

1 **1. – Mission Statement**

2 **Title:** Proposed Baltimore-Washington Conference Mission
3 Statement

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5 **Budget Implications:** None

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7 **Rationale:** This proposed Mission Statement will bring greater
8 alignment between the mission statements of the global
9 United Methodist Church, the Baltimore Washington
10 Conference, and local United Methodist faith
11 communities. It also emphasizes and clarifies the
12 Conference’s main purpose, which is to support and
13 equip local faith communities. This simple, clear
14 statement will guide and focus the work of the
15 Conference, particularly in relation to local faith
16 communities.

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18 **Submitted by:** Bonnie Scott and Jen Ihlo, Chair, on behalf of BWC
19 Discipleship Council

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21 **Resolution:** Adopt the following as the BWC Mission Statement:

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23 “To inspire and equip local faith communities to develop
24 disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the
25 world.”

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27 **Effective Date:** July 1, 2018

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29 *(The Connectional Table voted concurrence.)*

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31 **2. – Africa University**

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33 **Title:** Resolution that the Baltimore-Washington Conference
34 examine the relationship between Africa University and
35 the government of the Republic of Zimbabwe.

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37 **Budget Implications:** Estimated maximum \$5,000 for local travel
38 reimbursement, meeting expenses, and
39 publication expenses.
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41 **Rationale:** The list is long, publicly-known, and well-documented of
42 moral, ethical, economic and human rights offenses
43 committed by the ruling party and ruling elite of the
44 Republic of Zimbabwe. It includes self-enrichment by the
45 kleptocracy, looting of the country's treasury,
46 destruction of the economy, murder of an estimated
47 tens of thousands of political opponents, and the deaths
48 of an inestimable hundreds of thousands of children and
49 adults from hunger, preventable disease, lack of
50 medicine, contaminated water supplies, and otherwise
51 unsanitary and inhumane conditions. The tragedy of
52 Zimbabwe in the history of nations is that all of this
53 suffering and death has occurred in a country with one
54 of the highest literacy rates in Africa, as well as one that
55 is rich with natural resources and arable land. The
56 United Methodist Church and the Baltimore-Washington
57 Conference market proudly and prominently their
58 support of Africa University within Zimbabwe. The
59 Baltimore-Washington Conference spends
60 approximately \$57,000 each year in support of Africa
61 University through General & Jurisdictional
62 Apportionments. In addition, over the years, there have
63 been many non-budgeted special appeals to the
64 Conference, the collections of which have far exceeded
65 this yearly contribution. In the public descriptions of
66 Africa University and through past presentations to the
67 annual sessions of the Baltimore-Washington
68 Conference, little is known of the relationship between
69 the University and the Zimbabwe government. Not
70 surprisingly, nothing is found in University publications
71 and descriptions that decry the suffering of the host
72 country or comment on or criticize the policies and
73 performance of the Zimbabwe government. The United

74 Methodist Committee on Relief (UMCOR), which has
75 operations in Zimbabwe, addresses the suffering and
76 conditions within the country but not the political root
77 causes or framework. It is naïve to think that church-
78 sponsored and other non-governmental organizations
79 can continually criticize a blameworthy government and
80 then hope to operate long-term in that authoritarian
81 state. Yet, as history has shown countless times,
82 religious silence in the face of tyranny and oppression
83 ends poorly for those who could have spoken up—but
84 did not. On January 21, 1992, Africa University was
85 chartered by official proclamation of His Excellency the
86 President of the Republic of Zimbabwe Robert Gabriel
87 Mugabe, a leader who will be remembered for the
88 extraordinary number of years that he maintained a
89 corrupt, destructive and bloody regime. For years and to
90 this day, the Board of Directors of Africa University has
91 contained members from Zimbabwe who have been
92 appointed to their official positions by former President
93 Mugabe. This includes a current member who is under
94 investigation for corruption and one whose doctoral
95 degree is openly challenged in the press. An argument
96 can be made that an educational institution should
97 remain above all political concerns and criticism. But the
98 Africa University board membership alone calls into
99 question the application of that principle. Given our long
100 history of financial and otherwise support for Africa
101 University, this Conference should expect a full
102 explanation and description of the exact nature of the
103 past and current relationship between Africa University
104 and the Zimbabwe government and whether our
105 financial gifts in any way lend credibility or material
106 support to the Zimbabwe government or its
107 representatives.

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Submitted by:

Douglas M. Schmidt, lay member, Grace United
Methodist Church, Baltimore, Maryland.

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Resolution: Be it resolved that the Baltimore-Washington Conference of The United Methodist Church empowers our bishop to appoint a volunteer committee, which will have experience in and knowledge of African history and politics as well as of finance and education, to examine the relationship between Africa University and the government of Zimbabwe. The committee will assess the relationship against ethical and operational best practices for higher educational institutions and report its findings with any recommendations to the Conference on or before the 2019 annual session of the Baltimore-Washington Conference.

Effective Date: June 4, 2018

(The Committee on Finance and Administration voted non-concurrence. The Connectional Table voted non-concurrence.)

3. – Moving Policy

Title: Resolution to Amend the Moving Policy

Budget Implications: \$30-40,000 (estimated by Paul Eichelberger). Included in our current budget of \$160,000, we already fund a tax liability allowance for pastors whose moves are less than 50 miles.

Rationale: The Tax Cuts and Jobs Act passed by congress in December 2017 eliminates the exclusion for qualified moving expense reimbursements. Moving expenses covered by the conference are now considered taxable income. This resolution provides a tax liability allowance to all pastors who receive a move covered by this policy.

Submitted by: Rev. Jeffrey Paulson, Chair, Conference Moving Committee

148 **Resolution:** That the Annual Conference approves the following
149 change to the Moving Policy:
150 ¶15500. Moving Committee.— ...
151 6. Due to the tax liability incurred by covered moving
152 costs moves of less than 50 miles, active pastors whose
153 expenses are covered under this policy who will move
154 ~~less than 50 miles~~ shall be provided with a tax liability
155 allowance equal to 30% of the Conference financial
156 liability for the move.

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158 **Effective Date:** January 1, 2018

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160 **Co-Sponsor:** Rev. Kenneth Hawes, past chairperson, Conference
161 Moving Committee

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163 *(The Committee on Finance and Administration voted concurrence. The*
164 *Connectional Table voted concurrence.)*
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166 **4. – Love without Qualification**

167 **Title:** Love One Another

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169 **Budget Implications:** None

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171 **Rationale:** A Call for Inclusive Love

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173 **Submitted by:** Rev. Debbie Scott and Rev. Angela Flanagan, Co-Chair
174 Advocacy Committee BWARM

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176 **Resolution:** **Whereas**, we are followers of Jesus,
177 **Whereas**, we affirm all people to be of sacred worth,
178 made in the image of God,
179 **Therefore**, we commit to loving one another for who
180 God created us to be without qualification.

181
182 **Effective Date:** June 5, 2018

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184 **Co-Sponsors:** BWARM Steering Committee

185 *Chair:* Jan Lawrence, Laity, Foundry UMC, Washington, DC
186 *Vice Chair:* Marge Kumaki, Laity, Hughes UMC, Wheaton, MD
187 *Past Chair:* Mittie Quinn, Laity, Dumbarton UMC,
188 Washington, DC
189 *Secretary:* Rev. Mary Jo Sims, Elder, Retired, Arden UMC,
190 Martinsburg, WV
191 *Treasurer:* George Kahl, Laity, Grace UMC, Baltimore, MD
192 *Programs Chair:* Ellen Bachman, Laity, Metropolitan
193 Memorial UMC, Washington, DC
194 *Advocacy Co-Chair:* Rev. Deb Scott, Elder, Senior Pastor at
195 Calvary UMC, Mt. Airy, MD
196 *Advocacy Co-Chair:* Rev. Angela Flanagan, Elder, Lead Pastor
197 at Silver Spring UMC, Silver Spring, MD
198 *Convener:* Rev. Nancy Webb, Elder, Retired, Charge
199 Conference: Grace UMC, Baltimore, MD
200 *Communications Chair:* T.C. Morrow, Laity (Certified
201 Candidate for Deacon), Foundry UMC, Washington, DC
202 *At Large Member:* Rev. Andrew Greenwood, Elder, Pastor at
203 Pine Grove UMC, Parkton, MD
204 *At Large Member:* Rev. Rebecca Vardiman, Elder, Retired,
205 Charge Conference: Frostburg UMC, Frostburg, MD
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207 *(The Connectional Table voted concurrence.)*
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209 **5. – Adopt the Way Forward Accountability Covenant**

210 **Title:** Finding Our Way Forward
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212 **Budget Implications:** None
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214 **Rationale:** To develop a covenant for conversations as we work to
215 anticipate and receive The Way Forward Report and
216 Decision from the Council on Bishops and the Special
217 Session of General Conference in February 2019
218

219 **Submitted by:** Rev. Debbie Scott and Rev. Angela Flanagan, Co-Chair
220 Advocacy Committee BWARM
221

222 **Resolution:**

Whereas, the Council of Bishops has proposed the following Mission for the Commission on the Way Forward:

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225 **Mission:** The Commission will bring together persons
226 deeply committed to the future(s) of The United
227 Methodist Church, with an openness to developing new
228 relationships with each other and exploring the potential
229 future(s) of our denomination in light of General
230 Conference and subsequent annual, jurisdictional and
231 central conference actions. We have a profound hope
232 and confidence in the Triune God, and yet we
233 acknowledge that we do this work in a climate of
234 skepticism and distrust, from a human point of view. We
235 are a connection, and we admit that our communion is
236 strained; yet much transformative mission across our
237 world is the fruit of our collaboration. The matters of
238 human sexuality and unity are the presenting issues for
239 a deeper conversation that surfaces different ways of
240 interpreting Scripture and theological tradition. The
241 work is meant to inform deliberation across the whole
242 church and to help the Council of Bishops in their service
243 to the next General Conference in finding a way forward.

244
245 **Whereas**, the Council of Bishops has proposed the
246 following Vision for the Commission on the Way
247 Forward:

248 **Vision:** The Commission will design a way for being
249 church that maximizes the presence of a United
250 Methodist witness in as many places in the world as
251 possible, that allows for as much contextual
252 differentiation as possible, and that balances an
253 approach to different theological understandings of
254 human sexuality with a desire for as much unity as
255 possible. This unity will not be grounded in our
256 conceptions of human sexuality, but in our affirmation
257 of the Triune God who calls us to be a grace-filled and
258 holy people in the Wesleyan tradition.

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Whereas, the Council of Bishops has proposed the following Scope of the work of the Commission on the Way Forward:

Scope: We should be open to new ways of embodying unity that move us beyond where we are in the present impasse and cycle of action and reaction around ministry and human sexuality. Therefore, we should consider new ways of being in relationship across cultures and jurisdictions, in understandings of episcopacy, in contextual definitions of autonomy for annual conferences, and in the design and purpose of the apportionment. In reflection on the two matters of unity and human sexuality, we will fulfill our directive by considering “new forms and structures” of relationship and through the “complete examination and possible revision” of relevant paragraphs in the Book of Discipline. We will give consideration to greater freedom and flexibility to a future United Methodist Church that will redefine our present connectionality, which is showing signs of brokenness. If we ignore this work, fracturing will occur in more haphazard and even self-interested ways across the church. If we do this work only to address our preferences and self-interest, we will fail to place our complete trust in God’s steadfast love and faithfulness. If we do this work with complete surrender to God’s unlimited imagination and kingdom purposes, we will be blessed beyond our limited human imagination. God remains God; God is with us; God will never let us go. To God be the glory!

Therefore, be it resolved that the Baltimore Washington Conference adopt the Accountability Covenant (slightly adapted) below, proposed for the Commission for the Way Forward for our own work together as the Conference and in our local churches as we work through the proposals of the Commission and any

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adopted proposal by the Special Session of the General Conference of Feb. 2019

Accountability Covenant:

We covenant to pray for one another, for the Commission, for the United Methodist Church, for the mission of Christ, and for a way forward together. We covenant to attend all meetings concerning The Way Forward, unless unexpected urgencies prevent us, to prepare adequately for meetings by reading assigned books or papers, to stay engaged and focused, to participate actively in learning experiences and conversations, and to follow through with any assignments or projects that we agree to accept. We will offer our best and highest to the work of the United Methodist Church as servants of Christ and leaders of the church. We covenant to treat one another with respect, to assume the best in others, to represent one another in the best possible light, to speak the truth with love, and to practice and expect trustworthiness. We will each do our part to offer grace, to create an atmosphere of hospitality, and to moderate our anxiety through mutual encouragement, good humor, and with genuine love for one another. We covenant to listen actively to others, to seek first to understand rather than to be understood, to ask for clarity or help from others, to remain attentive to cultural, language, and contextual diversity, to be patient with one another, and to foster hopefulness and mutual encouragement. We covenant to maintain strict confidentiality, and so we will avoid inappropriate sharing of personal information, stories, or perspectives of other members without their consent. We covenant to avoid harmful speech toward or about others, during our meetings and outside our meetings. We will refrain from blaming others, misrepresenting others, making judgments about others, or using derogatory speech about others or the Commission. We

333 covenant to avoid the practices of interrupting others,
334 ignoring others, discounting others, speaking for others,
335 or exhibiting dominating or domineering behavior. We
336 shall practice self-monitoring, gently holding one
337 another accountable for divisive or hurtful behaviors.
338 We covenant to avoid dividing into factions, politicizing
339 our processes, and retreating into camps and silos based
340 on ideology or regional affinities. We will intentionally
341 seek to cultivate deeper relationships with those we do
342 not know rather than merely spend time with those we
343 already know. We covenant to restrain ourselves from
344 distracting behaviors during our meeting sessions so
345 that we may remain attentive to one another and to our
346 work. We will refrain from checking emails, reading
347 online news, and otherwise letting ourselves become
348 distracted for outside obligations. We covenant to abide
349 by agreed-upon protocols for sharing news, information,
350 or photos on social media.

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352 **Be it further resolved,** If conversations have not begun
353 in local churches, they should begin now.

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355 **Effective Date:** June 5, 2018

356
357 **Co-Sponsors:** BWARM Steering Committee
358 *Chair:* Jan Lawrence, Laity, Foundry UMC, Washington, DC
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378 Charge Conference: Frostburg UMC, Frostburg, MD
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380 *(The Connectional Table voted concurrence.)*
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382 **6. – Call for Full Inclusion from 2019 Special Session**

383 **Title:** A Fully Inclusive UMC
384

385 **Budget Implications:** None
386

387 **Rationale:** Living in the hope of a fully inclusive United Methodist
388 Church as we Find Our Way Forward
389

390 **Submitted by:** Rev. Debbie Scott and Rev. Angela Flanagan, Co-Chair
391 Advocacy Committee BWARM
392

393 **Resolution:** **Whereas**, the Commission of the Way Forward shared
394 sketches of three models, with the awareness that the
395 Commission and the Council Of Bishops are not
396 restricted to these sketches and are open to learning,
397 listening and improvement. It is likely that additional
398 models or sketches may emerge as this process
399 continues. Here is the summary about the sketches of
400 the models presented to the bishops:
401 One sketch of a model affirms the current Book of
402 Discipline language and places a high value on
403 accountability.
404

405 Another sketch of a model removes restrictive language
406 and places a high value on contextualization. This sketch
407 also specifically protects the rights of those whose
408 conscience will not allow them to perform same gender
409 weddings or ordain LGBTQ persons.

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411 A third sketch of a model is grounded in a unified core
412 that includes shared doctrine and services and one COB,
413 while also creating different branches that have clearly
414 defined values such as accountability, contextualization
415 and justice.

416
417 Each sketch represents values that are within the COB
418 and across the church. Each sketch includes gracious way
419 of exit for those who feel called to exit from the
420 denomination.

421
422 **Be it Resolved** that the Baltimore Annual Conference
423 would welcome and encourage the adoption of a
424 proposal by the Special Session of the General
425 Conference in Feb. 2019 that would allow for the full
426 inclusion of persons of all gender identities and sexual
427 orientations when it comes to matters of, but not
428 limited to, marriage, performing marriages and
429 ordination.

430
431 **Effective Date:** June 5, 2018

432
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454 Charge Conference: Frostburg UMC, Frostburg, MD
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456 *(The Connectional Table voted concurrence.)*