

ANNUAL CONFERENCE STRUCTURE PROPOSAL

Completing our plan of transition, organization, staffing, and budgeting begins with a conversation around how our new conference should be structured and is vital to the future of our new conference. For this work, keeping the Mission, Vision, and Values of our annual conference as the centerpiece of discussion is key. (See the last page of this document for Mission, Vision, Values and Strategic Initiatives that were adopted by each annual conference in June 2019.)

The new conference Structure Design Team worked with the guidelines provided in the *Book of Discipline* (Section IX, The Annual Conference beginning with paragraph 601) regarding conference structure and also considered the book *Seven Levers: Missional Strategies for Conferences* by Bishop Robert Schnase as a resource. The work to shape the structure of our new conference focused on our mission, vision, and values, adopted by both the Memphis and Tennessee annual conferences.

We need the gifts, input, and prayers of each of you as we continue our work toward formatting a new conference. Below is a summary of the activities to reach this point, supported by the attached slides illustrating the proposed structure of our new annual conference.

Our new conference Structure Design Team held meetings facilitated by Cindy Thompson with Boundless Impact. Cindy has consulted with our annual conferences since the beginning of our new conference discussions. Cindy led us through a process to consider and formulate based on:

- Discerning, dreaming, designing, and doing
- *Book of Discipline* requirements
- Mission: Discover | Equip | Connect | Send
- Reviewed the new conference strategic plan and committed to design a structure that lived out and aligned with our mission
- Assumptions and non-negotiables (from the assembled group)
 - Initially and during the process of transition, geographic districts will not be changed
 - Starting with desired structure, then budget will determine final structure
 - Structure **must** serve the mission
 - Conference is an equipping mechanism for local churches
 - Change in culture for what equipping means to embed design thinking in everything we do
 - Think in terms of stewardship vs. authority
 - Streamline and simplify
 - No isolated silo functions without connecting bridges => common stewards of the vision
 - Who is our user?
 - Need to understand challenges and opportunities for users
 - Insight: What new thing might God be calling forth for this season of the Church?
- Acknowledge that there will be loss—affirm the grief that goes along with loss
- Learn how to celebrate and nurture something new without seeing it as a threat
- Create a structure/environment that is strong enough to withstand difficult currents and rocky places, yet flexible/elastic enough to have clergy in the boat together as a team with a guide/person to coach the team as they navigate the river
- Reuse, recycle, and share resources across the new conference
- As a conference, promote unity throughout the connection, including local churches
- Uncover, discover, and recover the deeper places in our connection
- Reconnect the local church to a place of vital connection and nurturing community
- Foster an environment that feeds, nourishes, and encourages excellence in the ministry of the local church (1 Cor. 12:29-31)
- Clearly define and clarify our mission of discover, equip, connect, and send
- Align the four primary user groups identified (clergy, laity, local churches, neighborhoods) with our mission
- Align our Strategic Initiatives to our Mission
- Integrate administration and oversight into mission, user groups, and initiatives

From these meetings came a Structure Design that was shared with the Advisory Team on January 13 for feedback. It was then provided to the Human Resources (HR) Task Team to begin work on how this structure would function via positions, volunteer committees, etc. Work updates were shared with the Advisory Team in May and August and via webinars as part of annual conference preparations.

Note in the attachments that the graphs and charts are a two-dimensional depiction of a three-dimensional working model. Thus, arrows connect the Strategy Teams to districts and local churches. Also, each circle on the chart is not expected to be a paid position. Some depict volunteer committees while others can be filled by part-time or volunteer leaders as the structure evolves.

The HR Team worked to effectively determine and document expectations and job descriptions for the Strategy Team leaders on the attached charts. Those teams will then work to create working job descriptions (with the assistance of the HR Team) for those working in each area.

The Structure Team's original work was focused on collaboration and adaptation of missional alignment. An additional step is needed to organize day-to-day management of staff and volunteers. The HR Team met several times in person and via Zoom to review the Structure Design chart prepared by the Structure Team. Minor changes have been made mainly to consolidate related committees or functions. Work of the HR team included:

- Reviewing and creating standard job description templates to develop a common structure
- Providing salary data to the Budget Team—organized to model the structure
- Developing/revising job descriptions for district staff and Equip, Discover, Send, Connect, and Communications Strategy Team leaders
- Developing an HR organization structure to address technical or general reporting dealing with day-to-day management of staff and operations. The original structure is focused on adaptive, collaborative, and strategic planning
- Discussing the development of potential skills and resulting staffing needs to address the **conference's need to evaluate the state of technology**. This breaks down into two functions—technical support and digital strategy. A team will be formed to identify talents needed, prepare a job description, and discuss funding.
- A church technology survey has been developed and has been translated to a Survey Monkey for completion and logging by districts.

Work combining the personnel manuals into one for the new conference will take place in coming months. The HR Team will also continue working on job descriptions for smaller bubbles on the Structure Chart. This detail work will take place as persons are assigned to the larger bubbles on the Structure or HR organizational charts.

Much has been done in the year since the last annual conference to move our work forward as it relates to structure and human resource aspects of the Tennessee Western Kentucky Conference. We appreciate the support, guidance, and insight many of you have provided along the way and ask that you continue to support this work in the coming year.

AS ADOPTED AT ANNUAL CONFERENCE, JUNE 2019

Our New Conference

Our Vision: Uniting to embody the love of Christ in Spirit-led actions one community at a time.

Our Mission: To discover, equip, connect, and send lay and clergy leaders who shape congregations that offer Christ to a hurting world, one neighborhood at a time.

Our Values:

1. The local church as the disciple making center
2. Transparency and integrity in our communication
3. Seeking a purposeful and more generous way of love
4. Courage to explore possibilities and take risks by being nimble, experimenting, permitting failure, and staying the course
5. Empowering all leaders and enabling leaders with gifts and graces for the task
6. Seeking input from both people and useful data
7. We welcome diversity, rooted in Christ, a deep love of one another, celebrating our differences

Strategic Focus: Develop transforming lay and clergy leaders to engage the mission field to grow fruitful and faithful congregations.

Scriptural References:

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| Psalm 46:4 | Hebrews 11:1 1 | Corinthians 15:58 |
| Romans 12:1-8 | Acts 2:42 | Acts 20:28 |
| Hebrews 10:24-25 2 | Cor. 1:12-14 | Matthew 25:14-30 |
| Proverbs 11:4 | Proverbs 19:20 | Luke 14:28 |
| Galatians 3:28 | Revelation 7:9-10 | James 2:1-13 |
| Colossians 1:16-17 | Psalm 117:1-2 | Ephesians 2:13-22 |
| Ephesians 4:1-6 | Matthew 28:19-20 | Colossians 3:12-17 |

Strategic Initiatives:

1. Develop transforming clergy and lay leaders
 - Create a culture of call for lay and clergy
 - Equip lay leaders for team ministry with clergy
 - Foster emotional intelligence, invest in intercultural leadership
 - Hold one another accountable in love
2. Invest in and empower young (18-35) and diverse people
 - Invest resources into young people so they can carry the light of Christ, both now and to future generations
 - Celebrate and seek diversity as a means of transformation
 - Create a culture of inclusiveness: discover and develop young and diverse leaders
3. Engage the mission field through partnering with communities
 - Assess and understand assets: needs, gaps, and the church's role in its community
 - Repurpose existing assets
 - Invest in innovation, sustainability, and multiplying ministries
 - Develop new faith communities
 - Launch innovative expressions of church that engage evangelism more effectively
4. Create fruitful and faithful congregations
 - Every church commits to a plan for making disciples
 - Shift resources to areas of fruitfulness and vitality for mission achievement
 - Adopt mentality of enough: God's abundance vs. our human scarcity
 - Provide resources for struggling churches that desire change: financial, leadership, innovation
 - Build a culture of collaboration, effectiveness, and inter-dependency among connection