

DISCIPLINE REVISION

NATIONAL CONFERENCE

¶501, US National Conference

DR-21

Remove the words as indicated, and insert “various ministries”

501 Purpose

The United States National Conference shall oversee all affairs pertaining to its **various ministries**. ~~leadership teams, conferences, churches, church extension districts, and mission districts, and national office.~~ The US National Conference shall establish policies pertaining to the ministry of the Church of the United Brethren in Christ, United States of America.

¶502.2, National Conference Covenant

DR-22

Replace the current four paragraphs with a shorter, more flexible section. It deals with the process to follow when churches don't sign the covenant.

Current:

2. Responsibilities of the US National Conference

- a. If a church does not sign and submit the covenant to the national office 90 days prior to the National Conference session, the cluster coach (or another elder designated by the bishop) shall hold a specially called congregational meeting of the church membership at least 60 days prior to the National Conference. The purpose of this meeting would be to determine if it is the desire of the membership to sign and continue in a covenant relationship with the Church of the Brethren in Christ, USA, or to withdraw from said relationship. If a majority of the church's members at a duly called meeting determine not to sign the covenant, then the church shall be considered to have withdrawn from the Church of the United Brethren in Christ, USA.
- b. Churches that hold title to their property and do not sign the covenant shall be considered to have withdrawn from the denomination.
- c. If a church does not keep its commitment to the standards of the national conference covenant, the ELT may, with a majority, decline to offer a new covenant.
- d. The ELT shall handle any situations which may arise concerning the status of churches, but which are not already covered in the Discipline.

Replace with the following, which gives much more flexibility. The main changes are in points a and b.

- a. If a church does not sign and submit the covenant to the national office 90 days prior to the National Conference session, the bishop shall establish a procedure for determining whether or not

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the church desires to remain part of the Church of the United Brethren in Christ, USA.

b. The bishop shall give churches opportunity to comply with the covenant. If they fail to comply, the bishop may call a special local conference to determine if they desire to sign and continue in a covenant relationship with the Church of the Brethren in Christ, USA, or to withdraw from said relationship. If a majority of the church's members at a duly called meeting determine not to sign the covenant, then the church shall be considered to have withdrawn from the Church of the United Brethren in Christ, USA.

c. Having followed the above procedure, churches that hold title to their property and do not sign the covenant shall be considered to have withdrawn from the denomination.

d. If a church does not keep its commitment to the standards of the national conference covenant, and has been advised by the Bishop, the ELT may, with a majority vote, revoke the covenant.

e. The ELT shall handle any situations which may arise concerning the status of churches, but which are not already covered in the Discipline.

¶503, Delegates to the National Conference

DR-23

Revise as indicated, adding the national directors as voting members of the National Conference, replacing "elected" with "chosen,"

503 Delegates to the National Conference

The voting members of the United States National Conference are the US bishop, **national directors**, the ministerial delegate(s) from each congregation, and the lay delegates ~~elected~~ **chosen** by each congregation according to [insert paragraph reference from the new Discipline].

¶503.1, Clergy Representation

DR-24

Referendum 1 says ministerial representatives are those who meet the criteria set forth in the Discipline. This is where we set forth that criteria. This follows the direction set forth by the 2007 US National Conference.

Current wording

Conference ministers who are actively pastoring a United Brethren church or serving in an appointed or elected position in the Church of the United Brethren in Christ, USA, are eligible to serve as voting members of the National Conference. Retired ministers will be advisory members (without vote) of the US National Conference.

Replace with the following:

503.1 Clergy Representation

a. *Voting members.* Ministers are eligible to serve as voting members if they meet all of these

conditions:

(1) They hold a national conference license.

(2) At the time of the National Conference meeting, they are employed by a United Brethren church in the US National Conference, or serve the national conference in an appointed or elected position.

b. *Advisory members.* All other national conference ministers are eligible to serve as advisory members of the national conference.

¶521.1, Nominating Committee

DR-25

Make the revisions as indicated, giving some flexibility and not restrict the nominating committee to delegates, so the nominating committee could be selected anytime.

1. Nominating Committee

The Executive Leadership Team shall appoint a nominating committee ~~as soon as practicable after the election of delegates to the US National Conference~~ **and approve the ballot for submission to the US National Conference.**

¶522, Duties of the Bishop

DR-26

Delete point 2, add the points in bold (15-18), and renumber as needed. Only points 2 and 15-18 are open for revision. However, the entire section is printed here for context.

1. Develop and communicate the vision of the church in cooperation with the Executive Leadership Team.
2. ~~Serve as an ex officio member of all national conference leadership teams.~~
3. Preside at meetings of the US National Conference and the Executive Leadership Team. The bishop shall be responsible for the general administration of the Church of the United Brethren in Christ, USA. The bishop will oversee the work of the directors, the staff, and the national leadership teams.
4. Conduct ordination services or assign this responsibility to another ordained minister.
5. Ensure that accountability procedures are established for all directors, leadership teams, cluster coaches, and staff of the US national church
6. Interpret Discipline. The bishop shall interpret the Discipline, and this ruling shall stand until the next meeting of the US National Conference or the ELT.
7. Appoint Cluster Coaches. The bishop shall be responsible to appoint cluster coaches. Local churches that do not voluntarily join a cluster will be assigned a cluster relationship by the bishop.
8. Comply with International Agreements. The bishop shall ensure that US National Conference entities comply with any joint ministry agreements with any other United Brethren national conferences.

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9. Represent the US National Conference. The bishop shall, at his discretion, participate in or designate someone to represent the US National Conference to parachurch and inter-denominational ministries, and to other evangelical denominations.

10. Develop and implement a strategy for recruiting future pastors and churches.

11. Station pastors in conjunction with others assigned to that task.

12. Promote and communicate the Core Values of the Church of the United Brethren in Christ, International, and the Standards of the Church as stated in Part 2 of the Discipline.

13. Encourage and promote continuing relationship with the international conferences.

14. The bishop is an ex-officio ministerial member to the General Conference.

15. Create any leadership teams, beyond those specified in the Discipline, needed to better serve the churches and ministries of the US National Conference.

16. Maintain a manual stating job descriptions and operating procedures of the national office, staff, and leadership teams.

17. Fill vacancies on leadership teams.

18. Appoint the appropriate number of delegates to represent the US National Conference to the General Conference.

¶1544, Duties of the Executive Leadership Team

DR-27

Revise the duties of the ELT to conform to the governance structure. This involves deleting a lot of content, with those duties now assumed by the bishop. The last three points, in bold, are new. Items would then be renumbered as needed.

1. The Executive Leadership Team shall carry out the plans and policies established by the US National Conference. When issues arise that are not covered by the policies established by the US National Conference, the Executive Leadership Team shall determine the policy which will be followed until the US National Conference meets and deals with the issue.

2. The Executive Leadership Team shall decide questions of interpretation in the Constitution and the US Discipline. Between sessions, the US bishop's interpretation will stand until the next meeting of either the National Conference or the Executive Leadership Team.

3. The Executive Leadership Team shall fill vacancies involving the US bishop ~~and appointed directors.~~

4. The Executive Leadership Team will receive reports from the bishop, ~~directors, leadership teams,~~ and appropriate staff., **and from other persons as directed by the bishop, including information**

about finances, churches, ministries, and strategic direction.

5. The ELT shall develop and approve evaluation procedures for the US bishop, and shall approve job descriptions and evaluation procedures for the directors and staff.

6. The Executive Leadership Team will make appropriate appointments upon the recommendation of the US bishop for personnel such as auditor and staff.

7. The Executive Leadership Team will appoint the chairpersons for the leadership teams upon the recommendation of the US bishop.

8. The Executive Leadership Team will appoint the other members of leadership teams and fill any vacancies which may arise.

9. The Executive Leadership Team will appoint necessary committees to prepare for and conduct the work of the US National Conference.

10. Approve new appointments to the Higher Education Leadership Team.

11. New duty of the ELT: Approve job descriptions and operating procedures of leadership for inclusion in the manual of operations.

12. Determine the procedure for selecting delegates to the General Conference.

¶552.1, Clusters

DR-28

Current ¶552.1, Purpose

1. Purpose

All National Conference ministers, nonlicensed senior pastors, and United Brethren congregations are required to participate in a cluster of their choice for the purpose of maintaining and developing pastoral and congregational health through mutual friendships, coaching, and accountability. Clusters are the entities to which all local congregations, preaching points, and ministers are primarily accountable.

Replace with the following:

a. All National Conference ministers and senior pastors of United Brethren congregations are required to participate in a cluster of their choice for the purpose of maintaining and developing pastoral and congregational health through mutual friendships, coaching, and accountability.

b. Clusters are the entities to which all local congregations, preaching points, and ministers are primarily accountable.

c. The cluster to which the local church is accountable shall be the cluster in which the senior pastor is a member.

¶552.2, Formation of Clusters

DR-29

Current wording:

Groups wishing to form a cluster will present a formal request, including admissions standards, to the Executive Leadership Team, which possesses the authority to approve, disapprove, or request modifications. A cluster typically consists of five to ten (ideally not more than seven) United Brethren ministers and their congregations. Non-United Brethren participants may be included in approved clusters.

Replace with the following:

2. Formation of Clusters

a. A cluster typically consists of five to ten (ideally not more than seven) United Brethren ministers and their congregations.

b. Groups wishing to form a cluster will present a formal request, including admissions standards, to the Bishop, who possesses the authority to approve, disapprove, or request modifications.

c. Non-United Brethren participants may be included in approved clusters.

¶561, Property

DR-30

Remove the reference to annual conferences.

561 Introduction

According to the UB Constitution, all church property titled by the local church is considered as belonging to the local church. All real property owned by ~~an annual conference~~ or the national conference is considered to be held in trust for the Church of the United Brethren in Christ, USA.

Part VII, Leadership Teams

DR-31

In the past, bishops have been required to have certain leadership teams, whether or not they fit that bishop's vision, and whether or not a full leadership team was needed for that area. This proposal would provide flexibility by removing the requirement that the bishop use certain leadership teams, thereby enabling the bishop to apply his own vision for how to best carry out the work of the US National Conference. The bishop could use any of these leadership teams, or create entirely new ones, and could make changes in mid-term without requiring a vote of the national conference.

In the case of Global Ministries, they have their own handbook spelling out policies and procedures. In addition, Global Ministries is not specifically a ministry or entity of the US National Conference, but a joint venture of the United States and Canadian churches.

Any leadership teams the bishop desires would become part of the operations manual of the national office. A new duty of the bishop gives him responsibility for maintaining such a manual, which contains staff job descriptions, operating procedures, and information about the work of any leadership teams.

Remove the following chapters:

1. Chapter 21, "Leadership Teams."
2. Chapter 22, "Administrative."
3. Chapter 24, "Global Ministries."
4. Chapter 25, "Healthy Church."
5. Chapter 27, "Church Multiplication."

Reconstitute the section with the following chapters:

- a. Executive Leadership Team (currently in Part VI, The National Church).
- b. The Higher Education Leadership Team (needed to coordinate with Huntington University bylaws).
- c. The Pastoral Ministry Leadership Team (needed to oversee the licensing and ordination process).

¶505.4, Responsibilities of the National Conference DR-32

If the above proposal passes, thereby removing the Administrative Leadership Team, the following paragraph will need to be revised.

4. The US National Conference shall establish financial policies ~~to direct the Administrative Leadership Team in~~ **for** developing the annual budget for the US national church. The Executive Leadership Team will adopt the budget the years that the US National Conference does not meet.

Editorial Changes DR-33

Editorially change the terminology throughout the Discipline from "cluster coach" to "cluster leader."

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