

Executive Leadership 21-1 Team Minutes

August 6-26, 2021

Online vote via CCB group: Members of ELT

Friday, August 6, 2021

On August 6, 2021, the following was sent electronically to the voting members of the Executive Leadership Team:

ELT Personnel | Nominating & Voting

Friends,

The ELT is the highest governing body for the Church of the United Brethren in Christ between the biannual meetings of the National Conference. Four meetings are scheduled over the next two years: October 18-19, 2021 (Huntington), April 18, 2022 (Virtual), October 17-18, 2022 (Huntington), and April 17-18, 2023 (Huntington). Before we know it, we will be back in Fort Wayne for National Conference during the days of July 11-14, 2023.

As matters of first importance, there are two items related to the personnel of the ELT that you as a group will need to consider and decide. Let me lay out the technical details and recommend a tactical approach.

The ELT needs to appoint four additional members (2 clergy and 2 laypersons) nominated by the bishop (US Discipline ¶602.2) and fill two unexpired terms of ministers who were elected to four-year terms in 2019 — Andy Sikora (Central Region), who is taking a staff position with the United Brethren national office (UBNO); and Mark Wilson (North region), who took a pastorate in the Missionary Church.

Regarding the latter, the US Discipline instructs the ELT Executive Committee to fill vacancies. However, we won't have an executive committee until the October meeting, and the ELT currently consists of just six of the 12 persons (besides myself).

I want to fill those two vacancies before the fall meeting, along with seating the other four members, but we are in an area not specifically covered by the Discipline.

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come together

Among the “Duties of the Bishop” (Chapter 16 of the Discipline) are “Fill vacancies on leadership teams” (§512.1f), and “Interpret the Discipline” (§512.3a). The latter states, “The bishop’s ruling shall stand until the next meeting of the US National Conference or of the Executive Leadership Team.”

The Discipline gives similar responsibilities to the ELT. ¶605.1 says, “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.” And ¶605.2 adds, “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.”

With that in mind, I’d like to rule that, in the absence of an ELT executive committee, I will nominate persons for those vacancies, and then submit them to you for approval. This is consistent with how we handle the four persons with two-year appointments.

So, I will nominate SIX persons and submit them to you for approval later this month.

Please ask any question that you might have within this thread. Or, simply say, “I concur.”

Blessings,

Todd

Submitted by Todd Fetters

Tuesday, August 24, 2021

The voting members unanimously concurred.

Thursday – August 19, 2021

On August 19, 2021, the following was sent electronically to the voting members of the Executive Leadership Team:

Voting | 6 Nominees | August 25 Deadline

Dear Friends,

The Executive Leadership Team consists of 12 members. Four (4) clergy and four (4) laypersons are elected by the National Conference. Per US Discipline, paragraph 602.1.c, the remainder of the team constituency is appointed, “Two clergy and two laypersons nominated by the Bishop and appointed by the Executive Leadership Team.” Furthermore, of the four nominees, each of the four regions are to be represented. Two must be clergy. Two nominees must be laypersons.

We also need to fill two unexpired terms of ministers who were elected to four-year terms in 2019 – Rev. Andrew Sikora (Central Region), who is taking a staff position with the United Brethren National Office (UBNO); and Mr. Mark Wilson (North Region), who took a pastorate in the Missionary Church. Following unanimous consent obtained through email responses and phone calls from the current six Executive Leadership Team members, I reached out to two individuals about being nominated to serve on the 2021-2023 Executive Leadership Team – Rev. Mike Elkins and Rev. Tom Datema. Both individuals have agreed.

Mike Elkins has been lead pastor of New Hope Community Church in Bryan, Ohio since 2016. He leads a staff of about 15 persons. Prior to that, he served in ministry at non-UB churches beginning in 2005. He holds degrees from Baptist Bible College (2007, Pastoral Theology) and Liberty University (2015, Human Services – Executive Leadership).

Tom Datema began ministry in the United Brethren Church as a missionary to Sierra Leone from 1990-1994. After Sierra Leone, he served as an associate pastor from 1995-1998 at Dillman UB Church (Warren, Indiana), and in 1998 began 22 years as a senior pastor of Zanesville UB Church (Zanesville, Indiana). In 2020 he became pastor of Gaines Church in Caledonia, Michigan. He was the Fort Wayne Cluster Leader from 2016-2020, and currently serves on the denomination’s Financial Health Team and Crisis Management Team. He previously served on the ELT from 2005-2007.

VOTE #1 | Therefore, I recommend that Rev. Mike Elkins (Central District clergy) and Rev. Tom Datema (North District layperson) be appointed to serve on the 2021-2023 Executive Leadership Team to fill the unexpired terms of Rev. Andrew Sikora and Rev. Mark Wilson.

Additionally, I reached out to four individuals about being nominated to serve on the 2021-2023 Executive Leadership Team – Ms. Joni Michaud, Rev. Victor Mojica, Mr. Dale Perry, and Rev. Dan VanArsdalen. Given our agenda for the next two years, these four individuals will serve the UBIC well and are familiar with the “strengthen and start” vision. I am also excited that they will add to the diversity of personalities, perspectives, and skills that will benefit our team.

Joni Michaud is a member of Pleasant Valley UB Church in Lake Odessa, Michigan. Her involvement has included chairing the administrative board chair, serving as lay leader, and teaching Sunday school and junior church. Joni has been a lay delegate from her church to the last five meetings of the US National Conference, and served on the Human Sexuality Task Force 2015-2017. Joni works as an attorney in Grand Rapids,

Michigan, practicing immigration law, family law, and criminal defense. She earned her bachelor's degree in history from Huntington University in 2005 and her juris doctor from Notre Dame Law School in 2008. She served on the ELT 2019-2021.

Victor Mojica and his wife, Margarita, have been members of Clearview UB Church since 1994. He has been serving as a part-time pastor at Clearview since 1998. Currently, Clearview includes an English-speaking congregation pastored by Jim Gillette and a Spanish-speaking congregation pastored by Victor. He also works in his family business. He served on the ELT 2019-2021.

Dale Perry served 25 years as an employee of the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation from which he recently retired as Manager of the Department's Land Acquisition Program for highway and bridge construction projects. Dale has since joined consulting firm Arrow Land Solutions, LLC, as Director of Training and Development. He and his wife Shirley have been members of Mount Pleasant UB church (Chambersburg, Pa.) for nearly 30 years. Dale's involvement has included chairing the Governance Board, teaching an adult Sunday school class, and serving on the church Personnel Relations Commission and Worship Media Team. He served on the ELT 2019-2021.

Dan VanArsdalen is pastor of two UB churches in northern Ohio: Alvordton (Alvordton, Ohio) since 2010, and Kunkle (Kunkle, Ohio) since 2015. Prior to that, he served in ministry going back to 1994. He was ordained as a United Brethren minister in 2013. Dan is currently leader of the Central North: Montpelier Cluster.

VOTE #2 | Therefore, I recommend that Ms. Joni Michaud (North Region layperson), Rev. Victor Mojica (West Region clergy), Mr. Dale Perry (East Region layperson), and Rev. Dan VanArsdalen (Central District clergy) be appointed to serve on the 2021-2023 Executive Leadership Team.

The voting deadline will be set for Wednesday, August 25, 2021 at 4:30pm. As always, if you have any questions, please include them in this thread. When you are ready to vote, please reply as follows:

VOTE 1 | YES or NO

VOTE 2 | YES or NO

Blessings,

Todd

Submitted by Todd Fetters
Recorder, Samantha Essig

21-5

come together

Friday, August 20, 2021

Hey Gang!

Thank you for voting so promptly. The results of the motions #1 and #2 are unanimous and we have appointed all six individuals to serve on the 2021-2023 ELT. Sam will add the other six members to this group and I'll send a congratulatory email to the entire team on Monday.

Have a great weekend.

Todd

Tuesday – August 24, 2021

On August 24, 2021, the following was sent electronically to the voting members of the Executive Leadership Team:

Online Vote | 2021-2023 PMLT Members

Friends,

This email is a request for an online vote to approve the members of the Pastoral Ministry Leadership Team (PMLT).

Rationale

The Executive Leadership Team (ELT) is required by the US Discipline to appoint members to the Pastoral Ministry Leadership Team (PMLT). The appointment is for two years and will be complete in 2023. While the US Discipline does not stipulate how those “nominees” get to the ELT, it has been the custom that the Bishop nominates individuals and presents them to the ELT for approval and appointment. I see no reason to deviate from this traditional pattern. Therefore, I recommend the following:

Motion

To appoint the following individuals to serve on the 2021-2023 Pastoral Ministries Leadership Team: West Region: Troy Green, Craig Burkholder; Central Region: Terry Smith, Mike Brown; North Region: Randy Carpenter, Lee Rhodes. East Region: Greg Helman, Stuart Johns.

Note - All of these individuals are ministers and served on the 2017-2019 and 2019-2021 PMLT. (Troy Green was appointed in 2018 to fulfill a vacancy left by Bob Bruce who stepped off the PMLT). Rev. Jim Bolich, UB

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come together

Director of Ministerial Licensing serves as the Chairperson of the PMLT.

Please cast your vote accordingly: Yes or No

If you have any questions, please contact me. Voting will end on Friday, August 27 at 12:00pm.

Blessings,

Todd

Submitted by Todd Fetters
Recorder, Samantha Essig

Thursday, August 26, 2021

Friends,

The vote to approve the appointment of the PMLT has been unanimously approved. Thank you for taking a moment to record your vote.

FYI: all future online voting will take place on the ELT group that includes the UB directors. This particular group will be used for communication among the ELT members.

Blessings,

Todd

Respectfully submitted,

Samantha Essig
Recorder

Tomra Cardin
Board Secretary

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come together

October 18-19, 2021

HUNTINGTON UNIVERSITY, HUNTINGTON, INDIANA

Monday – October 18, 2021

At 7:00 pm, the following were present for the evening session. *Members:* Rev. Todd Fetters, Ms. Tomi Cardin, Rev. Tom Datema, Rev. Michael Elkins, Rev. Brian Kramer, Mr. Matt McConnell, Ms. Joni Michaud, Rev. Victor Mojica, Rev. Marc Stephenson, Rev. Dan VanArsdalen, Mr. Dale Perry (via Zoom), Mrs. Janis Creason (via Zoom). *Advisory:* Rev. Jim Bolich (Director of Ministerial Licensing), Mr. Steve Dennie (Director of Communications), Dr. Sherilyn Emberton (Director of Higher Education and President of Huntington University), Ms. Marci Hammel (Director of Finance), Dr. Mike Dittman (Director of National Ministries), Rev. Andy Sikora (Associate Director of Church Planting), Rev. Frank Yang (Director of UB Global), and Mrs. Samantha Essig (recorder).

Todd Fetters opened the evening session with a welcome, prayer, and time of introduction. He then prepared the team for a discussion on *The Pietist Option* by reading an excerpt from the book which had an emphasis on “Come back to Jesus.” The team split into small groups to discuss their thoughts on *The Pietist Option’s* “Four Instincts.” To conclude the discussion, Todd challenged the group to ponder the question, “What does ‘come back to Jesus’ look like for you?” He then closed with prayer.

Review of Directors’ Activity and Q&A

1. *Director of Higher Education.* Sherilyn Emberton spoke to the importance of HU’s connection with a denomination that is founded on strong, theological truth. She expressed her gratitude for Bishop Fetters and his positive impact on improving and developing the HU/UB relationship. She talked about HU’s enrollment and stated fall 2021 enrollment was down compared to the record number from fall 2020. She was not discouraged by fall 2021 enrollment, as numbers are still good compared to previous years. She was very proud that the enrollment class of fall 2021 contained the largest number of UB students in the last seven or eight years. She encouraged the group to be thinking about the upcoming 125th anniversary of HU and how the group can involve themselves and their churches. She stated the annual budget has grown 40% with over 650 employees, and that she must raise 40 million dollars per year to remain open. HU’s endowment has grown 80% since 2010, which affords them to award over 9 million dollars in scholarships per year. She closed by sharing the PLEX will be undergoing a \$15 million renovation in the coming years. There were no questions.
2. *Director of Finance.* Marci Hammel oriented the group to her role and referred to her report. She notified the group of her new administrative assistant, Jennifer Furnish. She briefly discussed the 2022 budget. There were no questions.

Discussion

1. *HELT*. Todd announced the names of the individuals who need appointed for the 2022-2025 term: Brooks Feters, Dalton Jenkins, Marty Pennington, and Kristi McConnell. Despite Dalton Jenkins's term limit, Todd indicated he would like to reappoint Dalton due to the unique perspective he adds to the team and the Board of Trustees.
2. *2022 Budget*. Marci shared information regarding the budget. There were no questions. Todd prepared the group for the election of the Chair, Vice-Chair, and Secretary during Tuesday's meeting. Andy Sikora closed the evening session with prayer at 9:05 pm.

Tuesday – October 19, 2021

At 8:30 am, the following were present for the morning session. *Members*: Rev. Todd Feters, Ms. Tomi Cardin, Rev. Tom Datema, Rev. Michael Elkins, Rev. Brian Kramer, Mr. Matt McConnell, Ms. Joni Michaud, Rev. Victor Mojica, Rev. Marc Stephenson, Rev. Dan VanArsdalen, Mr. Dale Perry (via Zoom), Mrs. Janis Creason (via Zoom). *Advisory*: Rev. Jim Bolich (Director of Ministerial Licensing), Mr. Steve Dennie (Director of Communications), Ms. Marci Hammel (Director of Finance), Dr. Mike Dittman (Director of National Ministries), Rev. Andy Sikora (Associate Director of Church Planting), Rev. Frank Yang (Director of UB Global), and Mrs. Samantha Essig (recorder).

Todd opened the morning session with a scripture reading from John 17. He then asked various members of the team to pray.

Report of the Bishop

1. *Report of the Bishop*. Todd Feters referred to his report with an emphasis on past, present, and future themes. He also shared a graph to identify the priority groups of the UNBO to give context behind each role and entity within the UBNO. A question was raised regarding the number of churches needing stationed and the plan to address the issue. Covid-19 and the lack of pastors in our pipeline are two obstacles that make stationing the open churches challenging. The discussion of how to resolve the issue will be ongoing. There were no other questions.

Review of Director's Activity and Q&A Continued

1. *Director of National Ministries*. Mike Dittman referred to his report and oriented the group to his role. He also shared his heart for the simple but supernatural mentoring process he implements for hurting churches and pastors. There were no questions.
 - 1.1. *Associate Director of Church Planting*. Andy Sikora oriented the group to his role as Associate Director of Church Planting and gave an update on his new ministry, Fresh Start Initiative. There is

ongoing conversation surrounding the ways in which Fresh Start can pool together resources with our clusters to plant more churches. He referred to the partnership with Stadia and noted they are assisting with a potential church plant in Peoria, Ariz. A question was raised regarding the Big Ten college towns and lack of church planting efforts in those areas. Andy stated the goal is to plant churches in cities. Todd expressed his gratitude and excitement for the future of National Ministries with Andy and Mike.

2. *Director of Communications.* Steve Dennie referred to his report and oriented the group to his role. There were no questions.
3. *Director of Ministerial Licensing.* Jim Bolich referred to his report and oriented the group to his role. Jim expressed gratitude for the hard work of the PMLT members as they have over 100 pastors in the licensing pipeline. Jim stated he is trying to shift the PMLT's focus to building relationships with the minister, their spouse, and the church leadership as opposed to focusing solely on moving the minister through the different phases of the licensing pipeline. Jim also identified three goals he hopes to accomplish with the PMLT over the next biennium. His first goal is to "raise up the next generation" by praying for them, inviting them to join ministry, and forming stronger connections with young people. His second goal is to develop greater gender, generational, and ethnic diversity amongst the PMLT and licensing teams. His third goal is to grow and develop ministers relationally, intellectually, and spiritually. A question was raised about whether or not we have a systematic way in which the PMLT connects with HU ministry students nearing graduation. Jim stated they have occasional interest, but we don't have any intentional processes in place at the moment. Jim plans to reach out to Dr. Wilson and Mark Vincenti at Huntington University to begin brainstorming what new processes can be implemented through our connection to HU.
4. *Director of UB Global.* Frank Yang referred to his report and oriented the group to his role and the different ways that UB Global can serve UB churches. He acknowledged two of his new employees, Angela Vincenti and Steve Fish. Frank also highlighted a few missionary families across the globe to orient the group on how UB Global serves missionaries. A discussion was held on the virtual services that UB Global is offering amidst the pandemic. They have used Zoom to participate in virtual phone calls with missionaries and leaders across the globe.

Business Session

1. *Elect Officers* (Chair, Vice Chair, Secretary). Bishop Todd Fetters.
 - 1.1. MSC to open nominations for Chairman of the ELT. Todd Fetters was nominated. MSC to close nominations for Chairman of the ELT. MSC that Todd Fetters be named Chairman of the ELT.
 - 1.2. MSC to open nominations for Vice Chairman of the ELT. Matt McConnell was nominated. MSC to close nominations for Chairman of the ELT. MSC that Matt McConnell be named Vice Chairman of the ELT.

- 1.3. MSC to open nominations for Secretary of the ELT. Tomi Cardin was nominated. MSC to close nominations for Secretary of the ELT. MSC that Tomi Cardin be named Secretary of the ELT.
- 1.4. MSC to open nominations for At Large Member of the Executive Committee. Joni Michaud was nominated. MSC to close nominations for At Large Member of the Executive Committee. MSC that Joni Michaud be named At Large Member of the Executive Committee.
2. *Approve 2022 Budget.* MSC to approve the 2022 budget as presented.
3. *Approve Minutes.* MSC to approve the minutes as presented for the 2021 National Conference. MSC to approve the online minutes from August 6, 2021 – August 26, 2021 as presented.
4. *Approve Housing Allowance.* MSC to approve housing allowances proposed. For Todd Fetters, of the total cash compensation, \$18,000 as housing allowance. For Mike Dittman, of the total cash compensation, \$22,000 as housing allowance. For Frank Yang, of the total cash compensation, \$13,500 as housing allowance.
5. *Approve Recommended Salary Base for Pastors.* MSC to approve the recommended salary base for pastors as presented: 1.0% increase \$40,720; 1.5% increase \$40,921; 2.0% increase \$41,123; 3.0% increase \$41,526.
6. *Approve HELT Appointees.* MSC to approve Brooks Fetters, Dalton Jenkins, Marty Pennington, and Kristi McConnell for the 2022-2025 term.
7. Receive Lifespring International Church into the COTUBIC. MSC to approve receiving Lifespring International Church into COTUBIC as presented.

Executive Session with the Bishop.

Executive Session without the Bishop.

The meeting was adjourned at 2:05 pm. The next meeting will be held via Zoom on April 18, 2022.

Respectfully submitted,

Samantha Essig
Recorder

Tomra Cardin
Board Secretary

21-11

— come together

Monday – April 18, 2022

At 6:30 pm, the following were present for the evening session. *Members:* Rev. Todd Fetters, Ms. Tomi Cardin, Mrs. Janis Creason, Rev. Tom Datema, Rev. Michael Elkins, Rev. Brian Kramer, Mr. Matt McConnell, Ms. Joni Michaud, Mr. Dale Perry, Rev. Marc Stephenson, Mrs. Ruth Nietz, and Rev. Dan VanArsdalen. *Absent Members:* Rev. Victor Mojica. *Advisory:* Ms. Marci Hammel (Director of Finance), Rev. Mike Dittman (Director of National Ministries), and Mrs. Samantha Essig (recorder).

Todd Fetters opened the session with a welcome, devotion, and prayer. He began the time of devotion with an illustration using the African impala because it has been observed that this animal will not jump over a low wall if they can't see exactly where their feet will land. He used the African impala's fear of the unknown to illustrate what it's like to have faith as we often have the trust that God will take care of whatever is on the other side of the wall for us. He then referred to Hebrews 11:1-8 and the story of Abraham. The Lord blessed Abraham richly because of his unwavering faith in some of the toughest and darkest of circumstances. Todd closed by having members of the ELT pray.

Report of the Bishop

1. *Bishop's Report.* Todd referred to his report. He also shared three common themes that he observed as he read through the 2021 minister reports. He observed that ministers are not done dealing with the repercussions and fallout of the pandemic, they are weary and in need of revitalization, and many of them are wrestling with the decisions of their adult children. He mentioned the 2021 reports were modified to focus more on disciple-making metrics in order to continue to encouraging disciple-making among our churches.
2. *Human Reproduction Task Force.* Todd informed the group that the Human Reproduction Task Force has been solidified. The six members include Dr. Jody Bowser, Dr. Kent Eilers, Mrs. Kim Fish, Rev. Christopher Little V, Ms. Joni Michaud (chair), and Rev. Mark Vincenti. Todd then had Joni Michaud (chair) provide the group with an update on the task force's timeline and scope of the project. The task force will focus on three primary subject matters which include abortion, family planning, and genetic engineering. Other issues that will likely be discussed include adoption, various assisted reproduction technologies, and genetic testing and therapy. The group will focus primarily on creating clarity, tone, and scriptural support of the statements listed in the Discipline. The goal will be to use flexible language to accommodate future developments and ongoing changes with reproductive technology. The group will also work on a white paper to flesh out the rationale beyond the language that will appear in the Discipline revision proposals. The group has already met one time and has another meeting scheduled in May. Joni anticipates that the timeline will proceed as follows:
 - The group will meet for a second time via Zoom in May.

- The group will meet in-person for a third meeting sometime before July.
- The group will meet for a final pre-ELT meeting sometime in September to craft a preliminary report for the October ELT meeting.
- The group will have a follow up meeting sometime in November to process any feedback provided by the ELT in October.
- The group will have a final meeting in February of 2023 to go over the proposals before they are submitted to the Bishop in March of 2023.
- In May of 2023 there will be regional meetings to look over the proposals and submit any feedback.
- In June of 2023 the final proposal will be published to the denomination.
- In July of 2023 the final proposals will be presented to the National Conference and voted upon.

Joni asked the group to pray that the task force would be able to meet in its entirety as meetings occur throughout the process, that an in-person meeting would be able to occur before July, for guidance as the group learns more about the subject matter that is being used to craft the proposals, for wisdom as the group prepares the proposals, and for cohesiveness of the task force throughout the process.

3. *Remove Hillsdale United Brethren in Christ (St. Marys, Ohio).* Todd proposed to remove Hillsdale United Brethren in Christ in St. Marys, Ohio, from the denomination. The US Discipline lays out the steps and procedures for removing a church from the denomination and those steps were followed.
4. *Renovating the United Brethren National Office Building.* Todd gave an update on the status of the United Brethren National Office building renovation and informed the group that an architect, Viridian Architect Design, has been selected for the project. Kristi McConnell is assisting Todd by acting as the architect liaison. The scope of the project includes a complete demolition of the interior with a few minor changes to the exterior of the building. Demolition will begin in July 2022 and the project will conclude by May of 2023. The primary reasoning for the renovation is to modernize and update the space, create a functional meeting space for the three organizations that reside in the building, and tell the story and celebrate the history of the three different organizations. During the renovation, the United Brethren National Office will relocate to a temporary office space that is owned by Huntington University called LifeSpring Counseling Center. Todd proposed three different funding approaches for the project that would later be voted upon: full mortgage, partial mortgage, and full cash on hand (no mortgage).

Review of Director's Activity

1. *Director of Finance.* Marci Hammel referred to her report. A question was raised about the funding for the Summits and the Youth MT line item. A ministry leader summit line item has not been created, and all funding is deposited into the Youth MT line item since they utilize it the most.

Business Session

1. *Approve fall 2021 minutes.* MSC to approve the fall 2021 minutes as presented.
2. *Approve removal of Hillsdale United Brethren in Christ (St. Marys, Ohio).* MSC to approve the removal of Hillsdale United Brethren in Christ (St. Marys, Ohio), effective April 30, 2022. Should members of the church reach out for reconciliation with the denomination, Bishop Fetters will reconsider the church's termination.
3. *Approve financial approach to funding the United Brethren National Office Renovation.* MSC to approve the full cash on hand and no mortgage financial approach to funding the United Brethren National Office renovation as presented.

Discussion

1. *Interview with Rick Tawney, Hilltop HUB.* Rick Tawney is a church planter in Columbus, Ohio. He and Mike Dittman have worked together to create a unique solution, called Hilltop HUB, that will equip and partner with kingdom-minded individuals and ministries to become more passionate with their missions. The space will be used to help those individuals start experimenting with and implementing their missions. The Hilltop HUB is located in the Hilltop which is an inner-city neighborhood in Columbus, Ohio. The church is located at First United Brethren Church in the Hilltop in Columbus, Ohio. Rick requested that we pray for the First United Brethren Church in Columbus, Ohio to create a vision for their building to be used as a HUB. He requested prayers for the summit that will be held this summer and that it will create more interest in his vision for Hilltop HUB. He also requested prayers for patience and that he would be able to wait on the Lord throughout the process.
2. *Interview with Nate Sams, Known Church Plant.* Nate Sams is a church planter in Surprise, Arizona. Nate and Andy Sikora connected through our partnership with Stadia. Nate lives in a community that is a hotbed of non-believers/explorers and his mission is to increase missional outreach in those areas. His primary focus is to help others be known by God and known by the community. In terms of funding and budget, Nate's biggest struggle in the first year was that people scaled back on donations due to the pandemic. Within the last year, Nate has seen that struggle lessen a little as they have raised around \$170,000 as of today's date. The biggest current concern is the lack of funds to be able to support personnel. He requested prayers for an improvement with funds to be able to support personnel, for the exploring non-believers in his community, the wisdom to find the right personnel, and for his family.

Executive Session without the Bishop.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:12 pm. The next meeting will be held in Huntington, Indiana, on October

21-14

come together

17-18, 2022.

Respectfully submitted,

Samantha Essig, Recorder

Tomra Cardin, Board Secretary

October 17-18, 2022

Monday – October 17, 2022

At 6:30 pm, the following were present for the evening session. Members: Rev. Todd Fetters, Ms. Tomi Cardin, Rev. Tom Datema, Rev. Michael Elkins, Rev. Brian Kramer, Mr. Matt McConnell, Ms. Joni Michaud, Rev. Victor Mojica, Mrs. Ruth Nietz, Mr. Dale Perry, Rev. Marc Stephenson, and Rev. Dan VanArsdalen. Absent Members: Mrs. Janis Creason. Advisory: Mr. Steven Dennie (Director of Communications), Ms. Marci Hammel (Director of Finance), Rev. Mike Dittman (Director of National Ministries), Dr. Sherilyn Emberton (Director of Education), Mr. Frank Yang (Director of UB Global), and Mrs. Samantha Essig (recorder).

Todd called the meeting to order at 6:30pm and welcomed the group. He then asked Brian Kramer to pray for the meeting as well as Janis Creason who was absent from the meeting. Todd then led the group in a time of devotions and focused on Ephesians 4:1-6. In this chapter, Paul is stressing that we all have a lot in common, but not by our own doing. He instructs us to maintain what God has instilled in us by following what Christ has done in us. Todd then asked the group to break out into smaller groups to discuss their assigned chapter assignments as well as follow the spirit's direction in how they would be led to pray for UB churches. When the group came back together, four groups shared their discussions and prayer requests. The group then spent some time in prayer over the shared prayer requests.

Review of Director's Activity

1. *Director of Education.* Huntington University had the largest enrollment in the history of the university at the start of the 2022-2023 academic year. This freshman class is also one of the most diverse classes the university has seen. Since the start of the school year, the university has baptized 26 students, further demonstrating the spiritual growth taking place at the university. Sherilyn also referred to the civil suit that the university is facing and requested prayers for the situation. The group surrounded Sherilyn and laid hands on her to pray for her and the university.
2. *Director of Finance.* Marci referred to her report. She stated that we ended August in the negative be-

cause our investments are taking a hit. The Youth Summit is currently in the negative because we are still waiting for a \$11,000 refund from the hotel in Daytona Beach, Florida. The Clergy Financial Health is negative because we are just now utilizing the NAE funds that were given to us several years ago. We've had many ministers take advantage of, and benefit from, the revised Clergy Financial Health program. Marci then referred to the 2023 budget, which is slightly less than the 2022 budget. Marci then referred to the 2023 compensation for fulltime lead/solo pastors report.

A question was raised about growing number of associate pastors who desire to become senior pastors within our denomination and allowing them to count their associate years in their total years served. Another question was raised about bi-vocational pastors and offering some type of compensation guideline for them as well. At the denominational level, it is heavily encouraged that the church leadership set clear expectations should they choose the bi-vocational route.

As a solution, it was proposed that we make an amendment under the "notes" section of the 2023 compensation for fulltime lead/solo pastor's form. New note #9 would read: For pastoral staff transitioning to senior pastor roles, previous years of ministerial service both within and outside of the United Brethren denomination are recognized in determining the experience factor and vacation.

Business

1. Approve spring 2022 minutes. MSC to approve the spring 2022 minutes as presented.

Tuesday – October 18, 2022

At 8:30 am, the following were present for the evening session. Members: Rev. Todd Fetters, Ms. Tomi Cardin, Rev. Tom Datema, Rev. Michael Elkins, Rev. Brian Kramer, Mr. Matt McConnell, Ms. Joni Michaud, Rev. Victor Mojica, Mrs. Ruth Nietz, Mr. Dale Perry, Rev. Marc Stephenson, and Rev. Dan VanArsdalen. Absent Members: Mrs. Janis Creason and Mr. Tom Datema. Advisory: Mr. Jim Bolich (Director of Ministerial Licensing), Mr. Steven Dennie (Director of Communications), Ms. Marci Hammel (Director of Finance), Rev. Mike Dittman (Director of National Ministries), Mr. Frank Yang (Director of UB Global), and Mrs. Samantha Essig (recorder).

Todd called the meeting to order at 8:30am and welcomed the group. The four remaining groups shared their discussions and prayer requests. The group then spent some time in prayer over the shared prayer requests.

Report of the Bishop

1. *Bishop's Report.* Todd referred to his report. He also shared his desire to continue to strengthen unity within the denomination. To help promote the theme of unity, Todd shared that the 2023 National Con-

ference theme will be “Come Together.” In preparation for National Conference, Todd has been deeply meditating on our Core Values and how they speak to the topic of unity within our denomination. Todd will be doing a series of podcasts with Brian Biedenbach on our Core Values in the near future. Todd also highlighted several United Methodist Churches, who are considering leaving the United Methodist denomination and joining the UB denomination. Nothing has been formalized as of today’s date, but he is eager and excited to continue these conversations. Todd then showed a video he captured of Walter Kim, President of NAE, and the 2023 National Conference main speaker.

Review of Directors’ Activity

1. *Director of National Ministries.* Mike Dittman shared a brief devotion on unity and referred to his report.
2. *Director of Ministerial Licensing.* Jim Bolich referred to his report. Jim spent some time talking about the Pastoral Development Team and emphasized the three big ideas the team is focusing on to help raise up the next generation, which is prayer, engaging the local church, and telling more positive stories. Jim also mentioned the pastoral residency program that Mt. Pleasant has instituted and described his excitement for the young pastors he is working with.
3. *Director of Communications.* Steve Dennie referred to his report. Steve also mentioned he is slowly starting to wind down on the final projects that he plans to work on leading up to his retirement in 2023.
4. *Director of UB Global.* Frank Yang referred to his report.

Discussion

1. Report from Joni Michaud on behalf of the Human Reproduction Task Force.

Joni expressed her excitement and appreciation for the HRTF. She has thoroughly enjoyed working with this team. She mentioned that the team has met a few times to begin developing proposals to present at National Conference 2023. At their in-person meeting in June 2022, the team drafted proposals and further solidified the goal of the team. The hope is that these new proposals will lead to revised language that is helpful to those seeking guidance. As of today’s date, they have not tackled the assisted reproduction technology topic. Due to ever changing technology, the group hopes the revisions will convey principles that will last, so they are taking their time to develop the proposals for this topic. Joni then referred to the HRTF report.

The team will have their initial proposals submitted by March 1, 2023 with the final proposals being submitted sometime in June 2023. Joni requested prayers for continued wisdom, humility, and perseverance as they craft the proposals, particularly for the assisted reproduction technology topic.

A question was raised about genetic engineering and how it is currently stated in the Discipline. Joni stated

the revisions will focus less on actual techniques as those are ever changing. Their modifications will focus primarily on conveying biblical principles to help families navigate these tough decisions.

2. Study item: 2023 Constitutional referendum.

A proposal was made to simplify our method for changing the Constitution, bringing it into line with what most other denominations do. It would not change our stand on any issues or permit changes in the Confession of Faith. Rather, it would remove the administrative work, which is cumbersome, often confusing, and seldom used. The proposed change would provide the following outcomes:

- Eliminate the need for a referendum to change the Constitution.
- Give national conferences the ability to change the Constitution.
- Raise the threshold for changing the Constitution from two-thirds of those voting, to three-fourths of those voting.

There was some pushback regarding the need to implement these changes, as it is not fully understood why we would make a change to the referendum if we are not planning to make immediate revisions to the Constitution. The concern is that if we make it too simple and easy to change the Constitution, the local church will lose its voice in matters. There was additional pushback about the concern for those in our local churches who prefer to handle changes by means of a vote. The Discipline allows local churches to still handle local church matters the way they prefer, so they would still have the opportunity to implement changes via the voting method. There was additional feedback given about needing more time and reasoning before a decision can be made, and this was agreed upon by a majority of the team.

A suggestion was made that the denomination could provide senior pastors with resources and an instructional video to be able to walk their congregation through the changes. The decision was made to allow the team to have more time to read through the Constitution and develop further reasoning for the change. Todd and Steve will further look at the revision between now and the next discussion on the topic.

Business Session

1. *Approve the 2023 budget.* MSC to approve the 2023 budget as presented.
2. *Approve the amendment to the 2023 compensation for fulltime lead/solo pastors as presented.* MSC to approve the 2023 compensation for fulltime lead/solo pastors as follows:
 - 2.1. In the 2023 Compensation for Fulltime Lead/Solo Pastors report, add the following as a new Note #9: For pastoral staff transitioning to senior pastor roles, previous years of ministerial service both within and outside of the United Brethren denomination are recognized in determining the experience factor and vacation.
3. *Approve the 2023 compensation for fulltime lead/solo pastors.* MSC to approve the 2023 compensation for fulltime lead/solo pastors as presented with the approved amendment.

21-18

come together

4. *Approve the housing allowance.* MSC to approve the housing allowance as presented.

Executive Session without the Bishop.

The meeting was adjourned at 1:47 pm. The next meeting will be held in Huntington, Indiana on April 17-18, 2023.

Respectfully submitted,

Samantha Essig, Recorder

Tomra Cardin, Board Secretary

April 17-18, 2023

Huntington, Ind.

Monday – April 17, 2023

The following were present for the Monday evening session. *Members:* Rev. Todd Fetters, Ms. Tomi Cardin, Rev. Tom Datema, Rev. Michael Elkins, Rev. Brian Kramer, Mr. Matt McConnell, Ms. Joni Michaud, Rev. Victor Mojica, Mrs. Ruth Nietz, Rev. Marc Stephenson. *Advisory:* Rev. Jim Bolich (Director of Ministerial Licensing), Mr. Steve Dennie (Director of Communications), Rev. Mike Dittman (Director of National Ministries), Ms. Marci Hammel (Director of Finance), Ms. Jamie Hoffman (Recording Secretary), and Mr. Frank Yang (Director of UB Global). *Absent Members:* Mrs. Janis Creason, Mr. Dale Perry, and Rev. Dan VanArsdalen. *Absent Advisory Members:* Dr. Sherilyn Emberton (Director of Education)

Todd called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. and welcomed the group. Mike Dittman prayed for the meeting. Todd then led the group in a time of devotions focused on Philippians 2:1-11, highlighting the theme of “unity through humility” as we follow the example of Christ. The group then had a meaningful time of discussion and prayer centered on the theme of “Praying and Preparing for Our Next Generation of Pastors.” Todd closed in prayer.

Report of the Bishop, Todd Fetters

Bishop Todd Fetters began by noting that as he discusses his report, he would first highlight three main items: Church “Adoption” Conversations on page 6, Huntington University Ownership on page 5, and Personnel Changes on page 9. First, regarding church “adoption” conversation, Todd noted that Bippus Calvary Church in Bippus, Indiana, has voted to disaffiliate from the United Methodist denomination and

join the UBIC, but there is nothing the ELT needs to do yet because the process will not be final until July, after which the ELT will either vote digitally or vote at the fall meeting. Todd noted that he will walk Bippus Calvary through the UB Discipline and interact with our Core Values. Regarding the section on Huntington University ownership, the Bishop noted that it was necessary to revise the language to make a formal statement to clarify ownership of the university and its relationship to our denomination. And third, he noted that there is an addition to the list of Senior Pastor resignations: Jody Bowser, King Street, has resigned effective April 30; this also makes an addition of King Street to the list of open churches. Some other items to note from discussion of the Bishop's Report are the following: Matt McConnell thanked the Bishop for his work on our Core Values and the way the podcasts, "For the Neighborhoods and the Nations", covered those; he asked if Steve Dennie could link the podcasts where visible on our website. During Todd's review of the General Conference 2023 in Jamaica in March, he noted that he appreciated the heart and connection of those in attendance. He reported that around 1000 people gathered at the closing service, where Bishop Larmond spoke with great energy and enthusiasm. Todd ended the discussion of his report with a short question and answer time with ELT members.

Review of Directors' Activity

1. *Director of Education.* In lieu of an in-person report by Dr. Emberton, her recorded fifteen-minute video was shown to the group. In her video report, Sherilyn shared about the school year, highlighting such things as student successes and awards, outreach programs, an inspiring student baptism chapel, and new programs of study. She also mentioned that she is looking forward to National Conference in July and is excited to host the UB Senior High Youth Camp that will take place during Conference.
2. *Director of Communications.* Steve Dennie discussed his report, which will be his final, as he is retiring in August after 45 years of service. He began by emphasizing that he has had a fun and fulfilling ride for these past 45 years. Steve shared about his most recent book, *Against the Blighting Curse*, which he noted that after five years of work is one that took the most research and time of anything he's written and is probably the one about which he feels most proud; he offered a copy of the book to all ELT members. On a personal note, Steve discussed his dad's passing on December 30 of 2022 and heralded his dad's interesting and God-centered life. In closing, Todd asked Steve to share the story he likes best from his new book. Todd thanked Steve for being a champion for our UB history and noted that he looks forward to honoring him at National Conference in July.
3. *Director of Ministerial Licensing.* Jim Bolich referred to his report. Jim began by reviewing the PMLT members and the ways they continue to provide relational connectedness with our ministers. He noted a couple corrections under his PML Team notes: Rev. Randy Carpenter is lead pastor at Colwood UB; Lee Rhodes is senior pastor at Countryside UB. Jim noted a correction to the list of provisional license ministers: Jeff Thompson is at Brown Corners in Clare, Michigan. Jim also noted two additions to the list of ministers for ordination: Brad North of South Scipio and Ryan Koch of Hopewell. He also noted that they anticipate another six to eight ordinations leading up to National Conference. Next, Jim

highlighted the new graphic that was designed to clarify license credentialing pathways and noted that the PMLT focus is on discipleship and relationship with ministers as they continue to try to answer the question, “Why should I pursue ordination?” Jim answered some questions related to the wording in the section of his report on removing senior pastors and noted that he and Todd will continue to consider the clearest wording. After a short break, Jim presented his Professional Development Plan (PDP).

Guided Prayer Experience

As a final activity for the evening, Jim Bolich guided the group through prayer centered on various themes.

Tuesday – April 18, 2023

The following were present for the Tuesday session. *Members:* Rev. Todd Fetters, Ms. Tomi Cardin, Rev. Tom Datema, Rev. Michael Elkins, Rev. Brian Kramer, Mr. Matt McConnell, Ms. Joni Michaud, Rev. Victor Mojica, Mrs. Ruth Nietz, Rev. Marc Stephenson. *Advisory:* Mr. Steve Dennie (Director of Communications), Rev. Mike Dittman (Director of National Ministries), Ms. Marci Hammel (Director of Finance), Ms. Jamie Hoffman (Recording Secretary), and Mr. Frank Yang (Director of UB Global). *Absent Members:* Mrs. Janis Creason, Mr. Dale Perry, and Rev. Dan VanArsdalen. *Absent Advisory Members:* Rev. Jim Bolich (Director of Ministerial Licensing), Dr. Sherilyn Emberton (Director of Education)

Todd called the meeting to order at 8:30 a.m. and welcomed the group. Todd read Ephesians 4:1 and opened with prayer.

Review of Director’s Activity

1. *Director of UB Global.* Frank Yang began the review of his report by sharing about the success of their first regional family-friendly missions event, called “Celebrate”, that had over 175 people in attendance. He then heralded our UB history that has worked since the 1800s to open frontiers to reach the world for Christ. He reinforced their priority to engage with who we are as UBs and encourage continued service partnering with UB Global. He ended with a question and answer time.
2. *Director of Finance.* Marci Hammel began by reviewing partnership fee receipts. She reported that this year’s audit presented with the highest rating. Marci’s report ended with some time of questions and answers.
3. *Director of National Ministries.* Mike Dittman’s report centered on discussing his Renewal Pathway and Process. Mike reiterated his need for input on how he can better communicate and teach leaders about the need for the core of renewal. Mike’s report ended with some question and answer time.

Business Session

1. *Approve the Fall 2022 ELT Minutes.* Tomi Cardin moved to accept the minutes; Joni Michaud seconded;

Todd noted two editorial corrections; motion carried, and minutes accepted with corrections.

2. *Appoint Secretary to the US National Conference.* Todd explained that with NC23 coming up in July, the ELT appoints the recording secretary to the executive team. Todd nominated Rocky Spear to serve as Secretary; Joni moved to approve; Matt McConnell seconded; motion carried.

Discussion

1. *Report from Joni Michaud on behalf of the Human Reproduction Task Force (HRTF).* Joni Michaud, as chair of the HRTF, began by thanking all for praying over this long process and for the work of her task force team. Joni reviewed each section of the HRTF document and allowed for time of discussion and questions and answers. Joni asked the ELT to continue to give feedback leading up to the May 1 deadline. Todd reminded the group how important it is that ELT members attend one of the upcoming Conference regional meetings, especially as it relates to the discussion of the HRTF report. Todd reminded the group that Steve Dennie will be posting these documents on our website; in addition, Matt McConnell asked if we are archiving these “white paper” documents, and Steve agreed this is important to be sure we have these documents archived.
2. *Review Discipline Revision Proposals.* Steve Dennie walked the group through the proposals that will be presented at NC23. After some time for questions and answers, Todd thanked Steve for all his work.
3. *Report from Steve Fish on behalf of the Nominating Committee.* Steve Fish began by explaining the process of the Nominating Committee to create documentation that future teams can follow; he asked for input on whether those on the ballot must be ordained, and it was decided that this will be considered and discussed in the future. Steve reviewed the ELT ballot. The ELT had no questions or advisement. Todd noted that Dalton Jenkins will present the ballot at NC23.

Executive Session with the Bishop.

The Executive Leadership Team went into executive session after returning from the lunch break.

Executive Session without the Bishop.

The meeting was adjourned at approximately 1:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Jamie Hoffman
Administrative Assistant

Tomra Cardin
ELT Board Secretary