

# Summary of Proposed Changes

*Bishop Paul Hirschy*

## Referendum Items

**1. Property.** The property referendum received an 89% "yes" vote during the referendum voting. There is strong support for this referendum item and I fully anticipate this item will pass.

**2. National Conference Representation.** This referendum received a strong 86% "yes" vote. I think this proposal will also pass the National Conference. It will do three things:

- a. Give every licensed UB minister a vote in the National Conference.
- b. Enable every local church to send a least one lay delegate to the National Conference.
- c. Put National Conference sessions on a two-year cycle, rather than a four-year cycle.

## Other Proposed Changes

### Local Church Covenant

In order to be a member church of the US National Conference, every local church will need to submit a covenant passed by its highest governing body and signed by key leaders. They will do this every two years, just prior to the US National Conference meeting. The covenant will require that they affirm the following:

1. They are committed to the Confession of Faith.
2. They agree to abide by the Constitution and Discipline of the US National Conference.
3. They are passionate about fulfilling the Great Commission in their local church.
4. They are interested in partnering with other like-minded churches.
5. They agree with the core values of the United Brethren in Christ, International.
6. They are willing to pay an annual partnership fee.

### Partnership Fee: A New Funding Proposal

The partnership fee will be as follows: 3.5% of the local church's total income, minus UB and non-UB missions giving, minus building fund, and minus any special estate that the church receives. This system will fund all of the US National Conference operations, except for those entities, like Huntington University and Global Ministries, which already raise most of their own support. Local churches will pay the partnership fee directly to the US National Conference Office each month.

### Annual Conferences

Currently, all UB churches in the United States are organized into annual conferences or mission districts. Those entities will be discontinued. In their place, all UB churches will be considered part of a single conference, the National Conference, which encompasses the entire USA.

### Clusters

A cluster is a group of 5-10 churches—ideally, not more than 7. Every church and pastor will be part of one cluster group. The Bishop will appoint the cluster group's leader, who will serve as a coach and mentor to the other pastors, and will ensure accountability within the group. The cluster leader will also carry out various administrative duties which may arise. But the main purpose of the cluster leader is to provide a coach for every pastor in the US National Conference.

## **Associations**

Local churches may also choose to belong to as many "associations" as they desire. An association is a group organized around a particular need, ministry, or something else. For instance, associations might form with churches supportive of individual camps.

## **Executive Leadership Team**

Since the US National Conference will meet every two years, it was felt that we no longer need the US National Board. Instead, the Executive Leadership Team will care for issues, needs, and business which arise between meetings of the US National Conference. The ELT will consist of the bishop, plus four laypersons and four ministers elected by the US National Conference. It will be required that one layperson and one minister come from each of four geographic regions of the United States.

## **Appointment of Leadership**

The US Bishop is the only official to be elected by the US National Conference. The Bishop and the Executive Leadership Team will appoint all of the other director positions, including the directors of Global Ministries and Education.

## **The US National Conference Leadership Teams**

Currently, we have five Leadership Teams at the national level. It is being proposed that we add two more teams, and that one of the existing teams be incorporated under one of those teams. Here is the proposed line-up:

1. Administrative Leadership Team.
2. Global Ministries Leadership Team.
3. Healthy Church Leadership Team. The existing Women's Ministries Leadership Team would become a subgroup of the Healthy Church team.
4. Education Leadership Team.
5. Pastoral Ministry Leadership Team (new).
6. Church Multiplication Leadership Team (new).

## **Stationing Committee**

The Stationing Committee process will remain basically the same. The bishop and cluster leader will comprise the stationing committee. When a pastoral change occurs, these two persons will work with the church's Personnel Relations Committee to bring about the transition. As now, the Stationing Committee will make the final decision when it comes to stationing a senior pastor.

## **Audit**

The respective cluster leaders will conduct the local church audit each year in January.

## **Global Ministries**

The work of Global Ministries will change very little, if at all.

## **UB Church International**

Our relationship with the United Brethren Church International will not change.