-44-940 12 43, marian.bach@bluewin.ch

Bach Markus Bahnstrasse 31, CH-8610 Uster
0041-44-940 12 43, markus.bach@umc-cse.org

Bach Sarah Waldeggstrasse 41 CH-3097 Liebefeld
0041-31-731 03 49, sarah.bach@emk-schweiz.ch

Bachmann Ulrich Postfach 1328, Badenerstrasse 69, CH-8021 Zürich 1
0041-44-299 30 70, ulrich.bachmann@emk-schweiz.ch

Bako Stanislava Partizanska 14, RS-22300 Stara Pazova
00381-62-77 99 36, stanislava.bako@umc-cse.org

Balovski Lila Lenjinova 12, RS-26202 Jabuka
00389-64-123 77 49, lila.balovski@gmail.com

Bartos Józef ul. Długa 3, PL-31-147 Kraków
0048-692-15 91 75, jozef.bartos@umc-cse.org

Becher Nicole Bahnhofstrasse 19, CH-8560 Märstetten
0041-71-657 28 75, nicole.becher@emk-schweiz.ch

Benedyktowicz Olgierd ul. Hoża 54 m 3, PL-00-682 Warszawa
0048-22-773 17 92, olgierd.benedyktowicz@umc-cse.org

Berger Marc 4, rue de Neuf-Brisach, FR-68180 Horbourg-Wihr
0033-389-41 50 60, marc.berger@umc-cse.org

Binder Peter Binzhofstrasse 97, CH-8404 Winterthur
0041-52-242 43 00, binder.peter@bluewin.ch

Bindl Helene Wienerstrasse 254, AT-4030 Linz
0043-660-69 75 940, bindl.helene@gmail.com

Bitterli Markus Langhagstrasse 17, CH-4600 Olten
0041-62-296 55 04, markus.bitterli@gmx.ch

Bittner Jean-Marc 16 Lotissement Le Clarant, Cidex 441B, FR-73390 Bourgneuf
0033-952-95 61 79, jean-marc.bittner@umc-cse.org

Boateng Hayford Felix Slavik Strasse 4/4/19, AT-1210 Wien
0043-2602-65 077, ybhayford@gmail.com

Both Manuel Bachtelstrasse 52, CH-8400 Winterthur
0041-52-222 38 85, dlf.nordostschweiz@emk-schweiz.ch

Brankov Novica Lukijana Musičkog 7, RS-21000 Novi Sad
00381-661 31 22, novica.brankov@umc-cse.org

Brunner Andrea Holbergstrasse 9, CH-8302 Kloten
0041-44-814 37 20, andrea.brunner@emk-schweiz.ch

Bullinger Iris 111, Chemin des Verjus, CH-1228 Plan-les-Ouates
0041-22-794 34 05, iris.bullinger@umc-cse.org

Büchmeier Sven Kirchstrasse 8, CH-4127 Birsfelden,
0041-61-311 35 86, sven.buechmeier@emk-schweiz.ch

Bünger Barbara Dorfstrasse 9, CH-3633 Amsoldingen
0041-32-622 99 36, barbara.buenger@umc-cse.org

Burkhalter Daniel Postfach 1328, Badenerstrasse 69, CH-8021 Zürich 1
0041-44-299 30 83, daniel.burkhalter@umc-cse.org

Buschenrieder Edith 4, Rue Ampère, FR-68200 Mulhouse
0033-389-57 21 45, busch.edith@orange.fr

Caley Peter Im Ehrmerk 3, CH-8360 Wallenwil
0041-71-971 18 88, peter.caley@umc-cse.org

Calugar Rares Str. Porii Nr.148, Ap.48, Floresti, Cluj-Napoca / Romania
0040-745-47 95 60, rares.calugar@umc-cse.org

Chlupáček David Nad Splavem 4, CZ-586 01 Jihlava
00420-777-32 27 58, david.chlupacek@umc-cse.org

Csernák István Kiláto utca 7, HU-2112 Veresegyház
0036-28-38 40 13, istvan.csernak@umc-cse.org

Daněčková Jana Lýskova 15, CZ-635 00 Brno
00420-732-49 14 94, brno@umc.cz

Dannecker Regula Fehrenstrasse 8, CH-8032 Zürich,
0041-79-234 28 18, regula@dannecker-legal.com

Daszuta Bozena Zaborze, ul. Łąkowa 1, PL-26-026 Morawica
0048-604-15 56 08, bozenadaszuta@gmail.com

Dimov Marjan ul. Zagrebska br. 4, MK-2400 Strumica
00389-34-51 16 70, marjan.dimov@umc-cse.org

Đurovka-Petraš Maria Generala Vjesta 10, RS-21469 Pivnica
00381-21-75 61 28, maria.durovka-petras@umc-cse.org

Eggert Waldemar ul. Sienkiewicza 22, PL-14-100 Ostróda
0048-501-021 06 93, waldemar.eggert@umc-cse.org

Eschbach Daniel Grundstrasse 12, CH-8134 Adliswil
0041-44-710 62 51, daniel.eschbach@emk-schweiz.ch

Fazekas Boris Bosanska 1, RS-21460 Vrbas
00381-643-19 17 44, boris.fazekas@umc-cse.org

Field David Augustinergasse 11, CH-4051 Basel
0041-61-262 04 09, david.field@umc-cse.org

Flemming Thomas ul. Wroclawska 71c, PL-55 095 Domaszczyn
0048-507-25 36 83, thomas.flemming@op.pl

Frutiger Serge Sunneraistrasse 36, CH-8634 Hombrechtikon
0041-55-535 31 20, serge.frutiger@umc-cse.org

Furrer Susanne Langfurrenstrasse 36a, CH-8623 Wetzikon
0041-44-930 58 18, furrer.susanne@bluewin.ch

Fux Thomas Prechtlerstrasse 25, AT-4030 Linz,
0043-732-65 71 37, thomas.fux@emk.at

Goia Samuel Str. Horea Nr. 55, Ap. 7, Floresti, Cluj-Napoca / Romania
0040-742-33 66 03, samuel.goia@yahoo.com

Gyurko Donát Munkácsy u. 1, HU-7100 Szekszárd
0036-20-824 82 73, donsamu88@gmail.com

Hadorn Philipp Florastrasse 17, CH-4563 Gerlafingen
0041-79-600 96 70, philipp.hadorn@umc-cse.org

Hafner Lea Schulgässli 17, CH-3812 Wilderswil;
0041-33-822 06 14, lea.hafner@umc-cse.org

Hafner Stefan Pilatusstrasse 10, CH-8203 Schaffhausen
0041-52-672 74 01, stefan.hafner@umc-cse.org

Handschin Esther Sechshausener Strasse 51/1/7+8, AT-1150 Wien
0043-676-720 91 46, esther.handschin@umc-cse.org

Hänni Daniel Untere Scheugstrasse 1, CH-8707 Uetikon am See
0041-44-790 11 52, daniel.haenni@umc-cse.org

Haslebacher Claudia Moosgärtenweg 20, CH-3177 Laupen
0041-32-513 41 46, claudia.haslebacher@umc-cse.org

Hecker Márton Bezerédj u. 2/c, HU-7200 Dombóvár
0036-74-46 60 67, hecker.marton@methodista.hu

Hernández Scharito Schleifenbergstrasse 46, CH-4058 Basel
0041-61-641 30 60, scharito.hernandez@emk-schweiz.ch

Herzog Daniel Freihofstrasse 3, CH-8633 Wolfhausen
0041-55-243 41 14, daniel.herzog@livenet.ch

Hradský Pavel Husova 14, CZ-301 24 Plzeň 3
00420-776-14 19 18, pavel.hradsky@umc-cse.org

Ilg Stefan Schürbachstrasse 11, CH-8134 Adliswil
0041-44-709 04 61, s.ilg@bluewin.ch

Iliev Tsvetan D. Konstantinov str. 35, ap. 1, BG-5800 Pleven
00359-896-51 90 80, tsvetan.iliev@umc-cse.org

Isenring Martine Rotfluhstrasse 73, CH-8702 Zollikon
0041-44-392 15 17, degen.isenring@bluewin.ch

Istrate Ligia Str. Nicolae Teclu nr. 10, Sibiu/Romania
+40-740-48 41 60, ligia.istrate@umc-cse.org

Jenei Grethe Csendes u. 9, HU-4400 Nyíregyháza -Vajdabokor
0036-70-778 04 92, grethe.jenei@umc-cse.org

Keller Anna Riedernstrasse 26, CH-9230 Flawil
0041-71-393 53 18, keller@bluewin.ch

Khaled László A. Kiscelli u. 73, HU-1032 Budapest
0036-1-250 15 36, laszlo.khaled@umc-cse.org

Kleiner Markus Hauptstrasse 27, CH- 8632 Tann
0041-55-240 27 51, markus.kleiner@emk-schweiz.ch

Kocev Pavle Dlhá 2336, SK-92601 Sered'
00421-944-36 45 58, pavlekocev@gmail.com

Kopas Gabriella Panenská 10, SK-811 03 Bratislava
00421-948-15 07 08, gabriella.kopas@umc-cse.org

Kovács Zoltán Apáczai Csere J. u. 6, HU-3529 Miskolc
0036-46-32 65 91, zoltan.kovacs@umc-cse.org

Křížová Jana Ječná 19, CZ-120 00 Praha 2
00420-777-63 42 27, jana.krizova@umc-cse.org

Lakatos Judit Vizakna u. 38/B, HU-1141 Budapest
0036-70-940 41 92, judit.lakatos@umc-cse.org

Lakatos Lilla Tulipán utca 18, HU-7200 Dombóvár,
0036-70-625 84 84, lilla.lakatos@umc-cse.org

Malicki Andrzej ul. Mokotowska 12 m. 7, PL-00-561 Warszawa
0048-22-628 53 28, andrzej.malicki@umc-cse.org

Mathys Bertrand 5, rue du Canal, FR-68500 Guebwiller,
0033-786-10 62 04, bertrand.mathys@gmail.com

Mihaylova Mariela Gen Skobelev 48-2, BG-9010 Varna,
00359-888-77 92 54, mariela_mihailova@yahoo.com

Minder Sylvia Nordstrasse 1, CH-8180 Bülach
0041-44-860 71 03, sylvia.minder@emk-schweiz.ch

Moll Stefan Seminarstrasse 21, CH-5400 Baden
0041-56-221 66 67, stefan.moll@emk-schweiz.ch

Moser Brigitte Waisenhausstrasse 8, CH-3600 Thun,
0041-79-425 53 66, brigitte.moser@emk-schweiz.ch

Nausner Wilfried Rr. Vehbi Agolli Nd.31, AL-1017 Tiranë
0043-664-7375 89 05, wilfried.nausner@umc-cse.org

Niederer Jörg Wassergasse 19, CH-9000 St. Gallen
0041-71-222 42 12, joerg.niederer@umc-cse.org

Nussbaumer Daniel Route des Monnaires 36, CH-1660 Château-d'Oex
0041-26-924 43 24, daniel.nussbaumer@umc-cse.org

Nzambe Freddy 39-41, av. Taha Hussein, TN-1089 Tunis-Montfleury
00216-71-39 72 39, freddy.nzambe@umc-cse.org

Obermeir-Siegrist Martin Wiener Strasse 260a, AT-4030 Linz
0043-650-779 90 08, martin.siegrist@umc-cse.org

Odendaal Marietjie Riehenring 129, CH-4058 Basel
0041-61-692 42 61, marietjie.odendaal@umc-cse.org

Oppliger Barbara Spengelgass 12, CH-9467 Frümsen
0041-81-757 25 17, barbara.oppliger@lzsg.ch

Palik-Kunčak Ana Dr. Janka Gombara 22, RS-21211 Kisač
00381-21-82 81 39, ana.palik-kuncak@umc-cse.org

Parnicki Marija Dr. Janka Gombara 65, RS-21211 Kisač
00381-21-82 76 69, marija.parnicki@umc-cse.org

Pöll Bernhard Sechshauser Strasse 56/2/4, AT-1150 Wien
0043-1-892 79 22, bernhard.poell@emk.at

Procházka Pavel Panenská 10, SK-811 03 Bratislava
00421-908-77 94 59, pavel.prochazka@umc-cse.org

Procházka Petr Ječná 19, CZ-120 00 Praha 2
00420-777-93 92 67, petr.prochazka@umc-cse.org

Procházková Ivana Ječná 19, CZ-120 00 Praha 2
00420-777-86 44 61, ivana.prochazkova@umc-cse.org

Procházková Lenka Agátová 19, SK-900 45 Malinovo
00421-905-75 48 12, lenka.prochazkova@umc-cse.org

Puślecki Edward ul. Mokotowska 12/9, PL-00 561 Warszawa
0048-22-621 46 65, edward.puslecki@umc-cse.org

Rendoš Štefan Panenska 10, SK-811 03 Bratislava
00421-948-25 21 53, stefan.rendos@umc-cse.org

Rickenbacher Theo Schwandenhubelstrasse 19b, CH-3098 Schliern
0041-31-961 51 50, theo.rickenbacher@emk-schweiz.ch

Rietschi Murielle Colmarerstrasse 29, CH-4055 Basel
0041-61-501 85 01, murielle.rietschi-wilhelm@umc-cse.org

Rodaszyński Sławomir ul. Winogrady 76, PL-61-659 Poznań,
0048-784-03 11 94, slawomir.rodaszynski@umc-cse.org

Rudolph Etienne 47, rue des Vergers, FR-68100 Mulhouse
0033-950-59 81 23, etienne.rudolph@umc-cse.org

Rüegger Marcel Oberholzweg 34, CH-4852 Rothrist
0041-62-794 05 37, marcel.rueegger@umc-cse.org

Šálková Miluše K Lomu 506, CZ-398 11 Protivin
00420-608-51 99 29, pastelka@umc.cz

Schauer mann Henrik Bethlen G. u. 68/B, HU-2051 Biatorbágy
0036-30-209 53 95, henrik.schauer mann@umc-cse.org

Schmid Jürg Ringstrasse 6, CH-3714 Frutigen,
0041-33-671 45 31, jg.schmid@bluewin.ch

Schneider-Oesch Christine Dättlikerstrasse 37, CH-8427 Freienstein
0041-44-865 39 56, christine.schneider@umc-cse.org

Schröckenfuchs Stefan Sechshauser Strasse 56/2/1, AT-1150 Wien
0043-699-114 84 210, stefan.schroeckenfuchs@umc-cse.org

Schweizer Urs Postfach 2111, Badenerstrasse 69, CH-8021 Zürich 1
0041-44-299 30 60, urs.schweizer@umc-cse.org

Siegrist Roland Prechtlerstrasse 25, AT-4030 Linz
0043-732-65 71 37, ev@emk.at

Sjanta Daniel Ive Lole Ribara 55, PAK 308013, RS-26210 Kovačica
00381-64-158 66 30, daniel.sjanta@umc-cse.org

Sonnleithner Maria Landgutgasse 39/4, AT-1100 Wien
0043-699-815 102 31, maria.sonnleithner@umc-cse.org

Stalcup Erika Place de la Riponne 7, CH-1005 Lausanne
0041-21-312 82 90, erika.stalcup@umc-cse.org

Stähli Ruedi Kapellenweg 8, CH-5210 Windisch
0044-56-441 20 74, ruedi.staehli@emk-schweiz.org

Stämpfli Andreas Allmendstrasse 7, CH-4410 Liestal
0041-61-641 60 21, andreas.staempfli@umc-cse.org

Stefanov Mihail Dr. Long UMC, Rakovski Str. 86, BG-1000 Sofia
00359-897-89 17 88, mihail.stefanov@umc-cse.org

Stefanova Irena Mesta 2 str., BG-9300 Dobrich
00359-899-83 94 00, live888bg@gmail.com

Steiger Esther Höhenweg 26, CH-5102 Rapperswil
0041-62-897 17 09, e.st@bluewin.ch

Steiner Andreas Faulenbachweg 87A, CH-3700 Spiez,
0041-33-654 45 20, andreas.steiner@emk-schweiz.ch

Stoilkova Daniela s. Monospitovo 172, MK-2400 Strumica
00389-70-35 89 58, daniela.stoilkova@umc-cse.org

Streit Martin Bernstrasse 68, CH-3018 Bern
0041-31-382 02 44, martin.streit@emk-schweiz.ch

Szczepańczyk Anna ul. Kosynierów Gdyńskich 9-11/3, PL-86-300 Grudziądz,
0048-534-25 61 37, motylekanna@gmail.com

Sztupkai Kristóf Londoni krt. 30, HU-6722 Szeged
0036-30-322 74 09, kristof.sztupkai@umc-cse.org

Szuhánszky Gábor Márta Mária Otthon, Rákóczi u. 2, HU-2092 Budakeszi
0036-30-999 99 52, gabor.szuhanszky@umc-cse.org

Tagai Ľuboš ECM Trnava, Bernolákova 6, SK-917 01 Trnava
00421-905-26 60 11, luobosko@gmail.com

Tankler Üllas GBGM, 458 Ponce de Leon Avenue NE, Atlanta, GA 30308 /USA
001-404-460 72 05, Utankler@umcmission.org

Thal Josef Ul. Jar. Haška 1, CZ-586 01 Jihlava
00420-777-11 03 45, josef.thal@seznam.cz

Tobler Christa In der Hub 19, CH-8057 Zürich
0041-44-261 78 54, christa.tobler@umc-cse.org

Todorova Desislava Dr. Long UMC, Rakovski Str. 86, BG-1000 Sofia
00359-894-48 07 16, desislava.todorova@umc-cse.org

Todorova Margarita PO Box 47, BG-5400 Sevlievo
00359-898-67 25 74, margarita.todorova@umc-cse.org

Töngi André Postfach 2111, Badenerstrasse 69, CH-8021 Zürich 1
0041-44-299 30 63, andre.toengi@umc-cse.org

Topalski Daniel P.O. Box 70, BG-9001 Varna
00359-898-67 25 64, daniel.topalski@umc-cse.org

Waechter Jean-Philippe 27, rue Croix Rouge, FR-13200 Arles
0033-695-31 46 82, jeanphilippe.waechter@umc-cse.org

Weissenbrunner Gerhard Gottschedgasse 28, AT-8042 Graz
0043-316-42 81 63, gerhard.weissenbrunner@umc-cse.org

Weller Bettina Hechtweg 21, CH-4052 Basel
0041-61-311 70 31, bettina.weller@umc-cse.org

Weller Stefan Hechtweg 21, CH-4052 Basel,
0041-61-315 21 30, stefan.weller@umc-cse.org

Wenziker Adrian Dennlerstrasse 1, CH-8048 Zürich
0041-44-972 30 72, adrian.wenziker@umc-cse.org

Wichers Gunnar Weiherstrasse 7, 4800 Zofingen,
0041-62-751 14 33, gunnar.wichers@emk-schweiz.ch

Wilhelm Hanna Ahornstrasse 13, CH-4127 Birsfelden
0041-61-311 76 56, hanna.wilhelm@umc-cse.org

Wilhelm Hansruedi Bettingerstrasse 20, CH-4127 Birsfelden
0041-61-373 90 97, hansruedi.wilhelm@dalbeverwaltung.ch

Zaev Emil Ul. Venjamin Macukovski, bt. 28/2-12, MK-1000 Skopje
00389-2-246 01 52, emil.zaev@umc-cse.org

Zolliker Stefan Trollstrasse 10, CH-8400 Winterthur
0041-52-212 17 39, stefan.zolliker@emk-schweiz.ch

Zuber Monika ul. Słowackiego 26, PL-19-300 Ełk
0048-695-61 12 06, monika.zuber@umc-cse.org

Zueva Desislava ul. Odrin 7, ap. 8, BG-8600 Yambol
00359-898-43 27 72, dessieveskozuevi@yahoo.com

Zürcher Simon

Rinderwaldstrasse 8, CH-3725 Achseten
0041-33-673 17 14, simon.zuercher@emk-schweiz.ch

Zürcher Stefan

Schwerzistrasse 9, CH-8606 Nänikon
0041-43-366 52 43, stefan.zuercher@umc-cse.org