

Proposed National Conference Structure

Key Changes

The key change is that the National Conference would take responsibility for pastoral leadership development. An appointed national Healthy Church Director would be hired, and he and the bishop would oversee a system of Healthy Church Clusters, each with its own leader. Here are the key components of this structure.

Clusters. Every UB church would be assigned to a cluster, comprised of about seven other UB churches. This will become the primary unit for accountability, interaction, and pastoral development. The churches may or may not be in the same conference. The clusters would be organized more around affinity—size, style, etc. Each cluster would have a cluster leader. Clusters would meet two months each quarter.

Annual Conferences. The current annual conferences would remain in place, retaining their identity, special ministries, programs, and benefits. However, their responsibilities would become more administrative. The life and health of local churches would advance through the clusters, which are under the supervision of the US National Conference. Some of the responsibilities still under the authority of the conference include:

- Camps
- Church Planting
- Missions (work teams, women’s ministries, etc.)
- Youth activities (like Bible quizzing)
- Insurance
- Ministerial licensing
- Conference council business

Conference Superintendents. Superintendents wouldn’t be required. Cluster leaders would assume much of their role.

Bishop and Healthy Church Director. Between them, these persons would meet with the cluster leaders once each quarter, except during the summer.

Audits. Cluster leaders would conduct audits.

Continuing Education. Continuing education would come through the clusters. The pastors would participate together in training opportunities.

Pastoral Assignments. Pastors would be assigned under the supervision of the Bishop, Healthy Church Director, and cluster leaders, all of whom would work alongside the local church Personnel Relations Committee.

Meetings. We assume that the National Conference will approve the referendum on National Conference representation and frequency (meet every two years, and give every local church lay and clergy representation). On the years that the National Conference meets, the various annual conferences would hold separate meetings as part of the National Conference schedule. On the other years, the annual conferences would plan its own meeting, as currently done.

Assessments. All local churches will pay a percentage of their budget directly to the national office to support US National Conference ministries. The suggestion is 3%. Another percentage will be paid to the annual conference of which they are a member. That percentage will be determined by the conference.