

Text of the Book of Discipline – Revision 2023

**Historical document with justification for
withdrawal of the Czechia Annual Conference**

**Shaping the future way of working as Execu-
tive Committee of the Central Conference CSE**

**Report of the
78th Meeting of the Executive Committee
from June 29 – July 2, 2023 in Cluj-Na-
poca (Rumania) and**

**79th Meeting of the Executive Committee
from November 23, 2023, Online-Meeting**



The United Methodist Church

Central Conference of Central and Southern Europe



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from June 29 – July 2, 2023 in Cluj-Napoca (Rumania) and

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Facts of the Central Conference of Central and Southern Europe

General Information

Annual Conferences of the Central Conference

Provisional Annual Conference Austria
Annual Conference Poland
Annual Conference Switzerland-France-North Africa
Provisional Annual Conference Serbia-North-Macedonia-Albania
Annual Conference Czech Republic
Provisional Annual Conference Hungary

Episcopal Supervision since February 1st, 2023

Bishop Dr. Stefan Zürcher

Bishop retired

Bishop Heinrich Bolleter
Bishop Dr. Patrick Streiff

The agents of the Central Conference

Chair: Bishop Dr. Stefan Zürcher
Badenerstrasse 69, Postfach 2111
CH-8021 Zürich 1
Mail bishopzuercher@umc-cse.org
Fon +41 44 299 30 60
Fax +41 44 299 30 69

Vice-Chair: vacant

Secretary: Markus Bach
Trollstrasse 10, CH-8400 Winterthur
Mail markus.bach@umc-cse.org
Fon +41 52 212 17 39

Treasurer: Iris Bullinger
111, Chemin des Verjus, CH-1228 Plan-les-Ouates
Mail iris.bullinger@umc-cse.org
Fon +41 22 794 34 05

The Bishops-Office and Headquarters of the Central Conference

Badenerstrasse 69, Postfach 2111
CH-8021 Zürich 1
+41 44 290 30 60 / +41 44 290 30 69 (Fax)
bischof@umc-cse.org

Employees in the Bishops-Office

Urs Schweizer, Assistant of the bishop
+41 44 290 30 60
urs.schweizer@umc-cse.org

André Töngi, Finance and Administration
+41 44 290 30 63
andre.toengi@umc-cse.org

The »Geneva Area«

The "Geneva Area" was founded in 1936 and assigned to the Southeastern Jurisdiction Conference in the United States. His first bishop, Dr. John Louis Nuelsen, chose Geneva as residence. Since it is customary in the United Methodist Church to name the parish according to the respective residence of the bishop, the new parish was given the name "Geneva Area". Until 1954, all bishops resided in Geneva. In these eighteen years, the "Geneva Area" became a household name. To preserve this connection, the Central Conference in Brussels decided in 1954 to "keep the name of the Genevan Area and let the bishop have a free hand, to choose his residence, where he considers him right according to the circumstances."

The bishops of the Geneva Area

John Louis Nuelsen	1936 - 1940
William W. Peele	1940 - 1941
Arthur J. Moore	1941 - 1944 and 1952 - 1954
Paul N. Garber	1944 - 1952 and 1965 - 1966
Ferdinand Sigg	1954 - 1965
Ralph E. Dodge	1965 - 1966
Franz W. Schäfer	1966 - 1989
Heinrich Bolleter	1989 - 2006
Patrick Streiff	2006 - 2023
Stefan Zürcher	2023 -

The Central Conference of Central and Southern Europe

The "Central Conference of Central and Southern Europe" was founded in 1954. It was formed from those Annual Conferences, Provisional Annual Conferences, and Missions left over after the dissolution of the "Central Conference of Central Europe" and the "Central Conference of Southern Europe" and summed up in the "Geneva Area".

The Meetings of the Central Conference

- 1st Meeting from October 14 to 17, 1954 in Brussels, Belgium
- 2nd Meeting from February 7 to 10, 1954 in Geneva, Switzerland
- 3rd Meeting from October 13 to 16, 1960 in Linz, Austria
- 4th Meeting from September 22 to 27, 1964 in Strasbourg, France
- 5th Meeting extraordinary from September 2 to 4, 1966 in Lausanne, Switzerland
- 6th Meeting from March 5 to 9, 1969 in Berne, Switzerland
Theme: »Die Kirche lebt«
- 7th Meeting from March 21 to 25, 1973 in Schaffhausen, Switzerland
Thema: »Es ist in keinem anderen Heil«
- 8th Meeting from March 15 to 20, 1977 in Zofingen, Switzerland
Theme: »Seid dankbar in allen Dingen; denn es ist der Wille Gottes in Jesus Christus an euch.«
- 9th Meeting from March 18 to 22, 1981 in Niederuzwil, Switzerland
Theme: »Dienet einander, ein jeder mit der Gabe, die er empfangen hat, als die guten Haushalter der vielfältigen Gnade Gottes.«
- 10th Meeting from March, 13 to 17, 1985 in Zurich-Zelthof, Switzerland
Theme: »Gott dienen - ein Leben lang.«
- 11th Meeting from March 15 to 19, 1989 in Baden, Switzerland
Theme: »Christus der Weinstock - wir die Reben.«
- 12th Meeting from March 10 to 14, 1993 in Berne-Bümpliz, Switzerland
Theme: »Wo der Geist des Herrn ist, da ist Freiheit«
- 13th Meeting from March 12 to 16, 1997 in Aarau, Switzerland
Theme: »Mit Grenzen leben - in Christus überwinden«
- 14th Meeting from March 14 to 18, 2001 in Bülach, Switzerland
Theme: »Lasst uns aber Gutes tun und nicht müde werden« (Gal. 6,9)
- 15th Meeting from April 13 to 17, 2005 in Berne-Altstadt, Switzerland
Theme: »Furcht ist nicht in der Liebe« (1. Joh. 4, 18)
- 16th Meeting from March 11 to 15, 2009 in Bülach, Switzerland
Theme: »Seek God and Live - the Methodist Way
- 17th Meeting from March 13 to 17, 2013 in Winterthur, Switzerland
Theme: »Faith, Hope and Love - these three«
- 18th Meeting from March 8 to 12, 2017 in Zurich-Zelthof, Switzerland
Theme: »Jesus is Lord«
- 19th Meeting extraordinary from November 16 - 20, 2023 in Basel, Switzerland
Theme: »The fruit of the Spirit is...«

Rules of Order of the Central Conference of Central and Southern Europe

Paragraph 1 - Foundation

1. The United Methodist Church (Evangelisch-methodistische Kirche) in Central and Southern Europe is part of the United Methodist Church.
2. The United Methodist Church in Central and Southern Europe is issuing for its area a *Discipline* in accordance with *the Book of Discipline* of The United Methodist Church.
3. The United Methodist Church in Central and Southern Europe is made up of all annual and provisional annual conferences as laid out by the General Conference of The United Methodist Church.
4. The United Methodist Church in Central and Southern Europe is organized in accordance with the powers granted by the 1952 General Conference of the former Methodist Conference and in accordance with the *Book of Discipline* of The United Methodist Church as the "Central Conference of Central and Southern Europe". (See Constitutional Document from October 14, 1954 in the Minutes of the Central Conference 1954 in Brussels, pp. 39 - 40.)
5. The "Central Conference of Central and Southern Europe" has its office in Switzerland, Badenerstrasse 69, 8004 Zürich. In the following it will be referred to in short as "Central Conference".

Paragraph 2 - The Central Conference

1. The Central Conference shall be composed of the Bishop, of voting delegates, delegates with advisory voice as well as guests, who have received an invitation from the conference chair or secretary. Guests may be restricted to public sessions.
2. Central Conference members with voting rights are the delegates of the annual and provisional annual conferences elected according to the provisions of the *Discipline* and the rules of order. Only regular members have voting rights.
3. Members with advisory voice are:
 - Retired Bishops;
 - Delegates of the associated Churches within the Central Conference borders;
 - The secretary, treasurer, chairperson of the judicial court, chairpersons of the working groups, if they are not already voting members.Advisory members may participate at all sessions of the Central Conference and submit motions to the Central Conference.
4. The delegates of the annual and the provisional annual conferences shall be elected according to the proportion determined by the executive committee. The provisions of the *Discipline* are to be observed.
5. The Central Conference shall convene once every four years within the twelve months following the General Conference. The Central Conference shall be convened by the Bishop in agreement with the executive committee. If the Bishop is prevented from doing this, the secretary may make notice of the conference session. If the Central Conference has not already decided otherwise, time

and place of the upcoming session, the executive committee shall determine time and venue of the upcoming session. If necessary a special session of the Central Conference may be called.

6. The Bishop shall lead the meetings and is chairperson. If he or she is unable to lead the conference, the conference shall elect from the clergy members an interim chairperson.

7. A quorum shall be established when notice of the conference is extended at least one month prior to the conference and at least half of the members with voting rights are present. If there are too few members, the conference shall be postponed from day to day. If on the second day there are still too few members, on the third day without regard to the number of members in attendance the Central Conference shall have a quorum.

8. Without prejudice to specific provisions, the Central Conferences decides with a simple majority of the votes cast. Abstentions are to be ignored.

9. The official languages of the Central Conference shall be German and English. The Central Conference minutes shall be published in one of the two languages only.

10. The rights and responsibilities, which the Central Conference has received from the General Conference, are laid out in the *Discipline*. In the area of the Central Conference it shall have the sole legislative power.

11. Further tasks of the Central Conference shall be:

- To promote the work which has been entrusted to the conference;
- To establish all necessary rules and regulations for administration and supervision;
- To install necessary organs and to elect their representatives;
- To assign the tasks to the organs and to supervise their work;
- To approve the budget for the quadrennium.

12. The Central Conference, where the laws of the land permit, can organize and incorporate itself and its institutions in order to acquire legal status and apply the appropriate legal provisions.

Paragraph 3 - Agents and Organs of the Central Conference

1. The agents of the Central Conference are:

- The Bishop;
- The secretary;
- The treasurer.

Through nomination the Bishop can petition that a voting member of the executive committee be elected vice chair of the executive committee.

2. The Organs of the Central Conference are:

- The Executive Committee;
- The Office;
- The Council on Finances and Administration;
- The Judicial Court;
- The Committee on Investigation;
- The Committee on Appeals;
- The Working Group on Episcopacy;
- Other Working Groups.

Paragraph 4 - The Bishop

1. The Bishop embodies the unity of the Central Conference with the entire United Methodist Church. He or she is supervisor (proctor) of the entire work within the Central Conference (geographical) boundaries. He or she shall represent the Central Conference outside of the conference and determines, if he or she is prevented and deems it to be prudent, a deputy. The Bishop may *ex officio* participate in all meetings of the Central Conference.
2. The Bishop shall be elected through secret ballot with a three-fifths majority of the voting delegates present who take part in that ballot and cast valid votes. Empty ballots shall also count among valid votes. The Executive Committee may establish a preparatory process for the election of a bishop. All ordained elders in full connection, who belong to an annual or provisional annual conference of the Central Conference, may be elected.
3. The newly elected Bishop has a term of four years. When the Bishop's first term of office is closing, the executive committee shall determine whether a re-election for life or an election of a new Bishop shall take place and makes the appropriate motion to the Central Conference. For a re-election for life a three-fifth majority is required.
4. If the office of Bishop becomes vacant (due to death, retirement or resignation) the executive committee in accordance with the *Discipline* shall determine the necessary steps. The executive committee shall decide whether an extraordinary session of the Central Conference shall be announced and makes the motion to elect a new Bishop.
5. A retired Bishop shall be an advisory member of the Central Conference and the executive committee. He or she shall remain member as long as his or her residency is within the Central Conference borders. He or she is to be invited to all meetings of these organs.

Paragraph 5 - The Secretary

1. Based upon the nomination of the executive committee the Central Conference shall elect a secretary for a four-year term. The candidate does not need to be a voting member of the Central Conference. Re-election is possible.
2. The term of office shall begin with the adjournment of the session during which the election occurred and continues until the closing of the next regular session of the Central Conference. The secretary shall *ex officio* be member and secretary of the executive committee and the office.
3. The secretary shall write the minutes of the Central Conference, the executive committee and the office and shall publish and mail these as required through their by-laws. In consultation with the Bishop, he or she shall manage as need dictates the correspondence for these organs and shall administer to the tasks which the *Discipline* places on him or her. The Central Conference, the executive committee, and the office may name additional tasks.
4. If the office of secretary becomes vacant during the quadrennium, an interim secretary may be appointed by the executive committee or by the Bishop.

Paragraph 6 - The Treasurer

1. The Central Conference shall elect following nomination by the executive committee a treasurer for a four-year term. The candidate does not need to be a voting delegate of the Central Conference. Re-election is possible.
2. The term of office of the treasurer shall begin with the adjournment of the Central Conference session, during which the election took place, and continues until the conclusion of the next regular Central Conference session. He or she shall be *ex officio* a member of the executive committee.
3. The treasurer shall manage the finances following the framework of the approved budget. He or she shall annually prepare a fiscal report of all transactions, which is given to the executive committee for review. He or she shall submit motions regarding the budget of the current year as needed. He or she shall write and in consultation with the executive committee submit a budget proposal for the quadrennium to the Central Conference for approval.
4. If the office of treasurer becomes vacant during the quadrennium, an interim treasurer shall be appointed by the executive committee or by the Bishop.

Paragraph 7 - The Executive Committee

1. The executive committee shall be composed of the following members with voting rights: the Bishop, the secretary and the treasurer, as well as one superintendent and one lay delegate from each annual and provisional annual conference, as well as the chairperson of the working group on episcopacy. Lay representatives must be elected members of the Central Conference.

Retired Bishops are members with advisory voice. If a conference consists of more than one country, then beyond the two voting delegates the superintendent of each additional country shall be a member of the executive committee with advisory voice.

Through invitation the Bishop may also invite the chairpersons of the working groups.

2. The representatives of the annual and the provisional annual conferences shall be nominated for election for the executive committee by the Bishop after consultation with the elected delegates of those annual and provisional annual conferences. Vacancies in the interim shall be filled by election of the executive committee upon nomination of the Bishop. If needed, an Annual Conference may elect additional alternate delegates.
3. The term of office for the executive committee shall be four years. It shall begin with the adjournment of the Central Conference session, during which the election took place and continues until the conclusion of the next regular session of the Central Conference.
4. Chairperson of the executive committee shall *ex officio* be the Bishop.
5. The executive committee shall meet at least once a year. The meetings shall be announced by the Bishop, if he or she is prevented in doing this, by the vice-chairperson or the secretary. There is a quorum if half of the voting delegates are present. The executive committee shall decide through majority vote of the voting members present.
6. The executive committee shall manage the business of the Central Conference between sessions. Most particularly:

- To attend to the completion of its resolutions and decisions and to do what is necessary to further the standing and development of the work;
 - To receive the financial statement of the treasurer and to discharge him or her on the basis of the audit report;
 - To make the necessary adjustments and extensions to the Central Conference financial budget;
 - To attend to the preparation of the Central Conference sessions.
7. The executive committee elects through the nomination of the Office the persons who shall represent the Central Conference in the worldwide church bodies, as long as no other voting regulations exist.
8. The executive committee shall report to the Central Conference on its work and make the necessary motions.

Paragraph 8 - The Office

1. The office shall be composed of the Bishop, the vice-chairperson, the secretary, and the treasurer. Chairperson shall be the Bishop.
2. The office can through a motion of the Bishop include a fifth person, who is elected by the executive committee from among its members.
3. The office shall have the following responsibilities:
 - Preparation of the executive committee meetings and supervision or administration of its decisions;
 - The determination of the language, in which the minutes of the Central Conference shall be written;
 - Administration of all financial and personnel matters for the office of Bishop and the secretariat of the Bishop, which are not otherwise supervised;
 - Nomination of members to the Council on Finances and Administration passed on to the executive committee, which confirms the nominations;
4. In pressing situations, for which the Central Conference or the executive committee have not made any provisions, the office can act for the interim on behalf of the executive committee.

Paragraph 9 - The Council on Finance and Administration

1. The Council on Finance and Administration shall be composed of three persons to be nominated by the office and confirmed by the executive committee.
2. The council shall annually examine the disbursement of funds of the Central Conference and shall submit the written report of the review to the executive committee.
3. The council shall resolve the budget issues of the Bishop and his or her office with the appropriate bodies of the General Conference. The accounting is done through the association "Hilfe im Sprengel". The council supports the Bishop and the Bishop's office in advisory capacity.
4. The members of the council are also members of the pension board of the Central Conference. The executive committee can elect further members to the pension board.

Paragraph 10 – The Committee on Investigation

1. The Central Conference shall elect a committee on investigation in accordance with the disciplinary and arbitration regulation of the Central Conference, consisting of seven clergy members in full connection (if possible not more than one pastor per annual or provisional annual conference), two laity with advisory voice, and six substitutes (five clergy members in full connection and one layperson). The election takes place upon nomination by the Bishop.
2. The committee on investigation is responsible for any complaint against the Bishop.
3. The committee on investigation constitutes itself and gives itself rules of procedure and by-laws. Seven clergy members in full connection respectively their substitutes build the quorum. Members of the committee on investigation, who might be party to the dispute, are to be replaced by substitutes.

Paragraph 11 - The Committee on Appeals

1. The Central Conference shall vote for a committee on appeals in accordance with the disciplinary and arbitration regulation of the Central Council, made up of five pastoral members (four in full connection and a full-time local pastor) as well as four laity, who have at least six continuous years as a professing member of the United Methodist Church, also as many substitutes. The election takes place after the recommendation of the Bishop.
2. The committee on appeals of the Central Conference is responsible for appeals in disciplinary proceedings against pastoral members.
3. The committee on appeals shall constitute itself and choose its rules of order and bylaws. Committee members, who might be party to a dispute or feel biased, shall be replaced by a substitute.

Paragraph 12 - The Judicial Court

1. The judicial court shall be composed of five persons of which at least two must be clergy members in full connection. At the same time four substitutes shall be elected, two of which shall be clergy members in full connection and two lay members. The candidates shall be persons of integrity and qualified for this task. They must not for the same period of time be members of the Central Conference, the executive committee, the working groups or the organs of the disciplinary and arbitration regulation. Their election follows the nomination prepared by the executive committee.
2. The judicial court shall constitute itself and shall provide its own procedural and working rules. A quorum shall be established by the presence of three members. A tie decision shall be decided by the vote of the chairperson. A member shall be excluded from a judicial process if he or she is a member of a church body, which is party to the case.
3. The judicial court shall meet as necessity calls at a place, which the chairperson shall name. The chairperson or a substitute shall be invited to the meeting of the Central Conference.
4. The judicial court shall make all judicial decisions in accordance with the constitution, excluding the jurisdiction of the Judicial Council of the General Conference.

5. The Central Conference may charge the judicial court with additional tasks.
6. The decisions of the judicial court shall have immediate effect. The option to invoke the judicial council of the General Conference in accordance with the constitution is hereby not affected.
7. The decisions of the judicial court shall briefly outline the facts and points of controversy as well as the rationale for the decision. All parties shall receive this document as well as the secretary of the Central Conference. It shall be published in the minutes of the following Central Conference session.
8. Petitions to the judicial court may be made by:
 - The Bishop of the Central Conference;
 - At least one-third of the voting members of the executive committee;
 - At least one-fifth of the delegates with voting rights present at the Central Conference;
 - At least one-fifth of the voting members present at the annual or provisional annual conference; in provisional annual conferences, which have fewer than 25 members, half of the voting members present.

Paragraph 13 - The Working Group on Episcopacy

1. The Central Conference shall elect a working group on episcopacy, which consists of one executive committee member from each annual and provisional annual conference. The nomination shall be suggested by the office. The Bishop shall choose one fifth of the members.
2. The working group meets at least once a year. It fulfills the tasks in accordance with the *Discipline* and reports directly to the Central Conference and the executive committee.

Paragraph 14 - Other Working Groups

1. The Central Conference can elect further working groups and authorize them to undertake specific tasks. The members of the working groups need not be members of the Central Conference.
2. In general, the working groups shall be comprised of three members. Vacancies shall be filled by the executive committee.
3. The chairperson of the working group shall be determined by the Central Conference. Otherwise the working group shall constitute itself.
4. The chairperson shall report annually to the executive committee on the activities of the working group. The reporting has to take place in writing and in the official languages of the Central Conference.

Paragraph 15 - The Session of the Central Conference

1. The session committee of the Central Committee consists of the chairperson, the secretary, the treasurer, the chairperson of the ushers (counters of votes), and the conference host. This committee shall make all decisions in all procedural or organizational questions, which are not

disciplinary question or which are not otherwise regulated in these rules of order. All members of the Central Conference have the right to appeal a decision made by this committee.

2. The approved program prepared by the preparations committee of the Central Conference is the official program of the session.
3. At the beginning of the first meeting the executive committee shall place a motion for election of the following persons:
 - 6 ushers (vote counters) (3 clergy delegates and three lay delegates) and a chairperson;
 - Two auditors of the conference minutes;
 - The reporters;
4. The Office lays the to do list before the conference for acceptance.

Paragraph 16 - The business meetings

1. No member of the Central Conference may be absent from the business meetings without permission, unless it is due to illness or other legitimate reason. In this case a written note indicating the reasons shall be given to the secretary in a timely manner.
2. The chairperson shall announce the presence of a quorum. The times of opening the meetings, recess, and conclusion of the day's deliberations shall be the decision of the chairperson. He or she shall preside over the deliberations.
3. The meetings of the Central Conference shall generally be public. Visitors shall sit in the area designated to them.
4. The chairperson may for selected business call for a closed meeting. He or she must announce a closed session when at least one-fifth of the members require it. Before the closed meeting begins all guests shall leave the conference room. The business of the closed meeting shall be confidential. The decisions of the closed session shall recorded in writing.

Paragraph 17 - Deliberations

1. Business may reach the Central Conference:
 - By motion of the chairperson
 - Through the reports of the organs of the Central Conference named under paragraph 3;
 - By motion of the annual and provisional annual conferences;
 - By motion of members of the Central Conference.
2. For the business meetings the following rules shall apply:
 - All motions and amendments shall be submitted by a member of the Central Conference and be supported by another member;
 - All motions and amendments shall be written in one of the official languages of the Central Conference and given to the secretary;
 - When an amendment is proposed and has been supported, the chairperson may limit debate to the proposed amendment. The same shall apply to amendments to the amendment. The discussion shall follow the reverse order of the submitted amendments;
 - A motion for reconsideration after the concluding vote on a petition may be made by a member of the majority vote fraction only.

- The following motions must be voted on immediately after consideration of the list of speakers: close of debate and motion to vote, motion to recess and postpone the meeting, point of order, matter regarding the agenda, commit to refer the matter for consideration to a Central Conference organ.

Paragraph 18 - Voting Procedure and Elections

1. Unless otherwise designated, voting is public. Elections may be public or by ballot.
2. Prior to the vote the chairperson shall offer a brief review of the amendments, which are on the table. Amendments to the amendment shall be voted on prior to the vote on the amendment and the vote on the motion itself, which is voted on a last.
3. Voting shall generally be a showing of hands. Only the votes of the delegates present at the time of the vote shall be counted. Abstentions shall be ignored. When there is a tie vote the motion is defeated.
4. When elections are open, the candidates shall be voted on in the order of their nominations.
5. Ballots shall be used for secret elections. Empty and invalid ballots shall not be considered in determining the majority. The ushers shall see that each voting ballot has a different color, format or print. They shall also count the number of voting ballots passed out. If the number of voting ballots turned in to be counted is higher than the number passed out, the vote is invalid and must be repeated. The ushers shall record the result of the election as follows: number of voting members, number of invalid voting ballots, and number of empty voting ballots and distribution of valid ballots.
6. If the election is to take place without nominations, the first two votes shall be open. After the second vote no further candidates must be included. As of the third vote the Central Conference may, following a motion of a member, declare in an open vote that the candidate with the highest number of votes below the absolute majority is elected. For the election of a Bishop paragraph 4 applies.

Paragraph 19 - Thematic Events

1. In regard to the tasks of the Central Conference as defined in the *Discipline* thematic events can be organized in connection with the meetings of the executive committee. The theme is selected by either the Central Conference or the executive committee.
2. Further persons who in their country work in this area or may offer further impulses to the annual and provisional annual conferences may be invited to the thematic events taking place in connection with the meeting of the executive committee. Generally not more than one person per country may be invited in addition to the executive committee members. The additional persons will be invited by the Bishop after consultation with the respective superintendent.
3. At the Central Conference the themes may be taken up again for consolidation and continuation or new themes can be initiated.

Paragraph 20 - The Conference Minutes

1. All Central Conference accepted reports, petitions and decisions shall be integral parts of the conference minutes and shall be included in the minutes in full.
2. After the revision through both of the auditors of the minutes and through the chairperson the minutes are valid and will be published.

Paragraph 21 - Final Provisions

1. Petitions to change these Rules of Order of the Central Conference require a two-thirds majority to pass.
2. These Rules of Order were adopted by the 2013 Central Conference and replace the previous Organizational Structure and Rules of Order from 2009. They shall take effect on March 16, 2013.
3. On March 10, 2017, the Central Conference amended the second sentence of Paragraph 4, point 2. The amendment takes effect immediately.
4. On March 8, 2019, the Executive Committee approves the deletion of the invalid postal address of Paragraph 1, point 5. The amendment takes effect immediately.
5. On November 17, 2022, the Central Conference replaced the first sentence in Article 4, point 2. The amendment takes effect immediately.
6. On November 17, 2022, the Central Conference added a sentence to the end of Article 7, point 2. The amendment takes effect immediately.

Procedural and working rules of the Judicial Court

General provisions

Article 1: Jurisdiction of the Judicial Court

The competences of the Judicial Court shall be those listed in Article 12 of the Rules Order of the CC CSE.

Article 2: Working mode in general

1 Wherever possible, the Judicial Court shall do its work in writing, in particular with the help of electronic communication (e-mail).

2 If special circumstances require so, the Judicial Court shall hold a meeting. In such a case it shall be able to take decisions if at least three members are present. The president shall decide on the order of the day. In principle, meetings of the Judicial Court shall not be public.

Article 3: Procedure

Without prejudice to the present rules, the Judicial Court shall proceed based on its free decision, provided that equality of treatment and fair hearing are guaranteed.

Article 4: Decision-making

The Judicial Court shall decide with the simple majority of the votes cast. Abstentions shall not be taken into account for these purposes. In the case of equal votes, the president of the Judicial Court shall decide.

Article 5: Working languages and languages of procedure

The working languages and the languages of procedure of the Judicial Court shall be German and English.

Procedure for formal decisions of the Judicial Court

Article 6: Standing

Applications for a formal legal decision to be taken by the Judicial Court within the meaning of Article 12(4) of the Rules or Order of the CC CSE shall be brought by the persons and groups of persons listed in Article 12(8) of the same Rules of Order.

Article 7: Written submissions

1 Applications for a formal procedure before the Judicial Court shall be made in writing. The written application is to be sent to the secretary of the CC CSE. An application by e-mail shall be deemed to have been received where the secretary has confirmed its receipt within 7 days after the application was sent.

2 The written application shall in any case contain the following information:

- a) Names of the parties

- b) Addresses, telephone numbers, fax numbers and (where applicable) e-mail addresses of the parties
- c) The application
- d) The grounds on which the application is founded.

3 The Judicial Court shall forthwith send to the defendant a copy of the written application. Within 30 days after the receipt of the application the defendant shall to the Judicial Court send a reasoned answer to the application in writing.

4 The Judicial Court shall forthwith send to the applicant a copy of the written submissions of the defendant.

Article 8: Oral procedure and procedure in writing

1 The formal procedure before the Judicial Court shall be conducted in writing. In special cases, the president shall be entitled to decide in favour of an oral procedure.

2 In the case of an oral procedure, the president shall decide on the place of the session and on the order of the day. At the beginning of the meeting, the Judicial Court shall appoint one of its members as secretary.

Article 9: Communication with the parties

1 Without prejudice to section 3 of the present article, the communication of the Judicial Court with the parties to the procedure shall, wherever possible, be carried out by e-mail.

2 Parties who receive e-mail messages shall immediately confirm their receipt. Absent such a receipt, the sending party shall repeat the sending of the message in an appropriate manner. Without prejudice to registered mail, the communication shall be deemed to have been received once its receipt has been confirmed.

3 The following documents shall be sent by registered mail as well, where applicable, by e-mail:

- a) The written submissions by the application (to be sent to the defendant)
- b) The written submissions by the defendant (to be sent to the applicant)
- c) The setting of any additional dates for action by the parties by the president of the Judicial Court
- d) The formal decision by the Judicial Court.

Article 10: Participation of experts

The president of the Judicial Court shall be entitled to appoint experts, in particular from among the members of the United Methodist Church who may be experts in the relevant field.

Article 11: Decisions of the Judicial Court

1 The decisions of the Judicial Court shall contain information about possibilities of appeal. They shall be sent in writing to the parties, the secretary of the CC CSE and to the Bishop of the CC CSE.

2 The decisions of the Judicial Court shall numbered consecutively and shall be published according to Article 12(7) of the Rules of Order of the CC CSE in the next protocol of the CC CSE.

Further procedures

Article 12: Further tasks and informal requests

1 Where the CC CSE assigns further tasks to the Judicial Court based on Article 12(5) of the Rules of Order of the CC CSE, the president of the Judicial Court shall decide on the procedure.

2 The president of the Judicial Court shall decide on informal requests put to it by the Bishop or by other leaders of the church.

Entry into force

Article 13

The present procedural and working rules shall enter into force on 1 January 2009.

Done by the Judicial Court on 21 December 2008 and adapted on 30 March 2013 to the terminology of the Rules revised by the Central Conference 2013.

For the Judicial Court:

The president: Prof. Dr. Christa Tobler, LL.M.

I. Minutes

of the 78th meeting of the Executive Committee of the Central Conference of Central and Southern Europe

Unauthorized translation - Original in German

Minutes Executive Committee of Thursday, June 29, 2023

Thursday, June 29, 2023, 3:00 p.m.

Plenary session in the United Methodist Church in Cluj-Napoca

Bishop Streiff welcomes those present. There are a few people who participate online: Ivana Prochazkova, Martina Chlupáčková and possibly Freddy Nzambe.

Bishop Streiff begins with a Bible verse from Jeremiah 20:11: But the LORD is with me as a mighty warrior; therefore my persecutors shall fall and not prevail. Would we use such a word in our preaching? Warrior? I come from a neutral country, so I am not comfortable with this warrior language. However, Jeremiah was talking about life and death. He means that God is stronger than what others want. From 1 Timothy 1:12-14: "I thank our Lord Christ Jesus, who hath made me strong, and counted me faithful, and set me in the ministry, me that was formerly a blasphemer, and a persecutor, and an evildoer: but mercy is upon me, because I did it ignorantly, in unbelief. But the more abounded in the grace of our Lord, together with the faith and love that is in Christ Jesus." It is something special that a persecutor of Jesus Christ has become the greatest proclaimer of the grace of God. Only the grace of God can do that, and it does it again and again. Prayer.

We will start with a short round of introductions. The following people are taking part in today's meeting:

Voting members:

Bishop

Presiding Bishop	Bishop	Patrick Streiff	present
Presiding Bishop	Bishop	Stefan Zürcher	present

Office

Vice-Chairman	vacant		---
Secretary	Pastor	Markus Bach	present
Treasurer	LocalPast.	Iris Bullinger	present

Executive Committee

Serbia-North Macedonia-Albania	Sup.	Daniel Sjanta	present
	Layperson	Emil Zaev	excused
Austria	Sup.	Stefan Schröckenfuchs	present
	Laiperson	Ben Nausner	present
Poland	Sup.	Andrzej Malicki	present
	Layperson	Bozena Daszuta	present

Switzerland-France-North Africa	Sup.	Serge Frutiger	present
	Layperson	Lea Hafner	present
Czech Republic	Sup.	Ivana Procházková	online
	Layperson	Martina Chlupáčková	online
Hungary	Sup.	László Khaled	present
	Layperson	Dávid Csernák	present
Chair WG Episcopacy	Pastor	Jörg Niederer	present

Advisory members:

Retired Bishop	Bishop	Heinrich Bolleter	excused
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Additional superintendents

France and Belgium	Sup.	Etienne Rudolph	excused
Romania	Sup.	Rares Calugar	present
Algeria and Tunisia	Sup.	Freddy Nzambe	excused
North Macedonia:	Sup.	Marjan Dimov	present

Chairmen of the Working Groups

WG Theology & Ord. Ministries	Pastor	Zoltán Kovács	present
WG Liturgy	Pastor	Erica Stalcup	present
WG Church Order and Legal Affaires	Sup.		Wilfried
Nausner	present		
AG Children and Youth		vacant	---
WG Church and Society	Pastor	Marietjie Odendaal	present
WG Women's Work	Pastor	Monika Zuber	excused
Coordinator	Layperson	Barbara Bünger	present

Present as guests are:

Moderator		Matthias Bruhn	present
Assistant to the bishop from Friday		Urs Schweizer	present

Total present: 24

Bishop Streiff: I would like to briefly introduce to you how we will proceed today. This afternoon is the last time I will chair the meeting. After that, Stefan Zürcher will take over the chair. We will now deal with some parts of the office report and will then interject the country reports. After that, as far as possible, we will discuss the remaining parts of the office report.

Report of the Central Conference CSE Office (Parts 1, 2, 4, 5)

Markus Bach, Secretary

Bishop Streiff: We will begin with Part 1, but will not take up the treatment of the Church Order in 1.3 until the end of the office report.

to 1. Presence and minutes (without 1.3 with the revised church order)

There are no additions or queries.

Re 2. Preparation for the meeting of the Executive Committee in Cluj-Napoca

The Executive Committee unanimously elects Martina Chlupáčková as a new lay member of the Annual Conference Czech Republic to the Executive Committee of the Central Conference CSE.

Bishop Stefan: Emil Zaev cannot be among us because the request for him to be a member of the Executive Committee was too tight in terms of time, so he could not take time off accordingly. However, it would be good if we can still elect him as a member of the Executive Committee.

The Executive Committee unanimously elects Emil Zaev as a new lay member of the Annual Conference Serbia-North Macedonia-Albania to the Executive Committee of the Central Conference CSE.

Re 4. On inflation in Europe

Bishop Streiff: There will be a change in the payment for the pensions which will affect the countries Poland, Hungary, Serbia, Romania, Northern Macedonia, Albania and Algeria. We will receive additional funds from Wespah, in addition to the money from our church-owned pension authority, which we can use for pensions to compensate for the high inflation. In most countries the state pension is adjusted to inflation, but since this is usually very low for pastors, on Monday we decided on a monthly pension increase of € 25.00 starting October 1, 2023. This applies to pastors with at least 30 years of service.

Andrzej Malicki: What about those people who have less than 30 years of service?

Bishop Streiff: These also receive an increase, although this is adjusted on a percentage basis in accordance with the shorter period of service under the pension regulations.

Marjan Dimov: What about the other people who are not pastors but still receive a supplementary pension from the pension fund?

Bishop Streiff: The increase applies to everyone, including lay people who receive a supplementary pension.

Re 5. Financial issues and Statistics

Bishop Streiff: You can see in the account that we had a very expensive Central Conference. Fortunately, we have enough reserves to be able to carry last year's deficit. Are there any questions about this?

Bishop Streiff: If there are no questions, we will look at the Auditor's Report in Enclosure 5.

The Executive Committee unanimously accepts the 2022 accounts on the basis of the auditors' report, grants discharge to the treasurer and expresses its sincere thanks for the services rendered.

Bishop Streiff: Many thanks to Iris Bullinger for her great work. Whenever we have a Central Conference, there is a lot of extra work for her. Many thanks!

Report from the Annual Conferences and Countries

Serbia-North Macedonia-Albania

Bishop Streiff: Daniel Sjanta reports on Serbia.

Daniel Sjanta: We didn't have any special agenda items at the Annual Conference, but the usual ones. Last year and this year we reorganized and worked in groups. What is new for us is that we are now three districts from three different countries with three different languages. This is challenging and we still have to learn to deal with it.

Bishop Streiff: Are there any additions from others in the conference?

Marjan Dimov: It is a new experience for all of us that we are three districts. Working in groups has been a positive experience. We are making good progress.

Wilfried Nausner: We spoke in four and sometimes even in five languages This is our reality and we have to learn to deal with it. It basically went well but we have to get used to it. We realized in Albania that we have the same questions, even if we are in discussion with two or three countries.

But we also realized that we need to be even clearer about who represents the Annual Conference when and where, because we are three countries in the Annual Conference and we have only two seats in the Executive Committee, but it would be good to have someone from Albania here as well.

Bishop Streiff: It was a very exciting and helpful conference. There was a lot of time for discussions and for planning individual joint activities It was about helping each other to be church.

Regarding the composition of the Executive Committee: During the reorganization a few years ago, we wanted to reduce the number of delegates to the Executive Committee, but all countries should still be represented, which is done by the additionally invited superintendents. However, this leads to the fact that we have an excess of superintendents compared to the laity. Perhaps this problem can be taken into account when considering how to work in the future? Also, we had planned theme days at the executive sessions with additional people from each country.

Hungary-Romania

Laszlo Khaled: After the Central Conference in Basel, we had a pastors' meeting in November, where we reported on the decisions of the Central Conference. We decided not to change the church order in Hungarian now. In April we had the Annual Conference. However, we did not talk about human sexuality issues. It was important for us to say goodbye to Bishop Patrick and welcome Bishop Stefan. And to begin the common journey with Romania.

Rares Calugar: The new start with the Hungarian Church came about quite naturally. When we started in Romania, the cooperation with Bulgaria was good, because both are majority Orthodox countries. But it is a new situation now and that is very helpful for us. We have on the border with Hungary about 6 parishes with 800 - 900 people, with whom we have been in contact for a long time, who are not yet part of the EMK. But they have also had visits from Methodists from Hungary. At the Annual Conference we had the ordination of Samuel Goia with a delegation from Hungary on Sunday here in Romania. We feel at home in this community. There are also some in the conference who speak Hungarian. There are various meetings across the national borders.

David Csernak: It was a special opportunity to meet more people. It was already good for me to have been at the Central Conference, so I could learn a lot.

Bishop Steiff: It was a particularly encouraging moment for me that we were able to bring these two countries together in an Annual Conference. At first, there was a reluctance in Hungary to join with another district and country. One has always been alone so far and should that change now? We had a separate day in which we discussed Hungarian matters with each other and then met together with the Romanian delegates. In the course of this year, the two countries will look for solutions on how to organize a joint annual conference.

Regarding the decisions of the Central Conference: We want to prevent the Annual Conference from being overloaded with these questions and have therefore decided to give ourselves more time to take up the question at the next Annual Conference. It will be held before the next General Conference.

Czech Republic

Ivana Procházková: We met in Prague. There were services at the beginning and end of the conference. We also said goodbye to Bishop Patrick and hello to Bishop Stefan. It was helpful that Stefan Zürcher was with us for two more days. We received one person as a probationary deacon.

The most important information for you is certainly our decision to leave the EMK. We have decided this with a clear majority. The way we dealt with this issue was very respectful. You have read about this in the documents.

Bishop Steiff: We will come back to the documents and the motion a little later. But first I would like to ask if there are any additions from Martina Chlupáčková?

Martina Chlupáčková: No, I do not have any additions.

Bishop Streiff: I would like to add that Ivana Procházková together with the Conference Lay Leader informed us in advance that the Annual Conference would like to remain traditional and that there will be a motion to separate from the EMK. Stefan and I then had a conversation with the district board. We emphasized again that it is possible for the Czech church to be traditional and remain in our church, according to the decisions of the Central Conference. From our point of view, they would not have to leave the unity in the Central Conference. We then sent a letter to this effect to all delegates in advance of the Annual Conference. At the meeting, as Ivana said, there was an open and respectful discussion with each other. In the vote there was the result mentioned in the report of the office and in the supplement.

Andrzej Malicki: If I understand correctly, this is your decision and you are on the way to be an autonomous church. When will you stop being part of our church?

Ivana Procházková: The process started with the last Annual Conference and lasts according to the indications in the report. If there is a Central Conference in 2027, this will be the moment when we will be autonomous.

Wilfried Nausner: Is this decision irreversible? What we hear as a message is that you no longer want to have fellowship with us. This is not easy to hear and to accept. We want to stay in fellowship with you. Is that really irreversible?

Ivana Procházková: We do not understand our decision as something that would make the community no longer possible. But our understanding of marriage is so different that we cannot stay in this community. The trust has been lost. We also see it as an important indication and statement in our society. But I don't see it as an indication that we could never have fellowship again.

Bishop Streiff: We will come back to the report and the motions later. But we'll take a break now first. It is a pity that Ivana cannot be with us because of her broken leg. It would be much easier to be in direct conversation. But unfortunately there is no other way.

We take a break

Thursday, June 29, 2023, 4:45 p.m.

Plenary session in the United Methodist Church in Cluj-Napoca

Lea Hafner: I would like to say something about the previous topic and about Ivana. I am very sad about the decision of the Annual Conference. We had intensive talks at the round table together and we hoped that this would have created the possibility for you to stay as well. I am sorry also for you and for us that it came so.

Austria

Stefan Schröckenfuchs: This year's Annual Conference meeting was held under the theme: "Celebrating the love of God: Let's take courage!" This theme was creatively and variously implemented in the devotions, worship services and also in the conversations, which gave courage to everyone involved. The Annual Conference commissioned the establishment of a "Climate" working group to coordinate and support the sustainability work of the EMK congregations. If possible, this should also be done in cooperation with Switzerland. In this context, the Annual Conference also adopted a resolution addressed to the Austrian Federal Government, expressing concern about the increasingly visible consequences of the climate crisis and calling for sustainable, just legislation. Furthermore, the Annual Conference dealt with the topic "Mission as an invitation to Christian fellowship on the way", on which a thesis paper was presented. This sparked a lively discussion. A summary of the thesis paper will be discussed in the congregations. An evaluation team was set up to develop a concept for a "Commission for Christian Way Community". The goal is to encourage and enable congregations to invite people to Christian journey community. During the conference meeting, the conference members of the UMC in Austria made a clear commitment to unity within the worldwide Evangelical Methodist Church and the Central Conference of Central and Southern Europe. Divisions within the Central Conference were perceived with regret. With regard to issues of inclusion, the Annual Conference made the decision that the aspect of pastoral care should be prioritized with regard to the desire for a church wedding or blessing ceremony. The decision as to whether a church wedding can take place lies with the pastors in accordance with the church order. All marriages performed in a civil ceremony according to Austrian law are to be treated equally in this sense. There was not much discussion for all these motions.

Ben Nausner: In all discussions, we treated each other with respect. On the question of how we want to live mission, we encouraged each other to move forward.

Bishop Streiff: I would like to thank especially Stefan Schröckenfuchs and Ben Nausner for the work you do in the Annual Conference in small groups and during three years on one topic. This helps the communities to take up these topics. Many thanks for this.

Poland

Andrzej Malicki: Our conference took place in Katowice from June 2 - 4, 2023. For the first time we had focused on 3 days, before it was always four days. Suffering and death have become a daily reality. Today more than ever we need the proclamation of life and hope. This is especially true in view of the war in Ukraine and the treatment of refugees. Out of a deep sense of hope, the Church has been energetically working for life, for example, by providing targeted support for refugees in Poland, but also for people remaining in Ukraine, with urgently needed goods. As a conference, we are also a bit tired with working with the reports. This year, unfortunately, there was no ordination. It concerns me that we have fewer pastors applying for the pastorate.

When we came back from Basel, we talked with the pastors about the decisions. At the Annual Conference, we adopted two resolutions that gave rise to some discussion. The Annual Conference made use of the opportunity opened up by the Central Conference last

November and clearly acknowledged the previous traditional position on the question of dealing with homosexuality, but at the same time stated that it wanted to remain connected in the future both with the Central Conference of the UMC and with the worldwide church. We have decided this before we know what the General Conference will decide. In the aftermath of the conference, we also discussed in the church council that we would have to organize the Annual Conference differently in the future in order to have helpful conversations and impulses for further work.

Bishop Streiff: There are always many reports at the conference in Poland, but at least they are not all read out now. The Polish Church is also traditional in the question of how we can confer. It is certainly good to try to further develop the design of the Annual Conference.

Switzerland-France-North Africa

Serge Frutiger: The Annual Conference met at Lenk, in the middle of the mountains of the Bernese Oberland. The theme was: "Discovering, opening, shaping spaces". We also said goodbye to one bishop and hello to another. We decided to set up a working group on sustainable justice. The board invited discussion on megatrends in our cities. We also had discussions on membership. You read about that in the office report. But we also have great tensions in France, as opinions on homosexuality issues are far apart. With a large majority, we had already decided a year ago as a conference to go openly into the topic of homosexuality and to orient ourselves to the Great Commission of Jesus, which applies to all people. At this year's conference, the topic was not discussed much. We are now waiting for the next General Conference. We had two ordinations, two new probationary members and 7 local pastors who received new ministry assignments.

Lea Hafner: It was interesting to hear about the situation in Algeria. It is politically very difficult in Algeria. Nevertheless, there are now again people who let themselves be taken into the service of our church.

Bishop Stefan: On North Africa: The biggest difficulty was that two delegates from Algeria did not get visas from Switzerland for the Annual Conference. All the pastors in North Africa signed a document at a meeting in April that they wanted to be traditional but stay within the UMC. It is also special that they wanted to sign this before the General Conference will make further decisions.

Bishop Streiff: In France it is a long controversy about homosexuality. When the district conference met in March 2023, it was about the motion on the one hand that the UMC wants to remain traditional in France, and on the other hand that the whole district can make a process to leave the church (both according to the possibilities opened by the Central Conference). In the vote, both proposals did not get the necessary majorities. No solution was reached as to how to proceed. I then asked the district board to work on a solution. At the same time, I now attend every District Board meeting to facilitate a solution that is allowed under the Church Bylaws. This weekend the board will send out a letter to all members of the EMK in France that each congregation should decide for itself if it wants to stay with the EMK (vote in each congregation on the first Sunday in October).

To leave, the congregation needs a two-thirds majority. A district conference will be held in mid-October, at which we will then see which congregations decide this way and which do not. From October until the end of January 2024, the congregations that want to leave can decide on a covenant or something similar to become an autonomous Methodist church. Otherwise, they will become autonomous congregations. The important thing is that we can stop the enormous pressure that has been exerted by individuals, as if everyone had to go the same way together.

Markus Bach: Will you say something else about Etienne Rudolph?

Bishop Streiff: Etienne will take up a new assignment as hospital chaplain and will leave his work as superintendent for the French part of Switzerland at the end of the year.

On the decision of the Annual Conference in the Czech Republic

Bishop Streiff: This has given us an overview of the different countries and the meetings of the Annual Conferences. We return to the situation of the Czech Annual Conference, which wants to leave our Church according to Art. 572. Unlike Bulgaria and Slovakia, it should be a withdrawal according to our order. As an office we have prepared the following proposal:

Motion to the Executive Committee:

The Executive Committee notes with regret the decision of the Czech Annual Conference to leave the Evangelical Methodist Church and establish an autonomous Methodist Church.

The Executive Committee will submit to the next Central Conference in 2025 a draft resolution for the further process according to Art. 572. The draft resolution may include the revision of the basic texts for the establishment of an autonomous Methodist Church and/or further elements for the process of voting in the Annual Conferences of the Central Conference. The Executive Committee instructs the Working Group on Church Order and Legal Issues to prepare a draft of such a draft resolution by the next meeting of the Executive Committee.

Until the official act of separation is completed, the Annual Conference shall remain a part of the Evangelical Methodist Church with all rights and responsibilities.

Laslo Khaled: Is there a possibility to go back a step or is the decision irreversible?

Ivana Procházková: Could you, Bishop, still explain what competence the Executive Committee has and what we have to decide on?

Bishop Streiff: If an Annual Conference wants to leave our fellowship, the request goes to the Central Conference. Between the Central Conferences, the Executive Committee has the task of processing the business for the Central Conference and submitting it to it. Only the Central Conference can decide on the further process according to Art. 572. We

must now be concerned that the Central Conference has all the information to decide at the next meeting. The Central Conference can determine under which conditions an Annual Conference can leave the UMC.

Ivana Procházková: The Annual Conference 2023 has made a decision and I cannot represent another decision.

Bishop Streiff: In principle, every Annual Conference can come back to decisions made in any year and decide anew, possibly also differently. But now it is important to take the decision of the Czech Annual Conference 2023 seriously.

Wilfried Nausner: I would like to say about the historical document that I do not agree with everything it says. When it talks about the church being separated from the worldwide church, I have a different view on that. I know from Bishop Schäfer and my father that great efforts were made to maintain contact with the Czech Church. It was very difficult, on both sides. Villem Schneeberger published books during that time that were noticed throughout the Methodist world. I just want to point out that I have a different memory.

Ivana Procházková: The text was adopted by a commission. It also rather means the situation towards the government. Thank you for this other perspective.

Stefan Schröckenfuchs: My question concerns page 3, it is about the two indents. In it, something like the two sides in the questions about homosexuality are described, and should make it clear why being together is not possible. However, I have the impression that at least one if not both sides are not correctly reproduced and therefore the conclusion cannot be drawn in this way.

Ivana Procházková: This is a formulation of the Parish Assembly and not of the Annual Conference. We tried to present the extreme positions. The understanding of our pastors is very broad but not necessarily based in these two positions alone. It shows the range rather than the arguments.

Stefan Schröckenfuchs: As a position of people, I can respect it. But in the description of one side or the other, it would have to be described more differentiated.

Jörg Niederer: It could be that the next General Conference decides on an easier way to leave the church. Would that be something that would be helpful for you and you would do. What would you do?

Ivana Procházková: Please don't ask me what we would do "If...". I can't say that!

Bishop Streiff: At the Annual Conference I already pointed out that the historical presentation would have to be revised. I still have a comment on the reasons for the withdrawal, point 1: What is said here about the Central Conference Germany does not correspond to the truth. The decisions of the 2019 General Conference have also not yet come into effect in the Central Conference at all. Throughout the document, statements about third

parties should be worded in such a way that the Central Conference can also agree with them when sending the documents to the Annual Conferences to vote on the motion.

Bishop Streiff: Let's come back to the motion that we find in the report of the office. Important argument in the office was for us to stay in conversation with each other. As the Executive Committee and the Annual Conference Czech Republic, we want to stay well in conversation so that we can decide in March 2025 at the Central Conference on the further process according to Art. 572. Can we vote on the motion?

The Executive Committee unanimously adopts the motion in the report of the Office:

The Executive Committee notes with regret the decision of the Czech Annual Conference to leave the Evangelical Methodist Church and establish an autonomous Methodist Church.

The Executive Committee will submit to the next Central Conference in 2025 a draft resolution for the further process according to Art. 572. The draft resolution may include the revision of the basic texts for the establishment of an autonomous Methodist Church and/or further elements for the process of voting in the Annual Conferences of the Central Conference. The Executive Committee instructs the Working Group on Church Order and Legal Issues to prepare a draft of such a draft resolution by the next meeting of the Executive Committee.

Until the official act of separation is executed, the Annual Conference shall remain a part of the Evangelical Methodist Church with all rights and responsibilities.

Bishop Streiff: We will take the rest of the office report (Parts 6-9 and Appendix 1 to the Church Order) on Saturday.

Bishop Streiff: Now we will go to dinner, and I will definitely hand over the chair to Stefan Zürcher.

Thursday, June 29, 2023, 6:00 p.m.

Dinner at the United Methodist Church in Cluj-Napoca

Thursday, June 29, 2023, 7:30 p.m.

Group work

Bishop Stefan points out the concerns/desires for the goals and future operation of the Executive Committee as per the Executive Committee minutes of Saturday, November 19, 2022:

- ❖ get to know and understand each other and the situation of the individual countries better
- ❖ Develop a self-image of the Executive Committee and an idea of the future cooperation

- ❖ Gather ideas on the (methodical and content-related) design/work style of the meetings, which motivate the members of the Executive Committee to get involved with their concerns and topics and also to communicate with each other personally

Bishop Stefan especially welcomes Matthias Bruhn, who will help guide the process we want to do in the next few days.

Matthias Bruhn introduces himself. He invites us to a partner interview:

1. In groups of two with people who know each other very little and come from different countries if possible
2. Find a setting together where you can talk and listen (e.g. go for a walk together or find a quiet corner).
3. Please interview each other for half an hour on the questions below!
The questioner listens and asks back in order to understand the interviewee as well as possible and to encourage their thoughts and ideas. Please do not discuss!
You do not have to answer all the questions. If your interviewee has a lot to say about a particular topic, you can stay longer on that topic.

Questions:

Please tell me about an interesting day that you have experienced!

What has particularly occupied you at work, in the community, in your private life, your family?

Please tell me about the EMF in your country:

What makes you happy? What worries you? What do you wish for your church?

We split into groups of two.

Thursday, June 29, 2023, 9:00 p.m.

Evening Prayer in the United Methodist Church of Cluj-Napoca

Ivana Procházková gives the evening prayer. This is attached to the minutes.

We sing the songs "Come, Holy Spirit" and "My Life Flows On".

Minutes Executive Committee of Friday, June 30, 2023

Friday, June 30, 2023, 9.00 a.m.

Morning prayer in the United Methodist Church in Cluj-Napoca

Erica Stalcup invites you to the morning devotion with a prayer. We will then sing the song "Be Thou My Vision." The scripture reading will be from Kohelet 3:1-11 There is a time for everything. The devotion is attached to the minutes.

She invites us to spend the next five minutes reflecting with the person sitting next to us on what we have hope for, on what opens up the future for us. We close with the song "Kum ba yah, my Lord" together with a prayer. For the blessing, we sing the song "We Are Called." She says a blessing.

Friday, June 30, 2023, 9:30 a.m.

Plenary session in the United Methodist Church in Cluj-Napoca

Bishop Stefan expresses his sincere thanks for the morning prayer and says goodbye to Ivana Procházková and Martina Chlupáčková. He then gives an insight into today's program. He thanks Matthias Bruhn for leading through this day.

Bishop Stefan points out the **requests and wishes from** the minutes of the last meeting:

- ❖ to get to know and understand each other and the situation of the individual countries better
- ❖ To develop a self-image of the Executive Committee and an idea of the future cooperation.
- ❖ To gather ideas for the (methodical and content-related) design/ the working style of the meetings, which motivate the members of the Executive Committee to contribute with their concerns and topics and also to communicate with each other personally.

Based on this, he presents **questions for the concept work**

- ❖ What are our overall goals for the Executive Committee meetings?
What do we want to achieve with each other?
(By this I mean non-subject matter goals).
- ❖ What topics/subjects are important in the coming years?
- ❖ What must necessarily have a place at the meetings and what can occur beyond that?
- ❖ What ways of working (methods) help us to achieve this?
- ❖ How do we plan the meetings?
How should the preparation process be designed?

He stated the **goals for the workshop are:**

- ❖ The Executive Committee identified the top three goals for its future meetings (why).
- ❖ The Executive Committee has designated those elements/contents that must occur at each meeting and others that can occur. (what)

- ❖ The Executive Committee has determined which topics will be taken up at the next meetings. (what)
- ❖ The Executive Committee has made a list of methods with the help of which it intends to work and achieve its goals and has clarified the design of the preparatory process (how).

Bishop Stefan also refers to the **Rules of Order of the Central Conference**, in which our tasks as the Executive Committee are described (*see Article 7 - The Executive Committee*):

5. The Executive Committee shall meet at least once a year. ...
6. The Executive Committee shall manage the business of the Central Conference between sessions. Most particularly:
 - To attend to the completion of its resolutions and decisions and to do what is necessary to further the standing and development of the work;
 - To receive the financial statement of the treasurer and to discharge him or her on the basis of the audit report;
 - To make the necessary adjustments and extensions to the Central Conference financial budget;
 - To attend to the preparation of the Central Conference sessions.
7. The Executive Committee elects through the nomination of the Office the persons who shall represent the Central Conference in the worldwide church bodies, as long as no other voting regulations exist.
8. The executive committee shall report to the Central Conference on its work and make the necessary motions.

Matthias Bruhn invites to the first steps of the group work:

Partner interview - total 30 minutes:

1. Please find your interview partners from last night.
2. Please tell each other about the international cooperation in the CC!
As a structured interview like last night, or a bit more relaxed
Please make sure the amount of time to speak is balanced between the two of you.

Questions:

1. what experiences have inspired you in the international UMC?
2. what annoys you?
3. what do you wish for?

Collection of materials I based on the partner interviews and the individual work in advance.

1. How do we want to know and understand each other's situation in our countries better? (*why and who*)
2. What do we want the work of the CC and the ExCo to bring to our church? (Besides the necessary information and decision-making)
What do I want to take away for the work in my country (*why and what*)?
3. What issues are important for us in the coming years? (*what*)
4. How to shape the process, ideas about the style of work (*how*):
 - how can we bring our concerns and issues?
 - how can we communicate with each other personally?

5. How should we design the preparation process (*how*)?
 - how do we plan the meetings? How do we prepare ourselves?
6. What doesn't fit under the other headings... (*why, what and how*)?

The participants distribute themselves evenly in front of the sheets. They write their ideas on the respective topic legibly on the cards and talk about them - first for 12 minutes, then for 6 minutes each, then they rotate in the small group to the next sheet until they have been around once. The participants are asked to write their name on the back of the cards so that you can ask them about their ideas!

Results of group work:

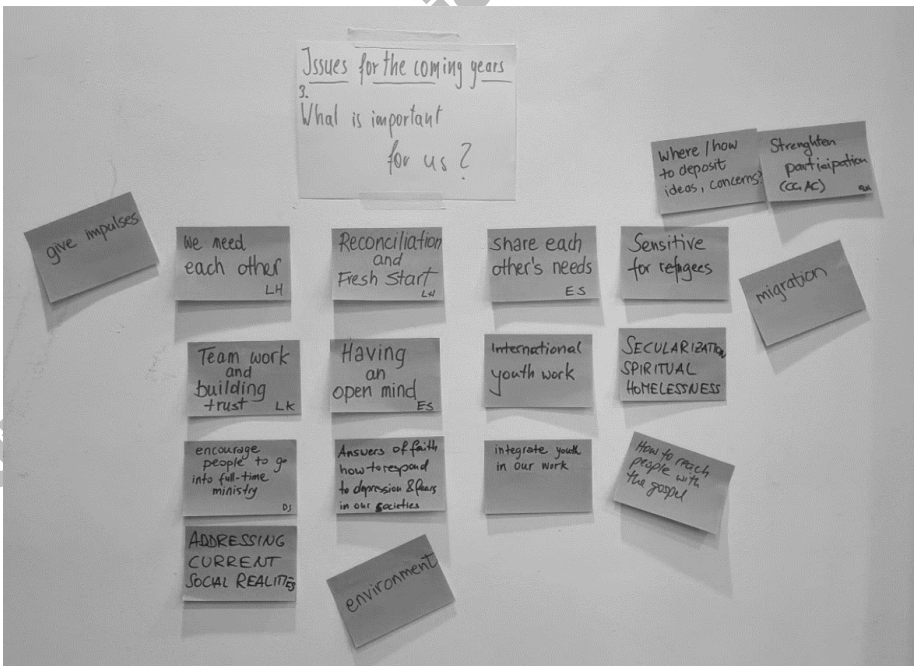
1. how do we want to **get to know and understand each other's situation better?**



2. what do I want the work of the Central Conference and the Executive Committee to **bring to our church?** (Besides the necessary information and decision-making.) What do I want to **take away for the work in my country?**

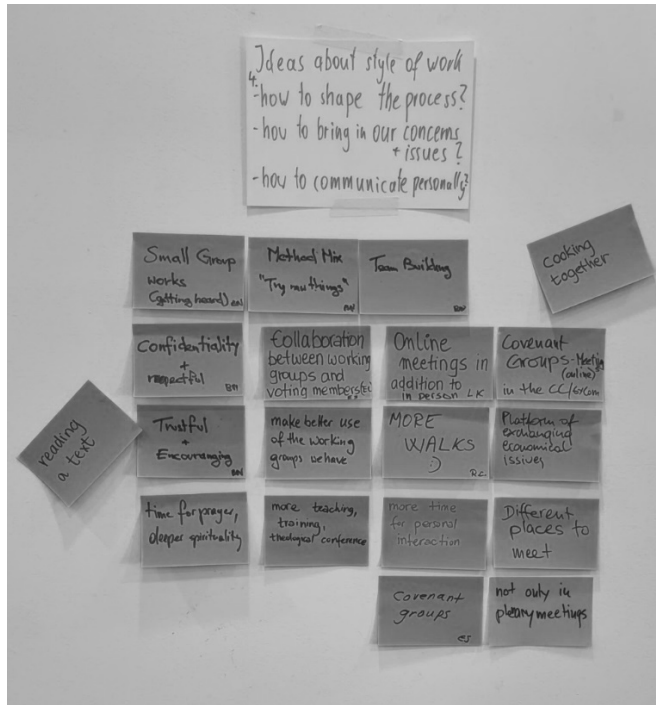


3. which **topics** are important for us in the next few years?



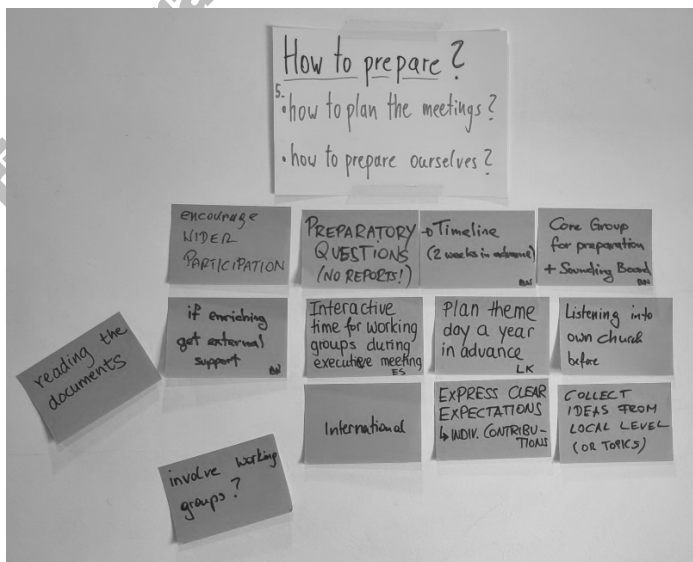
4. ideas of design, **ideas about the style of work:**

- how can we bring our concerns and issues?
- how can we communicate with each other personally?



5. how should the **preparation process** be organized?

How do we plan the meetings? How do we prepare ourselves?



6. what does not fit under the other headings...



Task: a creative contribution: play ("theater"), a picture, a mind map...

1. We form inclination groups of 5-6 persons each.
 - a) Play: I would not like to experience such an ExCo meeting...
 - b) Play: I would like to invest my time and energy in such an ExCo meeting...
 - c) Mindmap: do not experience and/or would like to invest time
 - d) Picture: do not experience and/or gladly invest time
 - e) Free design: do not experience and/or would like to invest time
2. Choose a facilitator (or distribute facilitation tasks, time management, list of speakers...), among other things to make sure that the contributions and opinions of everyone in the group are heard and that you arrive at a goal...
3. Preparation time: 50 minutes
4. Presentation/performance max. 5-10 minutes per group.
5. Then continue with the collection of materials according to slide 14/15

Friday, June 30, 2023, 12:45 p.m.

Lunch at the United Methodist Church in Cluj-Napoca

Friday, June 30, 2023, 2:00 p.m.

Plenary session in the United Methodist Church in Cluj-Napoca

The results of the creative group work will be presented:



Play:

I would not like to see such an executive committee meeting....



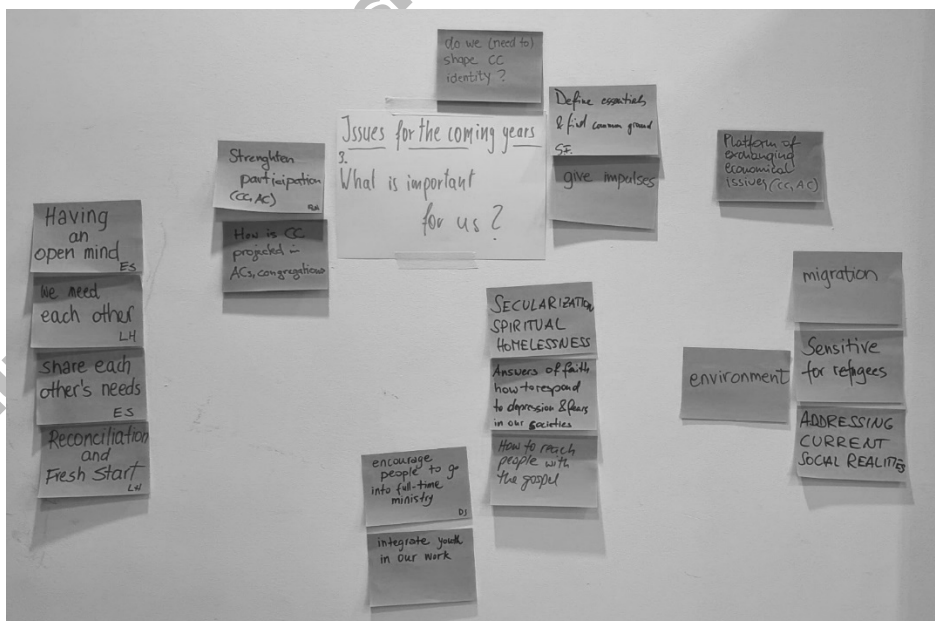
Play:

I would gladly invest my time and energy in such an Executive Committee meeting....

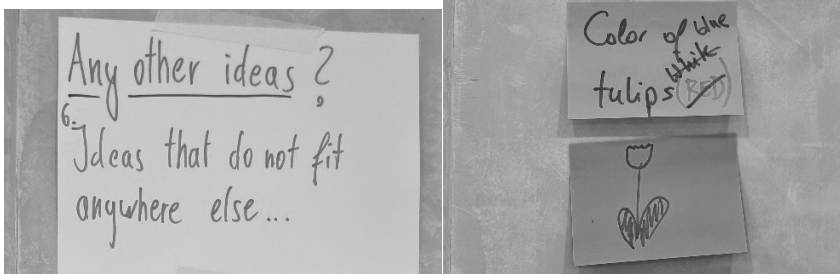
2. What do we want the work of the Central Conference and the Executive Committee to bring to our church? Besides the necessary information and decision-making. What do I want to take away for the work in my country?



3. What issues are important for us in the coming years?



6. what doesn't fit under the other headings...?



After that we go to the break.

Friday, June 30, 2023, 4:45 p.m.

Plenary session in the United Methodist Church in Cluj-Napoca

We form new groups for the **phase 1 working groups**. They are mixed and composed according to the interest of each working group. The cards are reassigned to the tasks of the working groups

Working group 1: Identify **goals** -
Sifts through the collection of materials and identifies any goals found within.

Working group 2: Identify **topics** -
Sifts through the collection of materials and identifies any themes found within.

Working Group 3: Identify **elements** for executive sessions -
Sifts through the collection of materials and identifies any elements that can be derived.

Working group 4: **Methods, style** - sifts through the collection of materials and identifies from it possible methods and what they are suitable for.

Working group 5: **Preparation of the meetings** - collects proposals for this

(Each group writes the results on a flipchart).

Outcome of Working Group 1 Objectives:

1. Overall goals for our Work

③ equipping

- Develop and encourage cooperation
- Team building

④ networking

- Strong Network (e.g. Ukraine)
- Connection on congregational level (church partnership)

② training & teaching

- give impulses
- more teaching, training, theological conference

① relating

- more time for personal interaction
- knowing what you don't know

④ Sending forth & making disciples

- collaboration between working groups and voting members
- Interactive time for working groups during executive meeting
- make better use of the working groups we have
- Create opportunity for building relationships (women, youth, ...)

WOMEN, CHILDREN, YOUTH, DIACONIA COMMUNICATIONS

New members in working group and ExCo → short introduction CV sheet

OFFER OPPORTUNITIES TO BE INVOLVED

1) relationship building ①

2) leadership building ② ③

3) ministry building ④ ④

Outcome of Working Group 2 Topics:

2. Topics to work on

- values and attitudes
 - we need each other open mind
 - Having an open mind
 - share each other's needs
 - Define essentials & find common ground
 - Remember our promises (see also in covenant)
 - help cultivate a wider view
 - help us, not take ourselves so seriously
 - POINT OF VIEW THAT WE ARE PART OF A BIGGER FAMILY
 - Joy (not frustration)
- social and ecological issues
 - migration
 - environment
 - ADDRESSING CURRENT SOCIAL REALITIES
 - Sensitive for refugees
 - Reconciliation, involving in giving people space who are don't raise their voice
 - Fresh start
 - Political & social - more than personal
- mission and discipleship
 - How to reach people with the gospel
 - Answers of faith how to respond to depression & fears in our societies
 - SECULARIZATION SPIRITUAL HOMELESSNESS
 - encourage people to go into full-time ministry
- relationship and participation
 - Platform of exchanging economical issues (CC, AC)
 - Strengthen participation (CC, AC)
 - encourage WIDER PARTICIPATION
 - How is CC projected in ACS, congregations
 - What we have in common (essentials)
 - Facebook group for executive C. (Theodor W. Kemp) LK
 - Testimonies on website/ social media

Please mark your NO. 1 and no. 2 priorities for the 1st two years!

integrate youth in our work

integrate youth in our work

integrate youth in our work

do we (need to) shape CC identity?

support visits between countries (esp. lay members) + youth

AL-CH C2 HU AT-RO BE PL TU-D2 MK RS

AL-CH C2 HU AT-RO BE PL TU-D2 MK RS

living in the other country

Guest delegates at annual conf. (more decisions)

Pastor exchange visits

TWO COUNTRIES MEET AND LEARN FROM EACH OTHER

Result of the working group 3 elements:

Please mark 3 elements that should occur every time

3. Elements for Meetings

What should be in our meetings?

- ♀ SPIRITUAL/PERSONAL SHARING
- ♀ FREE TIME FOR FELLOWSHIP
- ♀ CREATIVE GROUP PHOTO
- ♀ □ WALKS
- * THEME DAY
- ⊙ CHURCH VISITS
- + SINGING IN DIFFERENT LANGUAGES
- + PRAYER
- REPORTS
- SUMMARY + COMMUNICATION (NEXT STEPS)
- ♀ INTRODUCTIONS (ESA NEW MEMBERS)
- ♀ TEAM-BUILDING
- ♀ + SELF-REFLECTION
- ⊙ OFFERING (FOR COUNTRY)
- + COMMUNION & DEVOTIONS

KEY

- ♀ = INTERPERSONAL
- = ~~BUSINESS~~ WORK
- + = SPIRITUAL
- ⊙ = LOCAL
- * = THEME DAY

+ To share frustration hopes and joy

GROUP PHOTO
♀ ♀ ♀ ♀ ♀
CREATIVE

ExCo visits local churches during meetings
LK

self-reflexion

MORE WALKS
:) RC

AGREE ON / SUGGEST 1-3 ISSUES FOR COMMUNICATION

Theme day (not necessarily, during CC & ExCo)

Result of the working group 4 methods, style:

4. Methods & Style

Team-Building activities

- SINGING TOGETHER (NOT ONLY EU POUH...)
- PLAYING TOGETHER
- Team work and building trust LK
- Team Building
- Cooking together

Method Mix

- "Try new things"
- Discussion of the reports in groups with different perspectives
- only in early meetings
- Small Group works (getting heard)
- including body in thinking and working + other senses, too
- cross-border ritual inputs about devotion, (art, music)
- Creative ways of country and working groups reports (videos, photos)

Discuss: Safe Place + Guidelines/commitment

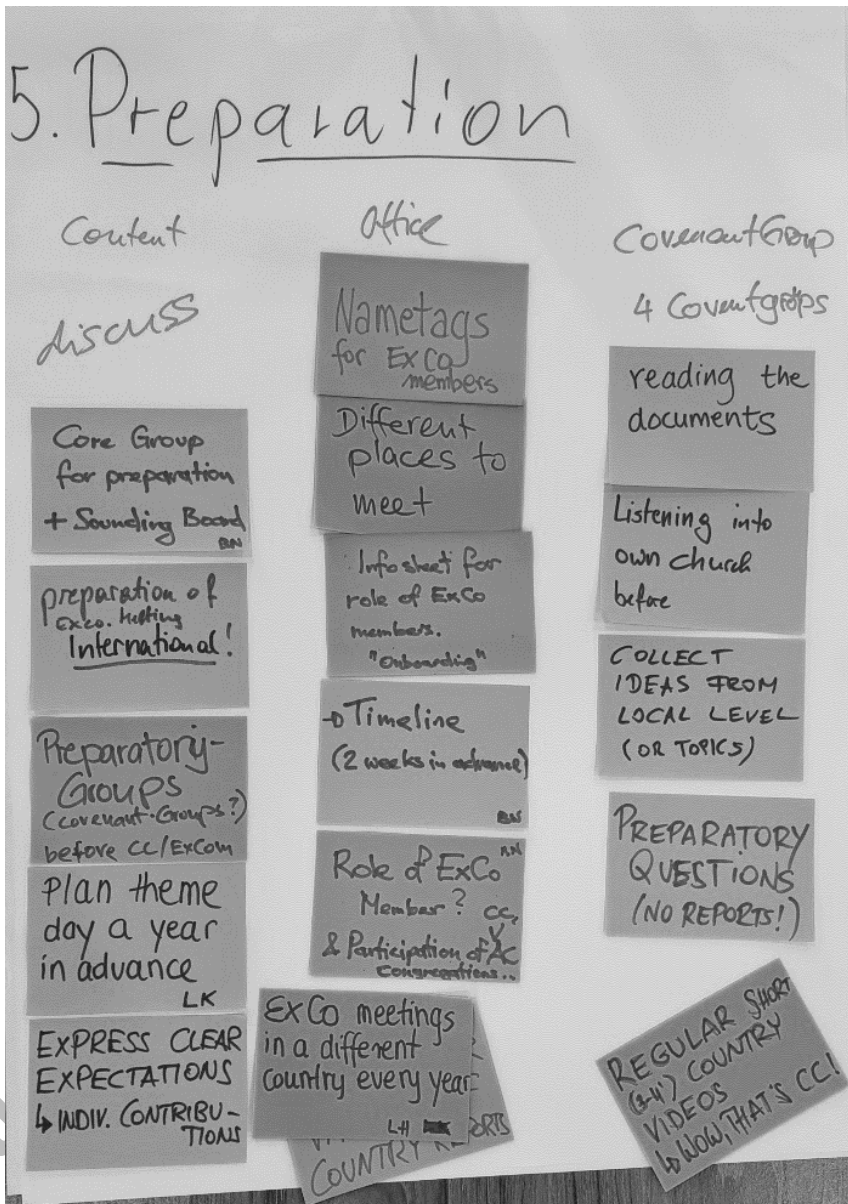
- Have Trust into the others HG
- Confidentiality + respectful EN
- define rules for dialog.
- Trustful + Encouraging EN

4. Methods + Style

Discuss: Shaping the time between Exco-Meetings by making use of electronic means

- Online meeting with personal element (break-out session) NB
- addition to Avoid "hub" meeting (if all online or do in-person meeting with sharing a personal topic)
- online meeting for administrative issues
- in-person meeting with sharing a personal topic
- Covenant Groups - The (online) reading a text together
- Covenant groups
- CC is more than only the meetings
- if en guests/experts get an supp topic from outside
- External support
- Rethink Discuss Organisation/structure
- Projekt-Groups instead of Working-Grp
- Define responsibility for networking (connectio)
- where and how is work - from working groups - evaluated?

Result of the working group 5 Preparation of meetings:



The results of the working groups are presented to everyone and questions about them are answered.

Friday, June 30, 2023, 6:00 p.m.
Dinner at the United Methodist Church in Cluj-Napoca

Friday, June 30, 2023, 7:30 p.m.

Plenary session in the United Methodist Church in Cluj-Napoca

Matthias Bruhn points out that the results still need some work and invites to prioritize the results of the 3rd and 4th

Prioritization of elements for meetings (3.):

- 12 Spiritual / Personal Exchange
- 9 Recreation for community
- 9 Team building
- 8 Community visits
- 4 Walks, hikes
- 4 Theme days
- 3 Communion
- 3 Singing in different languages
- 2 Introductions for new members
- 2 Prayer
- 1 Reports
- 1 Self-reflection
- 1 Collection for projects host country

Prioritization of themes (4.):

- 18 Integrating youth into what we do
- 9 Migration, Sensitive to Refugees
- 9 Environment
- 9 Reaching people with the gospel
- 6 Encouraging people for the pastorate
- 5 Secularization, spiritual homelessness

Matthias Bruhn expresses his sincere thanks for his cooperation during the whole day. The Executive Committee gives him a warm applause.

Matthias Bruhn invites to give a written feedback on the group work:

1. which aspects were helpful for ...
 - a) the relations
 - b) the work of the Executive Committee
 - c) the fun
2. what are you taking with you?
3. other remarks

Friday, June 30, 2023, 7:30 p.m.

Evening worship at the United Methodist Church in Cluj-Napoca

Bożena Daszuta invites us to the evening devotion and teaches us some Polish words so that we can sing a Polish song: "Juz teraz we mnie kwitna Twe ogrody. Juz teraz we mnie Twe Krolestwo jest."

(Already Your gardens are blooming in me. Already Your kingdom is in me.)

She reads from Jeremiah 29:11: "For I know well the thoughts that I have toward you, saith the LORD; thoughts of peace, and not of sorrow, that I may give you a future and a hope." We sing the song "Juz teraz we mnie kwitna Twe ogrody. Juz teraz we mnie Twe

Krolestwo jest." and read together Psalm 71, 14 - 24. We sing the song "Because He Lives."

Afterwards, *Bożena Daszuta* distributes written blessings in Polish, which we translate and read aloud with our electronic aids. Finally, she invites us to read Ephesians 4:14-21 together standing and putting our arm on the shoulder of the person standing next to us.

Unauthorized translation - original in German

Minutes Executive Committee of Saturday, July 1, 2023

Saturday, July 1, 2023, 9.00 a.m.

Morning worship at the United Methodist Church in Cluj-Napoca

Bishop Stefan welcomes those present and invites them to the morning devotion, which is given by *Ben Nausner*.

Ben Nausner invites us to sing the song "Here I Am to Worship." We read Psalm 139:1-12 together, and the devotion is attached to the minutes. *Ben Nausner* invites us to engage in conversation with the person sitting next to him about what encouraged us at this year's Executive Committee meeting. He then invites people to join in a time of prayer, speaking in their native language. The time of prayer is concluded with the common Our Father.

We sing the song "Fear Not". Afterwards *Ben Nausner* places us under God's blessing.

Saturday, July 1, 2023, 9:30 a.m.

Plenary session in the United Methodist Church in Cluj-Napoca

Bishop Stefan presents the program planned for today.

Markus Bach thanks Bishop Patrick Streiff on behalf of the Executive Committee for his great work in the Central Conference over many years. The Executive Committee gives a warm and grateful applause.

Markus Bach: You have been bid farewell by all the Annual Conferences and, as the last group, also by the Executive Committee of the Central Conference. You may now finally retire, although the "stand" is not to be taken too literally: you may retire. We are giving you and your wife Heidi a Muskoka chair as a gift, so that the retirement seat will be just right. This is at the same time to express our thanks and also to remind you of us.

Barbara Büniger presents Bishop Streiff with a gift in the form of a patchwork quilt made jointly by the women of the Central Conference. She also thanks him for his great commitment to women and to the Central Conference.

Bishop Streiff: Thank you very much for the gifts and thank you for the work, I enjoyed doing it.

Markus Bach: We also have a small gift to the new Bishop Stefan. It is a bunch of keys, each with a key from our different Annual Conferences. The keys are as different as we are different. The symbolism of the key also has a delicate side, namely that it does not simply hand over all decision-making power to the bishop. The key ring is meant to express the trust we are willing to place in you.

The Executive Committee gives a warm round of applause.

Bishop Stefan: Thank you very much for the trust you have placed in me, which I have always felt. I look forward to being on the road together with you.

Further work on the group work

Matthias Bruhn reviews yesterday's outcome of the five working groups:

to the working group 1:

The identified goals for our work are on the flip chart (see minutes of 6/30/2013)

to the working group 2:

The identified topics are named and prioritized:

1. integration of youth
2. environment, migration/refugees, reaching people with the gospel.
3. Encourage full-time service
4. secularization/spiritual homelessness

to the working group 3:

Identified elements for Executive Committee meetings are named and prioritized:

1. spiritual/personal exchange
2. free time for fellowship
3. visit communities

Lea Hafner: The prioritization as we have done it here seems to me not to be leading on, because the ordinary business parts that we have to do were not on the list. So it gave a false impression of what we want to do. It would have to be understood that these are the elements to be considered beyond the "ordinary" elements that we have evaluated.

Bishop Stefan: I have also seen this and can definitely classify it in this way.

Wilfried Nausner: What we have not taken into account is the linguistic diversity and the different cultures. It is not very easy to deal with this. We have not yet satisfactorily clarified how we want to do this in a helpful way.

Matthias Bruhn: I am grateful for this feedback. Still report them to me on the written feedback sheet.

to the working group 4:

Matthias Bruhn: There is a proposal for an online meeting of the Executive Committee each fall. Stefan Zürcher will inform us about this.

Bishop Stefan: For our further meetings as the Executive Committee, I intend that we will meet online each October/November. The idea is that we can inform ourselves about current events, but also share spiritual things with each other. I am thinking of about one to two hour online meetings.

Urs Schweizer: I think it's important to also remember what we've put together in terms of methodology when looking at online meetings - there is, for example, also the possibility of group discussions/work in online meetings to strengthen everyone's participation.

Matthias Bruhn: The question is whether you want to support and contribute to such an additional online meeting in the fall. The exact form and content will still have to be determined. Let's vote on it!

The Executive Committee unanimously agrees to hold an additional online meeting in October/November of each year.

Bishop Stefan: We will determine the date after the summer vacations.

Matthias Bruhn: Another suggestion from the working group is the introduction of so-called covenant groups. The possibility is also found in working group 5. We are of the opinion that this must be a voluntary thing in which one can participate or not. We have therefore prepared a paper on which one can sign up for such covenant groups. Is it understandable what is meant?

László Khaled: It would be helpful if we knew a bit more about what exactly is meant by covenant groups.

Erika Stalcup: I have worked to ensure that such covenant groups exist. This promotes mutual trust and strengthens the community for spiritual goals.

Urs Schweizer: It is not an interest group, but a covenant. You put yourself into it. What exactly something like that looks like can be very individual. It is a succession based on a deeper community.

Matthias Bruhn: I ask you to sign up on the list by tonight.

Stefan Schröckenfuchs: In this context, we should clarify more precisely what the difference is to the Cabinets South or that in Switzerland. We also need to clarify how many such groups we need to have and can have.

Rares Calugar: I don't think I can invest much time in such a group. I am already sufficiently committed without it. We also need more time for Cabinet South.

Erika Stalcup: The group will not be too large and will not take up much time or only as much as the participants are willing to contribute. It is also not a governing body, but a spiritual body. The two things should not be mixed.

Markus Bach: It's a panel that will meet online. I guess every two to three months, depending on the possibility of the participants. It would be good if it is well mixed with different countries, pastors and lay people, voting and non-voting members of the Executive Committee. I think the effort is not too much.

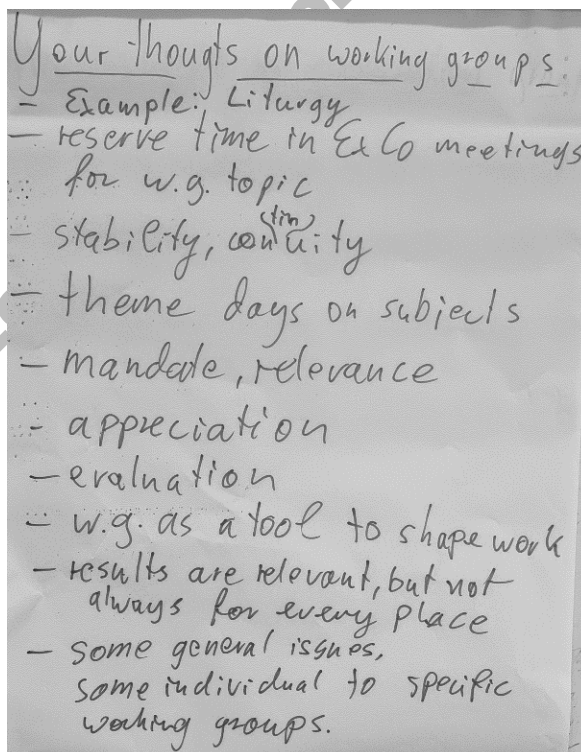
Wilfried Nausner: We should indeed not mix what is leadership and what is community. But we should also be mindful when certain people meet and others do not.

Matthias Bruhn: Thank you for the comments. We have clarified with that: covenant groups are not a leadership matter, but a personal group. Please sign up if you are willing to do so.

Serge Frutiger: But that doesn't answer Stefan Schröckenfuchs' question about how we deal with those who are not integrated into any group.

Stefan Zürcher: I plan to hold a superintendents' meeting towards the end of the year where we can discuss this. I also think that we need to distinguish leadership and community.

Matthias Bruhn: This brings us to the question of whether and how we want to continue working with working groups or rather with project groups. There was also the question of how the work of the working groups will be evaluated. We collect your thoughts on the flipchart.



Before online meeting,
w.g. leaders prepare:
- current situation
- challenges
- needs
- what is the contribution
you can make.

Stefan Zürcher: I suggest that next March, in connection with the questions around the working group on children and youth, we consider how the work of the working groups should fundamentally look. The work with the young people could probably give us a hint.

Markus Bach: We could additionally mandate the working group to formulate what is helpful for them and report this to us for the attention of the Executive Committee in March 2024. However, this only works if the chairs of the working group find this helpful and are willing to do so.

The chairs of the working groups signal approval.

Ben Nausner: Then I formulate a motion: The Executive Committee instructs the working groups that they describe their current situation, formulate their needs and challenges and describe what contribution they can make to the Central Conference for the attention of the Executive Committee meeting in March 2024.

Matthias Bruhn: Can we take a vote on this?

The Executive Committee unanimously mandates the Working Groups to describe their current situation, formulate their needs and current challenges, and describe what contribution they can make to the Central Conference for the attention of the Executive Committee meeting in March 2024.

Matthias Bruhn: We come to the last point from working group 4: Formulating guidelines for dealing with each other in a trusting manner (safe place). Which guidelines are necessary and helpful for group work or communication? We then need volunteers to evaluate this and put it together for the next Executive Committee meeting. I suggest that we write down our ideas on a sheet of paper, collect them and then give them to a small group to work on.

The Executive Committee agrees with this approach and fills out appropriate paperwork.

Matthias Bruhn: Who would like to sift through the papers and summarize them?

Bishop Stefan: The idea is that these people will prepare a first draft and present it to us at the next meeting of the Executive Committee. We can then decide how to proceed.

Marietjie Odendaal and Stefan Schröckenfuchs are ready for this.

Matthias Bruhn: Thank you very much for that. If there is a third person, you can include them in your group.

to the working group 5:

Matthias Bruhn: From working group 5 comes the suggestion that there is a separate preparatory group for the meetings of the Executive Committee. This preparation group could already be established for the next meeting in March 2024 and we should determine who belongs to this group.

Bishop Stefan: I would first like to ask if you agree that we should generally set up a preparatory group for the executive. Only when this question is clarified can we clarify who belongs to it.

Stefan Schröckenfuchs: Is it about the content or the organization of the Executive Committee.

Bishop Stefan: It is about the content of the Executive Committee meeting, but not about the organization; it is about the methods to be used. I think we can accomplish this task in two to three online meetings. I would appreciate if these people are then also willing to lead a part at the meeting.

Andrzej Malicki: It seems to me important to have someone from the place where the Executive Committee meeting will be held.

Bishop Stefan: That seems to make a lot of sense to me as well. For next year, we are planning to hold the Executive Committee meeting in Vienna. In 2020 we had the last meeting in Vienna, which we then had to cancel because of the Corona pandemic. Do you guys agree with that?

The Executive Committee unanimously decides to hold the Executive Committee meeting in Vienna (Austria) from March 14 - 17, 2024.

Bishop Stefan: Many thanks to you that you will again give us hospitality. When this is clarified, it would be helpful if Ben Nausner or Stefan Schröckenfuchs from Austria will be in the preparation group.

Stefan Schröckenfuchs: We are ready for it, but we can't say yet who it will be from the two of us. We still have to clarify that internally.

Bishop Stefan: Thank you very much for that! Are there other people who are available for this next preparation group?

Erika Stalcup: I am ready to participate.

Bishop Stefan: Thank you very much! It would be helpful if we had someone else from the East.

László Khaled: I am also ready to help.

Bishop Stefan: With this, we have determined the preparatory group for the next meeting of the Executive Committee. These are Stefan Schröckenfuchs or Ben Nausner, Erika Stalcup and László Khaled.

Matthias Bruhn: That brings us to the end of the points that still need to be clarified.

Matthias Bruhn invites to give a written feedback on the group work:

1. which aspects were helpful for ...
 - a) the relations
 - b) the work of the Executive Committee
 - c) the fun
2. what are you taking with you?
3. other remarks

Bishop Stefan: Thank you very much, Matthias, for taking us along this path in this meeting. That was very helpful for us.

The Executive Committee gives a big applause, joining the thanks of the Bishop.

Matthias Bruhn: Thank you very much for letting me be with you. I felt good and am grateful for the experiences I was able to have with you.

We will take a coffee break.

Saturday, July 1, 2023, 11:30 a.m.

Plenary session in the United Methodist Church in Cluj-Napoca

Bishop Stefan: We will continue with the discussion of the office report, at item 6.

Report of the Office of the Central Conference CSE

Markus Bach, Secretary

Re 6. Elections

The Executive Committee unanimously elects the following individuals to the appropriate committees:

- | | |
|---|-----------------------------------|
| - WG Theology and Ordained Ministries (Chair) | Zoltan Kovács (HU) |
| - WG Theology and Ordained Ministries (CH-FR-NA) | David Field (CH) |
| - WG Church and Society | Dorothee Bűrma (AT) |
| - WG Church Order and Legal Issues | László Khaled (HU) |
| - Substitute member Committee of Appeals | Christine Moll (CH) |
| - Judicial Council substitute member | Milen Stefanov (NMK) |
| - Counsel for the church | Markus Bach (CH) |
| - Substitute Counsel for the church | Stefan Schröckenfuchs (AT) |
| - CPCE Regional Group South-East Europe (1 person) | Wilfried Nausner (AL/AT) |
| - Connectional Table (1 person), from GC 2024 | Stefan Schröckenfuchs (AT) |

Re 7. Request of the Annual Conference Switzerland-France-North Africa

Bishop Streiff: I still looked at the formulations with Wilfried. You see the reason why we want to go from 4 to 5 questions in Switzerland. In Switzerland, we started from the existing four German-language questions. In the Book of Discipline and Book of Worship, the wording is still slightly different, which is why we would like to slightly change the German text in the 5th question: "Will you participate in the mission of the Evangelical Methodist Church with prayer, presence, gifts, service and witness?"

Stefan Schröckenfuchs: For me, it's too fast with the division from 4 to 5 questions. In addition, I have the impression that the questions are asked in such a way that younger or outsiders do not understand this. I have heard from Swiss colleagues that they want to translate it very freely in Swiss German. I think we should have more time for a discussion. I also have questions about this that are deeper and not about the wording. I don't think that we will have more agreement on the questions by changing it from four to five questions.

Jörg Niederer: We have also worked out a more up-to-date text for a younger audience. But we have not put this as a motion. What we have here is not a big change, but it would help us in Switzerland in dealing with the membership. So I support the change to

the five questions. But I have trouble with an adjustment of the motion based on the original English text. I am concerned about the word "presence", which should rather be translated as "presence".

László Khaled: I have the same questions as Stefan Schröckenfuchs. What exactly do we mean by membership, and what do these questions mean in this context? I can understand that Switzerland wants to do this. But for the other conferences, we are not ready to understand this for us. I think that we should give Switzerland this possibility, but not do this in the elaboration for the whole Central Conference.

Bishop Streiff: If you think it is too fast, then we can proceed according to László Khaled's proposal and give Switzerland the possibility to split the four questions into five questions. What Switzerland wants to do first of all is to take apart the pledge in the second question towards the worldwide church and the EMC. Liturgically, we will have the first four questions answered together and then take up the 5th question with a new affirmation.

Bishop Stefan: I have heard that we still need time to be able to discuss this in the working group Theology and Ordained Ministries. However, I also hear that we would be willing to give Switzerland this leeway. I suggest that we change the motion in this sense.

Lea Hafner: I would like to ask if in all other Annual Conferences exactly these four questions are asked.

László Khaled: We use these four questions of the Church Order as given.

Ivana Procházková: We also use these four questions.

Bishop Stefan: I see four questions that we need to clarify with each other:

- Is it possible to split the four questions into five?
- How do we understand membership?
- Do these four or five questions help us as we look to membership in the future?
- If we have an alternate version, is it a concrete formulation or more of a basis for translation into the appropriate dialect?

Markus Bach: And the 5th question would then be whether we want to decide something general for the whole Central Conference or simply enable something for Switzerland?

Jörg Niederer: And the further question would be: Do we split the motion by only discussing the split from four to five questions now and the other questions at another time?

Wilfried Nausner: That is the question we have to clarify. Is this a specific Swiss question or does it have to do with a certain theological understanding?

Jörg Niederer: The same questions remain, but we divide them up differently. We lose nothing compared to the previous questions.

Markus Bach: We actually have a special situation in Switzerland that no other country in our Central Conference has. We are not recognized as a church in Switzerland. This has to do with Swiss legislation, which does not allow this. Instead, we are organized as an association, as there are many other associations. When we accept someone into membership in the body of Christ, we also accept that person into the association "Protestant Methodist Church in Switzerland". However, many people do not want to be accepted into an association because they do not know what additional obligations are involved.

László Khaled: It is still open in the report how the Annual Conference voted. What is the vote on this?

Bishop Streiff: There was discussion, but the Annual Conference approved the motion.

László Khaled: Would we even have the competence to give them this opportunity?

Bishop Stefan: Yes, we would have the possibility to allow them to do this until the next Central Conference. The CC will then make a final decision. If yes, we would have to change the Church Order. We have a proposal from the Annual Conference Switzerland-France-North Africa before us. I think we should give the working group Theology and Ordained Ministries the task to consider the request until the next Central Conference.

Bishop Streiff: I think it would be good if we could decide, first, to allow Switzerland to divide into five questions until the Central Conference makes a final decision, and second, to give a mandate to the Working Group on Theology and Ordained Ministries to consider the concern of membership and questions and to formulate a proposal to the Central Conference.

Stefan Schröckenfuchs: But this order would have to be supplemented with the fact that membership should also be considered.

Daniel Sjanta: Is this possibly just a linguistic problem? Because everything is still there, I don't see any real difference between the variants.

Marietjie Odendaal: The difference is in the theological composition that membership in the Church of Christ and membership in the EMC are merged in the same question. If the question about membership in the EMC is answered with no, one should not have to answer membership in the Church of Christ with no at the same time.

Daniel Sjanta: Don't you have to answer yes to this second question?

Jörg Niederer: Yes, you have to answer yes to all questions when you join the confessing membership. But at a later time, it is always possible that someone answers the question about membership in the EMC differently, then he should not have to change a confessional answer. The first four questions in the new wording are also the questions that must be answered in the affirmative when someone is baptized. Thus, one can change to another church without revoking the baptismal confession.

Bishop Stefan: We have before us a substitute motion to that in the office report: The Executive Committee allows the Annual Conference Switzerland-France-North Africa until the next Central Conference to split from four to five questions for admission to the church according to its proposal. The Working Group on Theology and Ordained Ministries is charged with reflecting on the nature of membership and evaluating the related questions for admission to confessing membership and preparing proposals for the attention of the 2025 Central Conference.
Can we take a vote on this?

The Executive Committee unanimously allows the Annual Conference Switzerland-France-North Africa to split four questions for admission to the church into five, according to its proposal, until the next Central Conference. The Working Group on Theology and Ordained Ministries is charged with reflecting on the nature of membership and evaluating the related questions for admission to confessing membership and preparing proposals for the attention of the 2025 Central Conference.

Re 8. dates and deadlines

Bishop Stefan: We have previously agreed that the next Executive Committee meeting will be held in Vienna, March 14-17, 2024.

Bishop Stefan: The next General Conference is scheduled from April 23 to May 3, 2024 in Charlotte (US - North Carolina). We should be clear about how to prepare for it.

Bishop Streiff: There will be a preparatory event for central conferences in the run-up to the General Conference. But this will be more about technical and organizational things.

Stefan Schröckenfuchs: It was helpful last time that we had a European preparatory meeting, but it did not prepare us for what then happened in terms of content. I therefore think that it is helpful if we meet beforehand as the Central Conference of Central and Southern Europe. We need not only to learn what the procedures are, but to prepare ourselves as a community so that we can act.

Bishop Stefan: One possibility would be that we add another day in March 2024 after the Executive Committee to meet with all the General Conference delegates of our Central Conference. But we have to coordinate this with the other delegates to the General Conference.

Bishop Stefan: I suggest that we discuss this question at a superintendents' meeting. I would like to hold this in December or January. How do you see this in principle?

Serge Frutiger: Would that be a physical meeting?

Bishop Stefan: Yes, I assume so.

Stefan Schröckenfuchs: For me, early December is better.

Other superintendents also favor early December.

Ivana Procházková: The South Cabinet also meets in December. We can possibly link that.

Bishop Stefan: Then early December seems like a better time, and I will send you suggestions for the superintendents' meeting.

Markus Bach: I have a general question about the General Conference and the subsequent Central Conferences. It is currently planned that a General Conference will take place in 2024, 2026 and 2028. My question now is whether we have to hold a Central Conference within twelve months after each General Conference?

Bishop Streiff: The Book of Discipline clearly says that we have to do a Central Conference after a General Conference. But it does not say how long it must be and whether it must be held on site or online.

Bishop Stefan: We now return to the beginning of the office report on Section 1.3 Church Order.

To 1. Book of Discipline of the Central Conference CSE

Bishop Streiff: The background for the revision of the Book of Discipline of the CC CSE is the office, which found out that there are different documents for the church order stored on the homepage. We were of the opinion that there should be only one document. The official Book of Discipline of the CC CSE is written in German. We also have discussion in the Working Group Church Discipline and Legal Affairs about what an English language version should look like. But that is the future. enclosure 1 now includes all the updates that we have decided on. In compiling them, I have noticed that certain articles are not included in the current version, but are present in the Book of Discipline. I therefore propose that we include these parts with a footnote as a provisional translation until we have agreed on the common text with the Central Conference Germany.

Stefan Schröckenfuchs: I am not well enough versed in the matter. But I think, it would be good if we give the mandate to the Working Group Church Order and Legal Affairs to review this revision.

Bishop Streiff: The Working Group has already looked at these changes. I have sent the text to the Working Group and have received the indication from Wilfried Nausner that these are in order, but they still want to discuss the texts with the German Working Group. That's why the reference to the footnote.

Bishop Stefan: Can we vote on the motion that is formulated in enclosure 1?

The Executive Committee of the Central Conference CSE unanimously approves these specifications for a revised edition of the BOD CSE 2023 (in German). The revised edition 2023 will be published digitally on the website and printed in a limited edition.

Bishop Stefan: We interrupt for lunch.

Saturday, July 1, 2023, 1:00 p.m.

Lunch at Capriccio Pizzeria in Cluj-Napoca

Saturday, July 1, 2023, 2:15 p.m.

Plenary session in the United Methodist Church in Cluj-Napoca

Bishop Stefan welcomes us again after lunch for a short and final plenary session.

Bishop Stefan: I would now like to go briefly through the Working Groups and give some information at the end.

Working Group Women's Work

Barbara Zürcher: We will have a meeting next year, the date of which is immediately before that of the Annual Conference Switzerland-France-North Africa.

Working Group Church and Society

Marietjie Odendaal: We started working in the new composition. We have taken the old assignment for the revision of the "Guidelines for a Responsible Lifestyle" and we have tried to update it. You have received the current result, and we would like to adopt it next year. But we would like to give you the opportunity now to give a first reaction to it.

Stefan Zürcher: Next year, we will take more time for the treatment in order to also appreciate the work and the document. Today, we still want to take time for some initial feedback.

Stefan Schröckenfuchs: Thank you for the work involved. I was already able to talk to Marietjie Odendaal about where the order comes from. I noticed, on the other hand, that in the original by John Wesley, very specific things are mentioned as examples of doing good or avoiding evil. In this version, it is now stated in much more general terms. I would have liked to see it worded more concretely. These concretions are actually the strength in the original document.

Bishop Stefan: Thank you for the comment. I'm sure the working group will take it.

Working Group Children and Youth

Bishop Stefan: The leaders of the children's and youth work of our Central Conference will meet physically in Budapest from September 15 to 17. We have invited young people from all the conferences. I know that there will be many camps this summer. It was not

easy to explain why we need such a group and how they can be connected with us. We already had an online meeting in March and the beginning of June 2023.

Working Group Liturgy

Erika Stalcup: We have a big change. Before there were six people in the Working Group, and now there are three and we have a new chair. We have to find ourselves anew - also in terms of what we have to do. I would like to send a message to the superintendents and kindly ask them to answer a few questions.

Marietjie Odendaal: Are you aware of what the previous group did so that the same thing is not asked again?

Erika Stalcup: I know about it and was there. But we didn't get much feedback at the time.

Wilfried Nausner: I think it is important that we decide on a new mandate for the Working Group Liturgy in the future.

Urs Schweizer: Would it be possible for the Working Group Liturgy to work on our own songs that we can exchange among ourselves? In this way, a new Methodist hymnal could emerge that we can use together.

Working Group Church Order and Legal Affairs

Wilfried Nausner: We are now newly four people, and we are still dependent on new members who are professionally involved in legal issues. I am now old enough to stop. We have the ongoing task of revising the church order.

European Methodist Council

Bishop Stefan: The European Methodist Council has asked us to make a short film contribution for an exhibition of the World Methodist Conference next year in Gothenburg and to present our Central Conference in it, especially how we fulfill our missionary task. We can't decide that here and now. But I think there is a lot of material in our churches, and I would like to ask you if you know people who could do this.

Urs Schweizer: We would have to announce by 2 weeks whether we are making such a film or not.

Rares Calugar: I have seen the papers prepared for the 2022 Central Conference, which addressed mainly the bishops. I would not find this helpful for the World Methodist Conference. It would need other contributions.

Ben Nausner: I could imagine doing something, but I would then need appropriate material from you. Please send me something that is interesting.

Bishop Stefan: Are you ready to participate? Thank you very much for your approval!

Bishop Stefan: With this, we have worked through all the points that were envisaged by me. Is there anything else we need to discuss? If not, then we will conclude our meeting here and then take part in the program of the congregation.

Rares Calugar shares information about the rest of the program.

Bishop Stefan warmly thanks *Rares Calugar* for his hospitality, and the Executive Committee gives a grateful round of applause.

Saturday, July 1, 2023, 4:00 p.m.

Program of the EMK Romania in the United Methodist Church in Cluj-Napoca

The United Methodist Church in Romania presents itself to the Executive Committee of the Central Conference of Central and Southern Europe. Participating are: Duncan and Rosalind Smith, Sarah Putman, Leah Harper, Broderic Crowe, Gabriela Lupea, Rares and Ioana Calugar, Anca Beu, Samuel Goia, Yulia Sskalska, Elsa.

The UMC in Romania came into being in 2011 after a visit by Bishop Streiff. With a Powerpoint presentation the situation of Romania and the situation of the UMC and the congregations is described. Anca Beu gives information about the work in Cluj-Napoca. Yulia Sskalska, a Ukrainian, and Elsa, a native of Russia, talk about themselves and how the work with Ukrainian children and youth in Cluj-Napoca has developed and grown. Gabriella Lupea tells how she came to the Methodist Church. She tells about the Horizon project, which is supported with funds from the EU. This program gives psychological help for coming to terms with war trauma. Rares Calugar tells how Urs Schweizer was a great help in realizing all these projects. He presents Urs a picture with a heartfelt thank you for all his help.

Brodrick Crowe is a youth worker in the UMC in Cluj. He is originally from Ukraine and tells about the newly started youth work of the church in Cluj. Samuel Goia is pastor in Comsesti and tells from his work with the Romas. They have the vision "Make disciples who make disciples". He tells how the work was born and how it has grown. Rares Calugar tells about the church in Sibiu, which was founded in 2014. In 2021, they were able to buy a building that now houses the church. This also includes an orphanage.

The program will conclude with Evening Prayer with Leah Harper, Sarah Putman, Rosalind and Duncan Smith. At the end of the evening prayer, Bishop Patrick Streiff and Bishop Stefan Zürcher will each be presented with a picture with a dedication. Then all the members of the Executive Committee will receive a gift from the parish: honey from Cluj-Napoca and a ceramic plate.

Saturday, July 1, 2023, 4:00 p.m.

Dinner at the EMK Romania in the United Methodist Church in Cluj-Napoca

The dinner will be shared with the people present from the Church in Romania.

The Secretary:

Markus Bach

These minutes of the 78th session of the Executive Committee of the Central and Southern Europe Central Conference, held in Cluj-Napoca from June 29 to July 2, 2023, were examined and declared correct.

The examiner and the examiner of the protocol:

Lea Hafner and Jörg Niederer

Minutes Executive Committee of Sunday, July 2, 2023

Sunday, July 2, 2023, 11:00 a.m.

Service in the United Methodist Church in Cluj-Napoca

Rares Calugar welcomes everyone to the service and points out that we will need the work of the Holy Spirit for the language. He points out the countries from which all the participants come. It is beautiful to celebrate this service with so many languages.

Rares Calugar offers a prayer. The readings are in three different languages: Psalm 60:1-4 (Romanian). John 1:1-4 (Ukrainian) and John 1:14, 16-17 (in English). We sing different songs in English and Romanian.

Bishop Patrick Streiff preaches the sermon on Ephesians 4:15-16, which can be found attached to the minutes. Following the sermon, *Erica Stalcup* plays the song "Love Come Down to Earth" in response to the sermon.

We celebrate the Lord's Supper together.

Bishop Stefan Zürcher gives God's blessing to all at the end of the service.

Unauthorized translation - original in German

II. Directory of Decisions

of the 78th meeting of the Executive Committee of the Central Conference of Central and Southern Europe

Book of Discipline and Regulations

- 1a The Executive Committee unanimously allows the Annual Conference Switzerland-France-North Africa to split four questions for admission to the church into five, according to its proposal, until the next Central Conference. (1b)
- 2 The Executive Committee of the Central Conference CSE unanimously approves these specifications for a revised edition of the BOD CSE 2023 (in German). The revised edition 2023 will be published digitally on the website and printed in a limited edition.

Elections

- 3 The Executive Committee unanimously elects Martina Chlupáčková as a new lay member of the Annual Conference Czech Republic to the Executive Committee of the Central Conference CSE.
- 4 The Executive Committee unanimously elects Emil Zaev as a new lay member of the Annual Conference Serbia-North Macedonia-Albania to the Executive Committee of the Central Conference CSE.
- 5 The Executive Committee unanimously elects the following individuals to the appropriate committees:
- | | |
|--|----------------------------|
| - WG Theology and Ordained Ministries (Chair) | Zoltan Kovács (HU) |
| - WG Theology and Ordained Ministries (CH-FR-NA) | David Field (CH) |
| - WG Church and Society | Dorothee Bührma (AT) |
| - WG Church Order and Legal Issues | László Khaled (HU) |
| - Substitute member Committee of Appeals | Christine Moll (CH) |
| - Judicial Council substitute member | Milen Stefanov (NMK) |
| - Counsel for the church | Markus Bach (CH) |
| - Substitute Counsel for the church | Stefan Schröckenfuchs (AT) |
| - CPCE Regional Group South-East Europe (1 person) | Wilfried Nausner (AL/AT) |
| - Connectional Table (1 person), from GC 2024 | Stefan Schröckenfuchs (AT) |

Financial decisions

- 6 The Executive Committee unanimously accepts the 2022 accounts on the basis of the auditors' report, grants discharge to the treasurer and expresses its sincere thanks for the services rendered.

Decisions for the Executive Committee / Central Conference

- 7a The Executive Committee notes with regret the decision of the Czech Annual Conference to leave the Evangelical Methodist Church and establish an autonomous Methodist Church.
- The Executive Committee will submit to the next Central Conference in 2025 a draft resolution for the further process according to Art. 572. The draft resolution may include the revision of the basic texts for the establishment of an autonomous Methodist Church and/or further elements for the process of voting in the Annual Conferences of the Central Conference. (7b)
- Until the official act of separation is executed, the Annual Conference shall remain a part of the Evangelical Methodist Church with all rights and responsibilities.
- 8 The Executive Committee unanimously agrees to hold an additional online meeting in October/November of each year.
- 9 The Executive Committee unanimously decides to hold the Executive Committee meeting in Vienna (Austria) from March 14 - 17, 2024.

Decisions for the Working Groups / Office of the Central Conference

All Working Groups

- 10 The Executive Committee unanimously mandates the Working Groups to describe their current situation, formulate their needs and current challenges, and describe what contribution they can make to the Central Conference for the attention of the Executive Committee meeting in March 2024.

Working Group Church Discipline and Legal Affaires

- 7b The Executive Committee instructs the Working Group on Church Order and Legal Issues to prepare a draft of such a draft resolution by the next meeting of the Executive Committee.

Working Group Theology and Ordained Ministries

- 1b The Working Group on Theology and Ordained Ministries is charged with reflecting on the nature of membership and evaluating the related questions for admission to confessing membership and preparing proposals for the attention of the 2025 Central Conference.

The Secretary: Markus Bach

III. Report of the Office

Report of the Office of the Central Conference CSE

1. Presence and Minutes

1.1 Meetings of the CC Office

The CC Office met once since the extraordinary meeting of the Central Conference in November 2022, on April 27, 2023, in preparation for the Executive Committee meeting in Cluj-Napoca.

1.2 Minutes of the proceedings of the 19th session of the Central Conference and of the 75th - 77th Session of the Executive Committee

The minutes of the 19th (extraordinary) session of the Central Conference of Central and Southern Europe has been published together with the minutes of the Executive Committee of August 27, 2022 (online), October 27, 2022 (online), and November 16 and 19, 2022 (Basel). It is available for download on the CC CSE website (<https://www.umc-cse.org/en/downloads--links/documents-studies-and-lectures/minutes-cse.html>).

1.3 Revised documents of the Central Conference

The Rules of Order of the Central Conference of Central and Southern Europe, revised at the Central Conference meeting in Basel, were adapted and posted on the Central Conference website <https://www.umc-cse.org/en/downloads--links/documents-studies-and-lectures/cse-church-rules.html>.

The CC Office has also decided that the current fragmented version of the Book of Discipline should be united in one document and made available. The decisions of the Central Conference of November 2022 will be included, as well as earlier changes. Bishop Patrick Streiff has thankfully agreed to work on the updating. Attachment 1 to this report informs about the details.

2. Preparation for the meeting of the Executive Committee in Cluj-Napoca

2.1 Meeting of the Executive Committee in Cluj-Napoca

The 78th meeting of the Executive Committee will take place in Cluj-Napoca, Romania. It will mark the transition from Bishop Patrick Streiff to Bishop Stefan Zürcher at the level of the Executive Committee. It will also serve to allow the newly constituted Executive Committee to find itself and deliberate on its future mode of operation. Bishop Streiff will chair the meeting until Thursday's dinner, after which Bishop Zürcher will take over. Matthias Bruhn was engaged as an external facilitator for the process of developing the future way of working. There will be no request for reports from the Working Groups, since most of them have not yet worked or have hardly worked at all. However, there will be time on

Thursday afternoon for short oral reports from the meetings of the Annual Conferences or District Conferences regarding the common future in the Central Conference.

2.2 Program of the Executive Committee from June 29 to July 2, 2023

The agenda can be found as attachment to the report of the office (see Attachment 2).

The program is designed along the following lines of vision:

Thursday, 29. June 2023:	Looking back
Friday, June 30, 2023:	Looking into the future
Saturday, July 1, 2023:	Looking around us
Sunday, July 2, 2023:	Looking upwards

2.3 Assignments for the meeting

The CC Office commissions the following people:

As assistant to the secretary:	Urs Schweizer
As treasurer:	Iris Bullinger
For the review of the minutes:	Lea Hafner and Jörg Niederer

2.4 By-election to the Executive Committee

At the Central Conference meeting in November 2022, Miluše Šálková was elected to the Executive Committee as a lay member of the Czechia Annual Conference. She has changed her job and therefore can no longer fulfill this role. The Czechia Annual Conference has elected Martina Chlupáčková as an additional substitute member to the Central Conference. Bishop Stefan Zürcher, in consultation with Superintendent Ivana Procházková, proposes her for election to the Executive Committee as the new lay member from Czechia.

Motion to the Executive Committee:

The Executive Committee elects Martina Chlupáčková as a new lay member of the Czechia Annual Conference to the Executive Committee of the Central Conference CSE.

Daniela Stoilkova has resigned from her position as lay member of the Executive Committee of the Serbia-North Macedonia-Albania Annual Conference. After consultation with the responsible superintendent Marjan Dimov, Bishop Stefan Zürcher proposes Emil Zaev as a new lay member.

Motion to the Executive Committee:

The Executive Committee elects Emil Zaev as a new lay member of the Annual Conference Serbia-North Macedonia-Albania to the Executive Committee of the Central Conference CSE.

3. Information on the church in Czechia

The Annual Conference of The United Methodist Church in Czechia met in Prague from May 12-14, 2023, under the theme "Christ - Center of Faith and Head of the Church".

In a joint agreement, the pastors had previously stated that they would continue to adhere to the previous traditional formulation in the definition of marriage and the understanding

of human sexuality. Bishops Streiff and Zürcher sent a joint letter to all members in the run-up to the Annual Conference, in which they pointed out once again that the decisions of the Extraordinary Central Conference of Central and Southern Europe in November 2022 explicitly grant Czechia the right to retain the traditional conviction and at the same time to remain in the Central Conference, even if a different understanding may prevail worldwide after the General Conference in 2024. In a respectful atmosphere that also provided space for voices of dissent, those present discussed a motion for separation that went beyond that. By a two-thirds majority, members of the conference voted to become an autonomous Methodist Church under Par. 572 of the Book of Discipline. The motion passed with 24 votes for, 9 against, and 3 abstentions. Attachment 3 contains the documents submitted to the Annual Conference in connection with the motion.

Motion to the Executive Committee:

The Executive Committee notes with regret the decision of the Czechia Annual Conference to leave The United Methodist Church and establish an autonomous Methodist Church.

The Executive Committee will submit to the next Central Conference meeting in 2025 a draft resolution for the further process according to Par. 572. The draft resolution may include the revision of the basic texts for the establishment of an autonomous Methodist Church and/or further elements for the process of voting in the Annual Conferences of the Central Conference. The Executive Committee instructs the Working Group on Church Order and Legal Affairs to prepare a draft of such a resolution by the next meeting of the Executive Committee.

Until the official act of separation is completed, the Annual Conference shall remain a part of The Methodist Church with all rights and responsibilities.

The procedure according to Par. 572 provides, in brief, for the following steps (see also document #8c of the Extraordinary Central Conference 2022 in Basel):

- | | |
|---------------|---|
| May 2023 | A petition to begin the process of becoming an autonomous Methodist Church must be presented to and approved by the Czech Annual Conference. |
| March 2025 | The Central and Southern Europe Central Conference must trigger the process for the Czechia Annual Conference to leave The United Methodist Church and form an autonomous Methodist Church. |
| AC 2025 | The decision of the Central Conference must be ratified by all Annual Conferences within the Central Conference by a two-thirds majority of all votes cast. |
| From CC 2025 | The Czechia Annual Conference consults with the Standing Committee on Central Conference Matters (BOD ¶ 2201) to provide all necessary documents for an authorizing resolution by the General Conference. |
| Subsequent CC | The ordinary Central Conference following the CC 2025 is then authorized by the General Conference to declare the present relationship between the UMC and the Czechia Annual Conference dissolved. |

4. On inflation in Europe

4.1 Information from the bishop's office on salary support.

Due to the high inflation in Europe, the Bishop's Office had already last summer increased the salary support for pastors in active ministry in the countries in Eastern Central Europe (PL, HU, RS, NMK, AL) by € 50 per month for the second half of 2022 (€ 60 in RS with the lowest wages in the CC).

As of April 1, 2023, we have again decided on an additional support of € 50 and € 60 per month for these countries as well as for North Africa. This was done in consultation with Connexio in each case, as it may have a longer-term impact on the necessary contributions from Connexio to salary support. However, it will not be possible to provide for such extraordinary increases in subsequent years.

4.2 Information from the Pension Board meeting

The Pension Board has also considered the question of an increase in the supplementary pensions that may be provided by the CC CSE Pension Board for countries affiliated with it. As the actuarial calculations of *Wespath*, the worldwide Pension organization, have been delayed, a verbal briefing to the Executive Committee meeting is expected to follow.

5. Financial issues and Statistics

Financial statement 2022 of the Central Conference CSE

The treasurer, Iris Bullinger, presents the annual financial statement 2022 to the Executive Committee (see Attachment 4). The financial statements show a loss of CHF -124,010.94. This high loss is due to the costs of the extraordinary Central Conference, which amount to CHF 130,513.60. The costs for the work of the Round Table were CHF 25,623.04. The loss is booked through the equity capital, which now amounts to CHF 78,551.95. The office would like to thank Iris Bullinger very much for the work she has done and also for the additional work caused by the extraordinary meeting of the Central Conference.

The financial statement 2022 was audited by the auditor Adrian Wenziker. He recommends the financial statement for approval (see Attachment 5).

Motion to the Executive Committee

The Executive Committee accepts the Financial statement 2022 on the basis of the auditors' report, grants discharge to the treasurer and expresses its sincere thanks for the services rendered.

The budget for the years 2023-2024 was already approved at the Central Conference meeting in November 2022.

Statistics based on the 2022 Annual Conferences figures are attached as attachment 6.

6. Elections

At the extraordinary meeting of the Central Conference 2022 in Basel, most but not all elections could be made. The following nominations could be clarified in the meantime:

- WG Theology and Ordained Ministries (Chair) Zoltan Kovács (HU)
- WG Theology and Ordained Ministries (CH-FR-NA) David Field (CH)
- WG Church and Society Dorothee Bűrma (AT)
- WG Church Order and Legal Affairs László Khaled (HU)
- Substitute member Committee of Appeal (1 local pastor) Christine Moll (CH)
- Legal Council substitute member (1 pastor) Milen Stefanov (NMK)
- Counsel for the Church Markus Bach (CH)
- Substitute Counsel for the Church Stefan Schröckenfuchs (AT)
- CPCE Regional Group South-East Europe (1 person) Wilfried Nausner (AL/AT)
- Connectional Table (1 person) from GC 2024 Stefan Schröckenfuchs (AT)

The following tasks have not yet been definitively clarified or are vacant:

- Vice Chair(s) Executive Committee / CC Office. A request for Winter 2023/2024 is pending.
- WG Children and Youth (2 co-chairs) Proposals will be made after the fall meeting of those responsible for youth/children
- Committee on Appeals (1 pastor/1 layperson)
- Legal Council substitute member (1 layperson)
- DMYP (1 youth worker) It is still being clarified if this committee will continue.
- World Evangelism (1 person)

Proposals to the Executive Committee

The Executive Committee shall elect the following individuals to the appropriate committees:

- **WG Theology and Ordained Ministries (Chair)** Zoltan Kovács (HU)
- **WG Theology and Ordained Ministries (CH-FR-NA)** David Field (CH)
- **WG Church and Society** Dorothee Bűrma (AT)
- **WG Church Order and Legal Affairs** László Khaled (HU)
- **Substitute member Committee on Appeals** Christine Moll (CH)
- **Judicial Council substitute member** Milen Stefanov (NMK)
- **Counsel for the Church** Markus Bach (CH)
- **Substitute Counsel for the Church** Stefan Schröckenfuchs (AT)
- **CPCE Regional Group South-East Europe (1 person)** Wilfried Nausner (AL/AT)
- **Connectional Table (1 person), from GC 2024** Stefan Schröckenfuchs (AT)

The current overview of all elections and commissions from summer 2023 to the Central Conference 2025 is attached to the report (see Attachment 6).

7. Request of the Annual Conference Switzerland-France-North Africa

The Annual Conference Switzerland-France-North Africa is currently dealing with questions of membership and church affiliation. It was noted that the way these issues have been dealt with so far is not always helpful. At the Annual Conference meeting in June 2023, the Commission for Theological and Ecclesiastical Issues will present an additional report on "Church Membership". In it, a motion is made to divide the 4th question on church membership (Article 217 of the Book of Discipline). The motion reads as follows:

The Annual Conference agrees with the division from four to five questions in the admission to the Church and requests the Central and Southern Central Conference to approve the following rewording:

1. Do you confess Jesus Christ as your Lord and Savior and trust in His grace alone?
2. *Do you want to remain a faithful member of Christ's holy Church and participate in its service in the world?*
3. Do you want to follow Jesus Christ and therefore renounce evil and do good?
4. Do you recognize the Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments as the God-given foundation and guide of our faith and life?
5. *Do you want to participate in the ministry of The United Methodist Church through prayer, cooperation, and regular offerings?*

(Changes to the previous text are written in *italics*)

Justification: Why do we want to divide the questions? - We see that membership in the Church of Christ is a very fundamental question. You cannot leave it - but you can leave the UMC. The UMC is part of the Church of Christ, but it is not congruent with it. With the new division, we want to signal that it is not primarily a question of formal and institutional affiliation. Rather, it is primarily about belonging to the body of Christ - and as a consequence of the first four questions, also about belonging to the UMC. A formal and institutional affiliation comes in second place.

The Annual Conference Switzerland-France-North Africa cannot make a final decision on this because it is the responsibility of the Central Conference. At the time of writing, it is not yet clear whether the Annual Conference will agree to the proposal. If so, the Executive Committee of the Central Conference will be asked to decide at its meeting at the end of June 2023 whether the new version in five questions can already be provisionally introduced in Annual Conferences that wish to do so.

Motion to the Executive Committee:

The Executive Committee approves the provisional new version in five questions for admission to the Church as proposed by the Annual Conference Switzerland-France-North Africa. The new version is to be submitted to the next session of the Central Conference for confirmation and inclusion in the official version of the Book of Discipline of the CC MSE.

8. Dates

8.1 Meeting of the Executive Committee in 2024

The Central Conference CSE Office proposes that the next Executive Committee meeting be held March 14–17, 2024. The place has yet to be determined.

8.2 Meeting of the Central Conference CSE 2025

The next General Conference will take place in Charlotte (North Carolina USA) from April 23 to May 3, 2024. This is the postponed General Conference 2020, which means that the elections for this General Conference and the Central Conference originally planned for 2021 are still valid. Since there is no election of bishops, the meeting is scheduled to begin with a worship service on Thursday afternoon. The CC Office is proposing March 13-16, 2025, as the date. A suitable location has yet to be found.

8.3 Overview of other dates

An overview of the other dates of 2023 / 2024 can be found in Attachment 7.

9. Miscellaneous

9.1 Deceased

Vlastislav Malac (CZ) passed away on May 10, 2013. He was a delegate to the Central Conferences in 1969, 1981, 1985, 1989 and was a member of the Executive Committee from 1989 - 1993. From 1985 - 1993 he worked in the Working Group Media and Communications.

9.2 Thanks

With the meeting of the Executive Committee in June/July 2023 in Cluj-Napoca, the episcopal supervisory leadership of Bishop Patrick Streiff will also end. He has been involved in the issues of the Central Conference not only with his election in April 2005. He was elected to the Working Group of Theology and Ordained Ministry in 1993 and was elected as a member of the Executive Committee in 2001. Therefore, it has been 30 years since Patrick Streiff has been involved with the Central Conference of Central and Southern Europe. But the most intensive and also most challenging time is the one as our bishop in active service from May 2006 to July 2023. For this, we would like to thank you very much. Your dedication to Jesus Christ, to the Church, and also to us as the Central Conference has left traces of blessings. For this, we are heartily grateful that God has given you the necessary health, perseverance, joy, understanding, patience (and sometimes impatience) and above all much love. We are also very grateful that you had your Heidi by your side during this time and that she gave you the necessary support for this ministry. We also thank you, Heidi, from the bottom of our hearts. May your retirement now finally be what it promises, that you can come to rest, take care of each other and enjoy your big family. May God bless you for this.

With the meeting of the Executive Committee, the sole supervisory leadership of Bishop Stefan Zürcher now begins. We are very grateful that you are taking on this great challenge and that you want to walk a path with us into our common future. We wish you much wisdom and strength from God. We also thank your wife Valérie for supporting you in this ministry.

At all Annual Conferences of our Central Conference, Bishop Patrick Streiff was bid farewell and Bishop Stefan Zürcher was welcomed. In all places this was done with much love and sympathy for those concerned. For this we as the CC Office are very grateful.

A change in the Bishop's Office brings changes, must bring changes. There it is a help that we can also look to proven people who remain in the Bishop's Office. We thank Urs Schweizer and André Töngi very much for staying and working. It is our wish that your blessed work will also be a blessing for you.

Markus Bach, Secretary

IV. Annexes of the Report of the Office

Attachment 1: Text of the Book of Discipline of the Central Conference (in German) - Revision 2023

Content:

- Updating of the BOD-CSE 2005 (in German) in accordance with the decisions of the meetings of the Executive Committee and the Central Conference up to and including the Extraordinary Central Conference of November 2022. The preface and table of contents have been adapted accordingly.
- The "Brief History of the United Methodist Church" is also newly published.
- The footnotes have also been adapted. Only information relevant to the Central Conference of Central and Southern Europe now appears as footnotes. Some important changes are explicitly mentioned below. Furthermore, the bibliographical references have been adapted to the latest publications.
- If the numbering of articles in Part VI differs in the latest *Book of Discipline 2016*, it has not been adjusted (cf. also the explanation in the preface to the revised BOD-CSE 2023).
- The new version appears as "Revision 2023".

On Part I - Constitution:

- In Article 20: Term "clergy" and footnote 3
The footnote reads new:
In the German-language BOD-CSE - except in the Constitution - the term "pastoral members" is used in all other parts, cf. Art. 142 and Art. 339.
- Explanation: Replacing the term "Geistliche"/"clergy" in the Constitution would require coordination with the Central Conference Germany, as both Central Conferences issue an identical text of the Constitution.
- In Article 32, Composition of the Annual Conference, the previous footnotes 9-14 have been replaced. The only new footnote is: "If the members or bodies mentioned do not exist in an Annual Conference, the regulations of the Annual Conference may fix appropriate provisions."
- The previous footnote 16 is replaced by a new footnote 10: "Although this committee is not mentioned for the Central Conferences, there is one for the CC CSE".
- The previous footnote 18 is replaced by the new footnote 12: "In German-speaking Switzerland, the term Distriktsvorsteher / Distriktsvorsteherin is used."

To Part II - General Book of Discipline:

Text inserted (with review by WG on Church Order) but shortened, without detailed instructions on how to proceed for revisions after the 2016 General Conference.

On Part IV - Service of all Christians:

New Art. 125 and 127 added.

Re Part V - Social principles

- Previous footnote 1 deleted (official translation of church name already mentioned in Constitution.)
- Previous footnote 2, new footnote 3: reference to Art. 509, which is now also translated.
- Previous footnotes 3 and 4 with references to CC-Germany deleted and instead decisions of the CC-CSE 2022 inserted as footnotes 4 and 5.
- Previous footnote 5 on Judicial Council decision deleted (because we do not list these decisions otherwise either!)
- From footnote 6 onwards, same counting as before.
- Footnote 11: In addition to CC-Germany also CC-CSE mentioned.

Concerning Part VI - Organisation and Administration; Chapters 1-4

Footnotes to untranslated articles or to abridgements and adaptations deleted.

In the case of untranslated articles, the title of the article is mentioned in brackets.

Further decisions on Part VI, Chapters 1-4:

At the 2014 Executive Committee meeting, an interim report was given on changes made by the 2008 and 2012 General Conferences (see German version of ZK-Verhandlungen, pp. 78-80). However, no decisions were then taken, not even at the 2017 Central Conference.

In the new revision 2023, the following changes have been made based on the practice already so established:

- The minimum duration of probationary membership may be reduced from three to two years in justified cases (Art. 335.2). The amended text now reads:
 2. they have been probationary members for at least three years. In justified cases (many years of experience in service), the minimum duration of probationary membership may be reduced to two years.
- The prescribed retirement age is increased from 70 to 72 years (Art. 359.1).
- Art. 540 (Boundaries of the Central Conferences): for the CC-MSE, the names of the countries were adapted to the current status after CC 2022 and listed in the German alphabetical order of the countries for all CCs.

The following articles or sections were announced at the time but not further edited. These have remained unchanged in the 2023 revision:

- Art. 335 with the questions for admission to full association was not revised further.
- Art. 401-435 of the BOD2008 were not revised according to BOD2012. They remain in the 2023 edition as before.
- The new articles 431-442 of the BOD2012 and articles 443-450 of the BOD2016 have not been translated. The 2023 edition only mentions the two new sections and their title but does not include any articles on them.

In Article 543, the text has been adapted so that the previous footnotes 4 and 5 can be omitted.

On the Judiciary and Arbitration Code:

The Judiciary and Arbitration Rules are integrated into the complete edition of the BOD-CSE (with slight adjustments to the numbering) and listed as Part VI, Chapter 7. It is structured differently from the other parts of the BOD-CSE and is comparable to a very limited extent only with Chapter 7 in the *Book of Discipline*. The differences will remain visible. It was decided not to align the Judiciary and Arbitration Rules with the other parts of the BOD-CSE.

The revised 2023 edition is to be printed in a similar run to the conference proceedings. The CC Office decides on the details.

Motion to the Executive Committee:

The Executive Committee of the CC CSE approves these specifications for a revised edition of the BOD CSE 2023 (in German). The revised edition 2023 will be published digitally on the website and printed in a limited edition.

**Layout based on the specifications for the conference proceedings
of the Annual Conference CH-FR-NA:**

Paper size and margins:

A4 format; page margins: top 3 - bottom 5 - left 4 - right 3.5 cm

Text field: 135x215mm

Print to size of CC conference proceedings (outside size): 165x235mm

(Main) Parts I - VI

With title:

Verdana 14 - before 10Pt - after 12Pt - centred

Chapter 1

With title:

Verdana 12 - before 2Pt. - after 12Pt. - centred

Section I. Heading:

**Verdana 11 - before 2Pt. - after 6Pt. (corresponds to English
"section")**

Subheading within a section:

Calibri 11 - before 0Pt. - after 3Pt. (This level appears in the table of contents without page reference).

Article title:

Art. xxx *Heading*

Calibri 11 - before 0Pt. - after 3Pt.

Text:

Calibri 11 - before 0Pt - after 3Pt.

Footnotes:

Calibri 10

Page numbers: Calibri 10 - on even and odd pages

Attachment 2: Preliminary Program

Wednesday, June 28, 2023

13.00 Lunch

Thursday, June 29, 2023

Theme of the Day: Looking back

Morning Meeting of the Cabinet South

13.00 Lunch

Until 14.30 Arrival of all voting and non-voting members of the Executive Committee

15.00 Meeting of the Executive Committee with Coffee Break

→ Where do we come from?

→ Reports from Annual Conference sessions, from the Pension Fund and from the Association «Hilfe im Sprengel»

18.00 Dinner

19.30 Meeting of the Executive Committee

→ Community-building activities and conversations

Friday, June 30, 2023

Theme of the Day: Looking into the future

09.00 Meeting of the Executive Committee with Coffee Break

→ How to shape our work as Executive Committee

→ How to live our togetherness as Central Conference

→ led by Matthias Bruhn

12.45 Lunch

14.00 Meeting of the Executive Committee with Coffee Break

→ continuation of morning program

18.00 Dinner

19.30 Meeting of the Executive Committee

→ continuation of morning/afternoon program

Saturday, July 1, 2023

Theme of the Day: Looking around us

09.00 Meeting of the Executive Committee with Coffee Break

→ Which challenges do we face?

→ How can our Central Conference structure (WG) provide support?

→ Next steps on the journey into the future

12.45 Lunch

14.00 Meeting of the Executive Committee with Coffee Break

→ continuation of morning program

16.00 The Mission of the UMC in Romania

→ ministries of the local churches

→ ministries with refugees from Ukraine

incl. Dinner

Sunday, July 2, 2023

Theme of the Day: Looking up

11.00 Participation in the worship service in Cluj-Napoca

13.00 Lunch

Afterwards Departure

Attachment 3: ANNUAL CONFERENCE PETITION

The Annual Conference of the United Methodist Church in the Czech Republic (CZE UMC) expresses its desire to become an autonomous Methodist Church according to ¶ 572 of the UMC Book of Discipline.

The conference asks the bishop to act according to the above-mentioned paragraph and authorizes the District Council and the Superintendent to take further steps towards the transformation of the UMC in the Czech Republic into an autonomous Methodist Church.

HISTORICAL RECORD WITH REASONS FOR THE REQUEST OF THE ANNUAL CONFERENCE OF THE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH IN THE CZECH REPUBLIC TO BECOME AN AUTONOMOUS METHODIST CHURCH HISTORICAL RECORD

The Methodist Episcopal Church, South in the USA began missionary work among Czech immigrants in Texas in late 1907. Soon several Czech-speaking congregations were established in Texas. In June 1912, Czech pastors and students asked the Mission Board in Nashville, Tennessee, to "not forget Bohemia and Moravia." In March 1920, the Missionary Council sent pastor Josef Dobes to Czechoslovakia. In the same year, Bishop J. Atkins also visited Czechoslovakia. In response, it was decided that the Methodist Episcopal Church, South would send additional workers to Czechoslovakia and begin mission work there. Thanks to the efforts of Josef Dobes, Josef P. Bartak, Vaclav Vancura and other clergy and lay co-workers, the ministry of the church grew and congregations were established in Czechoslovakia (Bohemia, Slovakia, and Subcarpathian Rus). The Annual conference for these newly established congregations was established in 1927.

World War II cut the Methodist Church in Czechoslovakia off from its mother church in the United States. Superintendents Josef Dobes, Josef P. Bartak, and other church employees with American citizenship were forced to return to the USA. The church was experiencing very difficult times, and several members were even taken to concentration camps. In Slovakia, the Methodist Church lost its state approval in 1940, and thus all its work was banned. It was restored again in 1946.

Subcarpathian Rus was occupied by the Hungarian army in 1939, and after the war, it was annexed to the Soviet Union. Thus, the congregations in Subcarpathian Rus did not return to the union of the Czechoslovak Annual Conference after the war.

The communist coup in 1948 brought persecution of all believers and suppression of the work of all churches. The Methodist Church in Czechoslovakia gradually lost some churches, church buildings and properties. The Methodists were isolated for many years, all contact with the world church was cut off for several years, and later severely restricted. At that time the church was administered by superintendents elected by the Annual Conference, but the election was subject to the approval of the state authorities.

Between 1948 and 1989, therefore, the church functioned in effect as an autonomous Methodist church with the brotherly support of the bishops of the Central Conference (since 1954). The church recalls the personal courage of many clergy and laity who persevered in faith and service in very difficult circumstances.

After the so-called Velvet Revolution in 1989, a new period of Methodist work in Czechoslovakia began. The Evangelical Methodist Church was incorporated into the Central Conference for Central and Southern Europe as early as 1954 but did not become fully involved in its life and work until 1989. Its social work was restored, and an Institute of Education for clergy, laity, and lay preachers was established. In 1993, after the split of Czechoslovakia into two independent states, the Czech Republic and the Slovak Republic, two districts were created in one annual conference: the Czech District and the Slovak District. The Slovak District Conference, as a separate legal entity in Slovakia, decided to leave the United Methodist Church in 2022.

Currently the Annual Conference of the UMC in the Czech Republic has 21 congregations, social work includes 9 Christian Help Centers (community for drug and other addicts, shelters for mothers with children, homeless people, and socially weak families), a kindergarten and a primary school.

From 1920 to 1939 and from 1946 to 1947 the Annual Conference in Czechoslovakia was presided over by bishops from the USA. From 1939 to 1946 and 1948 to 1989 the Annual Conference in Czechoslovakia was essentially autonomous and governed by its own Book of Discipline.

Nevertheless, it was an autonomy imposed by political circumstances. Since 1990, the Annual Conference has always been presided over by bishops from Switzerland.

THE REASONS FOR THE REQUEST

In an effort to live and serve in the spirit of Christ's gospel in our context as best we can at this time, we desire to become an autonomous Methodist Church according to ¶ 572 of the UMC Book of Discipline. We desire to leave peacefully and to implore upon those who remain in the UMC and those who leave the UMC the blessings of God as our brothers and sisters in Jesus Christ.

1. The 2019 General Conference approved by vote the so-called Traditional Plan, which was also supported by a large majority by the Czech District Conference at its meeting on November 3, 2018. The Western Jurisdictional Conference, however, declared that it does not intend to follow the decision of the 2019 General Conference¹. In the months that followed, some Annual Conferences and some bishops, including the Central Conference Germany, refused to respect and acted contrary to the decision of the 2019

¹ "We cannot comply with the actions of the 2019 General Conference." <https://westernjurisdictionumc.org/as-we-make-our-way-back-home/>

General Conference.

This has eroded our confidence that we as a church are able to uphold the agreements we make by vote of the General Conferences in the current situation.

2. Although *the One Church Plan* was rejected at the 2019 General Conference, its adoption was de facto in the works in our Central Conference (CC CSE)². This was fully reflected in the vote on the direction of the CC CSE approved by the CC CSE held in Basel in 2022 in the form of footnotes in the CC CSE Book of Discipline.³

The Czech Methodist Church does not wish to join in this direction of the CC CSE.

Statement of the Czech Methodist Church

1. We find the original *One Church Plan* and its new variants to be inherently unrealistic, especially since the UMC's divisions on the issues of ordination and church marriage have become part of secular cultural and political struggles for rights and freedoms. As a consequence of the human rights discourse, church policy that uncritically adopts it, has resulted in a stalemate:

- The so-called liberal-minded Christians cannot in good conscience ultimately tolerate what they consider to be the intolerance (fundamentalism, homophobia, sexism, etc.) of traditional (conservative) Christians.
- And the so-called traditional (conservative) Christians cannot in good conscience ultimately tolerate what they consider to be teachings and practices contrary to Scripture and the apostolic teaching of the Church (sin).

2. The Czech Methodist Church professes to the understanding of marriage as a relationship between one man and one woman⁴ and wishes to adhere in the future to the intent of the current UMC Book of Discipline (BOD 2016) regarding ordination.⁵

² #4a Report of the Round Table to the extra meeting of the Central Conference CSE 2022, #4a.2 Final Report of the Round Table the Central Conference of Central and Southern Europe 2022

³ Motions of the Executive Committee to the extraordinary meeting of the Central Conference 2022 (1-6), Information and motions from the meetings of the Executive Committee, 19th Central Conference CSE 2022 in Basel (Switzerland) Report #5a, p. 5.

⁴ We affirm the sanctity of the marriage covenant that is expressed in love, mutual support, personal commitment, and shared fidelity between a man and a woman. We believe that God's blessing rests upon such marriage, whether or not there are children of the union. Book of Discipline 2016, Social Principles, ¶ 161, II. The Nurturing Community, C) Marriage, p. 111.

⁵ ¶ 304.2 For the sake of the mission of Jesus Christ in the world and the most effective witness to the Christian gospel, and in consideration of the influence of an ordained minister on the lives of other persons both within and outside the Church, the Church expects those who seek ordination to make a complete dedication of themselves to the highest ideals of the Christian life. To this end, they agree to exercise responsible self-control by personal habits conducive to bodily health, mental and emotional maturity, integrity in all personal relationships, fidelity in marriage and celibacy in singleness, social responsibility, and growth in grace and in the knowledge and love of God. Book of Discipline 2016, p. 226.

We are aware of our common roots in the apostolic faith and our common Methodist heritage. We are grateful for our years of life and ministry together. We are grateful for the support we have received from individuals, congregations, and bishops who have administered the CZE UMC, and we are grateful for the support of the CC-CSE. We give thanks for the work of committees and agencies working together, and for participation in the mission of the worldwide UMC.

We want to remain part of the family of Methodist churches in the future, and the existing UMC BOD will become the foundation of our adapted new BOD.

Attachment 4: Financial Statement 2022

Einnahmen	Rechnung 2022		Konsolidiert 2021 - 2024	
Beiträge Jährliche Konferenzen				
Schweiz	45 000.00		90 000.00	
Frankreich	4 500.00		9 000.00	
Österreich	3 238.00		6 476.00	
Bulgarien	375.00		1 875.00	
Nord-Mazedonien	750.00		1 500.00	
Serbien	750.00		1 500.00	
Ungarn	1 500.00		3 000.00	
Slowakei	750.00		1 500.00	
Tschechien	750.00		1 500.00	
Polen	1 500.00		3 000.00	
Nordafrika	0.00	59 113.00	0.00	119 351.00
Gaben und Zinseinnahmen		0.00		56.00
Total Einnahmen		59 113.00		119 407.00
Ausgaben				
Zentralkonferenz	130 513.60		130 513.60	
Sitzungen Exekutivkomitee	8 529.23	139 042.83	25 341.13	122 198.10
AG Theologie und Ordinierte Dienste	0.00		0.00	
AG Kirche und Gesellschaft	3 043.30		3 043.00	
AG Kinder und Jugend	0.00		0.00	
AG Liturgie	0.00		0.00	
AG Kirchenordnung und Rechtsfragen	0.00		0.00	
AG Frauendienst	0.00*		0.00	
AG Bischofsamt	0.00		0.00	
Reserve für a.o. Aufträge	25 623.04	28 666.34	25 623.04	28 666.34
Superintendententreffen	0.00		23 146.08	
Weitere Tagungen	0.00	0.00	0.00	23 146.08
Beiträge der Zentralkonferenz an:				
Weltrat	2 963.04		5 685.25	
Europäischer Rat	5 956.50		12 299.46	
Jugendrat (EMYC)	0.00	8 919.54	0.00	17 984.71
Verschiedenes				
Druckkosten	0.00		0.00	
Bibliothek / Archiv	7 500.00		15 000.00	
Übrige Kosten	-1 004.77	6 495.23	345.93	15 345.93
Total Ausgaben		183 123.94		217 851.71
Einnahmen		59 113.00		119 407.00
Ausgaben		183 123.94		217 851.71
Einnahmen-Überschuss				
Ausgaben-Überschuss		-124 010.94		-98 444.71

Balance Sheet as per December 31, 2022

	Fr.	Fr.
Aktiven		
Zahlstelle EMK	110 376.72	
Guthaben	461.30	
Passiven		
Kreditoren / Trans. Passiven		32 286.07
Rückstellungen		0.00
Eigenkapital		202 562.89
Ergebnis		- 124 010.94
Total	110 838.02	110 838.02

Plan-les-Ouates, 25. April 2023, Iris Bullinger

Attachment 5: Auditors' report

Annual accounts 2022 Central Conference of Central and Southern Europe

On behalf of the Central Conference of Central and Southern Europe, I have revised the accounts for the 6th year since the last Central Conference. Due to the postponement of the Central Conference to 2022, a new budget was prepared for the 6-year period between the two Central Conferences.

The 2022 accounts close with an expenditure surplus of CHF 124,010.94 (cumulative expenditure surplus for 2017 - 2022 is CHF 87,954.19). As of December 31, 2022, the reported equity amounted to CHF 78,551.95.

I have checked the opening and closing balance sheets, randomly checked the annual transactions on the income statement accounts and found the accounts to be clean and correct.

The undersigned confirms the accuracy of the 2022 annual financial statements and the balance sheet as of December 31, 2022. I propose that discharge be granted to the treasurer, Iris Bullinger, and that she be thanked for her clean and conscientious work.

Zurich, June 19, 2023

The auditor: Adrian Wenziker

Attachment 6: Statistics based on the Annual Conferences 2022

Bezirke Gemeinden Glieder Gottesdienste										
	Bezirke	Gemeinden	Bekennende Glieder	Getaufte Glieder	Freunde	Total Pers.	Gottesdienstbesuch Erwachsene	Gottesdienstbesuch Kinder	Bekennende Glieder pro Bezirk	Bekennende Glieder pro Gemeinde
nach Ländern										
Albanien	3	6	239	2	80	321	200	60	79.7	39.8
Algerien	4	5	170	0	20	190	99	8	42.5	34.0
Belgien	1	1	33		5	38	12	0	33.0	33.0
Frankreich	16	16	1'094	46	515	1'655	833	167	68.4	68.4
Nord-Mazedonien	7	10			2'000	2'000			0	0.0
Österreich	7	7	633	437	448	1'518	242	26	90.4	90.4
Polen	20	40	1'760	249	260	2'269	1'400	141	88.0	44.0
Rumänien	1	3	29	1	85	115	49	33	29.0	9.7
Schweiz	68	99	4'467	458	3'057	7'982	3'188	587	65.7	45.1
Serbien	9	14	379	110	209	698	278	47	42.1	27.1
Tschechische Republik	15	21	813	218	451	1'482	978		54.2	38.7
Tunesien		1				0				
Ungarn	12	28	489	602	703	1'794	960	264	40.8	17.5
Total	179	293	11'425	2'325	8'607	22'357	9'294	1'587		
<i>Vorjahr 2021</i>	181	298	11'781	2'250	8'715	22'746	9'313	1'643		
<i>Differenz +/-</i>	-2	-5	-356	75	-108	-389	-19	-56		
nach Konferenzen										
Prov. JK Österreich	7	8	744	498	349	1591	287	57	105	92.9
Distrikt Rumänien	11	33	1'192	46	816	2'054	895	292	142.3	50.6
JK Schweiz-Frankr.-NA	90	129	6'215	443	3'961	10'619	5'059	989	212.8	243.6
JK Tschechien ohne SK	22	35	1'131	359	623	2'113	841	0	90.4	64.1
Prov. JK Ungarn	12	28	516	571	876	1'963	1'273	305	43.0	18.4
JK Polen	20	37	1'924	255	251	2'430	?		96.2	52.0
Prov. JK RS-NMK-AL	19	31	631	109	2'336	3'056	575	105	33.2	20.4
Total	181	301	12'353	2'281	9'212	23'826	8'930	1'748	723.0	541.9

Pfarrpersonen Mitarbeitende	Personen in voller Verb. zur JK aktiv	Mitglieder auf Probe + a.o. Mitglieder aktiv	Lokalpastoren aktiv	Laienmitarbeiter aktiv	Volle Verbindung + a.o. Mitgl. i. Ruhestand	Clergy		Beginn der Arbeit
						aktiv	total	
nach Ländern								
Albanien	1	2	0	1	0	3	3	1922/1990
Algerien	0	0	0	3	3	0	3	1886
Belgien	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1920/2008
Frankreich	8	5	2	1	11	15	26	1791/1868/1907
Nord-Mazedonien	2	0	3	2	2	5	7	1873/1921
Österreich	6	1	1	0	1	8	9	1870
Polen	22	1	0	2	4	23	27	1895/1920
Rumänien	2	1	0	0	0	3	3	2011
Schweiz	49	4	24	0	53	77	130	1840/1856/1866
Serbien	7	0	3	1	1	10	11	1898
Tschechische Republik	10	2	5	1	4	17	21	1920
Tunesien	1	0	0	0	0	1	1	
Ungarn	10	1	3	0	5	14	19	1898/1905
Total	131	17	54	12	87	202	289	
<i>Vorjahr 2021</i>	135	17	54	16	82	206	288	
<i>Differenz +/-</i>	-4	0	0	-4	5	-4	1	

Bekennende Glieder:	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	Differenz
Prov. JK Österreich	732	742	746	744	646	642	-4
Distrikt Rumänien	1'277	1'220	1'195	1'192	1'113	32	-1'081
JK Schweiz-Frankreich-NA	6'812	6'605	6'407	6'215	6'138	5'924	-214
JK Tschechien	1'125	1'160	1'179	1'131	1078	834	-244
Prov. JK Ungarn	479	477	509	516	521	508	-13
JK Polen	2'083	2'105	1'925	1'924	1'978	1'787	-191
Prov. JK RS-NMK-AL	467	457	434	631	595	639	44
Albanien/Kroatien (bis 2019)	142	169	169	-	-		
Total	13'117	12'935	12'564	12'353	12'069	10'366	-1'703
+ Makedonien	1'000	1'200	1'200	1'200	1'200	1'200	0
Total Gesamt	14'117	14'135	13'764	13'553	13'269	11'566	-1'703
<i>Änderung in %</i>	-1.7	+0.13	-2.62	-1.53	-2.1	-12.83	

Attachment 7: Elections Central Conference CSE 2021 - 2024

→ See VI. Institutions of the Central Conference

Attachment 8: Terms and Dates

2023

14.-18.6.	Switzerland-France-North Africa AC	CH-Lenk
14.-20.6.	CEC General Assembly	Estonia
29.6.-2.7.	Executive Committee CC CSE	RO-Cluj-Napoca
4.-5.7.	50 Years CPCE	AT-Vienna
6.-9.9.	European Historical Conference	IT-Velletri
15.-17.9.	Central Conference Youth Leaders' Meeting	HU-Budapest?
22.-24.9.	STAUNEN!	DE-Hamburg
28.9.-2.10.	Fund for Mission in Europe / European Methodist Council NO-Oslo	
6.-10.11.	Council of Bishops	US-Lake Junaluska

2024

14.-17.3	Executive Committee CC CSE	TBD
4.-7.4.	Serbia-North Macedonia-Albania Provisional AC	MK-???
11.-14.4.	Hungary Prov. AC (together with Distr. Romania)	HU-???
17.-20.4.	Council of Bishops	US-Charlotte
23.4.-3.5.	General Conference	US-Charlotte
4.5.	Council of Bishops	US-Charlotte
24.-26.5.	Czech Republic AC	CZ-???
30.5.-2.6.	Austria Provisional AC	AT-Graz
12.-16.6.	Switzerland-France-North Africa AC	CH-Rothrist
27.-30.6.	Poland AC	PL-Ostroda
13.-14.8.	World Methodist Council	SE-Gothenburg
14.-17.8.	World Methodist Conference	SE-Gothenburg
18.8.	World Methodist Council	SE-Gothenburg
27.9.-2.10.	CPCE General Assembly	RO-Romania
3.-7.10.	Fund Mission in Europe / European Methodist Council	TBD

2025

13.-16.3	Central Conference CC CSE	TBD
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V. Minutes

of the 79th meeting of the Executive Committee of the Central Conference of Central and Southern Europe

Unauthorized translation – Original in German

Minutes Executive Committee Thursday, November 23, 2023

Thursday, November 23, 2023, 7:30 p.m.

Online meeting

Bishop Stefan welcomes those present. It's great that so many people were able to make today's appointment. Thank you very much for that. I have planned to close the meeting at 9.00 pm.

Bishop Stefan begins with thoughts on 1 Samuel 7: 1-13. Samuel took a stone and called it Ebenezer, i.e. "God has helped". The people experienced that God helped them in the battle against the Philistines. They experienced that God stood up for them and stood by their side. A memorial like this can help them to remember this. It helps us to have faith in God. We also need such memorial stones because we forget so quickly. That's why we need reminders of God's help. Visible signs help us to keep our trust in God. Our memory is lost so quickly. You can have a little stone in your pocket to remind you, as I sometimes do. We can hold on to a date or have other helps. I invite you to do this in groups of two and tell each other about how you have experienced God's help in the last few days or weeks.

The Executive Committee members meet in pairs in separate group rooms.

Bishop Stefan says a prayer.

The following people are taking part in today's online meeting:

Voting members:

Bishop

Chairman	Bishop	Bishop Stefan Zürcher	present
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Office

Vice-Chairman(s)	vacant	---	
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Secretary	Pastor	Markus Bach	present
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Treasurer	Localpastor	Iris Bullinger	present
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Executive Committee

Serbia-North Macedonia-Albania	Sup.	Daniel Sjanta	present
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	Layman	Emil Zaev	present
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Austria	Sup.	Stefan Schröckenfuchs	present
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	Layman	Ben Nausner	present
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Poland	Sup.	Andrzej Malicki	present
	Laywoman	Bozena Daszuta	present
Switzerland-France-North Africa	Sup.	Serge Frutiger	present
	Laywoman	Lea Hafner	present
Czech Republic	Sup.	Ivana Procházková	present
	Laywoman	Martina Chlupáčková	excused
Hungary	Sup.	László Khaled	present
	Layman	Dávid Csernák	present
Chair WG Episcopacy	Pastor	Jörg Niederer	present

Advisory members:

Retired Bishop	Bishop i.R.	Heinrich Bolleter	excused
	Bishop i.R.	Patrick Streiff	excused

Additional superintendents

France and Belgium	Sup.	Etienne Rudolph	excused
Romania	Sup.	Rares Calugar	present
Algeria and Tunisia	Sup.	Freddy Nzambe	excused
North Macedonia	Sup.	Marjan Dimov	present

Chairmen of the Working Groups

WG Theology and Ord. Ministries	Pastor	Zoltán Kovács	excused
WG Liturgy	Pastor	Erika Stalcup	present
WG Discipline and Legal Affairs	Sup.	Wilfried Nausner	present
WG Children and Youth	--	vacant	---
WG Church and Society	Pastor	Marietjie Odendaal	present
WG Women's Work	Pastor	Monika Zuber	present
Coordinator	Laywoman	Barbara Büniger	excused

Present as guests are:

Assistant of the Bishop		Urs Schweizer	present
Bishop's Office		André Töngi	present

Total attendance: 23

Sharing

all

Bishop Stefan: I would like to briefly introduce you to how we are going to proceed this evening. Above all, we would like to spend the evening sharing what we have experienced in recent months and weeks. We will proceed country by country.

Andrzej Malicki, Bozena Daszuta and Monika Zuber report from Poland. They talk about the "Renewal Days", which have been taking place for 20 years. They hope to invite Adam Hamilton to Poland as a "special guest" at a future edition of these "Renewal Days". There is a lot of work among people who have fled Ukraine, and they organize aid transports to Ukraine. They also talk about an annual children's camp ("Indian Village") with almost 400 children. There was also a meeting with national librarians.

Ivana Procházková reports from the Czech Republic. She also talks about a summer camp. A pastors' meeting with lay preachers took place at the beginning of fall. There was a 100-year anniversary celebration in Jihlava and Pilsen. She talks about new employees in the church, lay training and help for Ukraine. She is grateful for the financial help and support from the bishop's office.

Wilfried Nausner reports from Albania. In Tirana, the congregation had to move for the fifth time in 15 years. They have found a good new place and are experiencing existentially what it means not to have a permanent place here. Despite the burden, they have also experienced blessings.

Stefan Schröckenfuchs and *Ben Nausner* report from Austria. At the beginning of November, a television service was broadcast from the church in Graz. The church is challenged in interfaith dialog as to how it should respond to the events in Israel and Palestine. They continue to work on questions about the understanding of mission. In this context, they have also begun to work on the structures of the church and ministries - with the focus on ensuring that the structures serve the mission. A new course has been launched in lay training entitled "Accompanying people well".

Marjan Dimov and *Emil Zaev* report from North Macedonia. It was an intensive time in all the communities. They had guests from Australia. There was a youth meeting with Albania and Serbia, as well as a meeting between the pastors and their families. There are always evangelization events taking place, which will also take place next year. It has been a good time over the last four months. Emil Zaev is on the Executive Committee for the first time and introduces himself and his tasks in the church. He reports on Strumica, where there is an opportunity to buy a house, and on two building projects in Radoviš and Prilep that are challenging them.

László Khaled and *Dávid Csernák* report from Hungary: A month ago, the first joint pastors' meeting took place in Cluj with the Romanian brothers and sisters. It was a good and blessed experience. It was about questions of discipleship and baptism. This helped us on our way to becoming a joint conference. A national Family Camp was held in the summer, and preparations are already underway for the next Family Camp. Between 200 and 250 people take part each time.

Lea Hafner and *Serge Frutiger* report from Switzerland and France. After the Annual Conference adopted the document "Kaleidoscope" (on dealing with different understandings of human sexuality), there was hardly any more discussion and other more important issues could be addressed. Only two congregations have left the UMC. In France, there is a major controversy on this topic. After a long and painful process, the church in France has decided that the congregations should decide individually whether or not to remain in the UMC. In October, seven congregations decided to remain in the UMC and nine congregations will leave the UMC and form a new association. This is to take place by the end of January 2024. With one exception, all pastors voted in the same way as their congregation. In North Africa, all pastors have signed a document stating that they have opted for the traditional stance but wish to remain in the UMC.

Marietjie Odendaal reports from the Church and Society working group. They have been dealing with questions about refugees.

Erika Stalcup reports on her inspiring experience of being able to attend an international UMC seminar on the multicultural work of the church. She is the new contact person for our church's e-academy and also has a 20% commitment as a teacher at Cliff College in the UK.

Jörg Niederer reports from his own region, where almost all pastors will be retiring in the next two years. With this in mind, they will set up a regional pastors' group. He will remain in active ministry for one year after his retirement.

Daniel Sjanta reports from Serbia. There were various activities and camps in the summer, including a regional youth camp with participants from Serbia, North Macedonia and Albania. In the fall, the 50th anniversary of the Roma community in Jabuka was celebrated.

Rares Calugar reports from Romania. In October, 17 women from Ukraine were welcomed. For two weeks, they told their stories in a "Faces of Courage" project. They received help and support in their situation. These women should be given a voice. He thanks Connexio and the Bishop's Office for their support. Another highlight is that at the end of October, the first EMK building, which had been built from scratch, was inaugurated for a Roma congregation in Comsesti, near Cluj. A baptism has already taken place in it. There are many activities in the congregations.

Bishop Stefan Zürcher: Thank you very much for the colorful bouquet of your work. It is important that we are connected with each other in our prayers and encounters.

Different information's

Bishop's Office

Connexio

Urs Schweizer: The evaluation/application forms have been received and checked. Thank you for your good work. The Connexio hope and Connexio develop budgets will be finalized at the beginning of December. The results (approved grants) will then be communicated to the superintendents.

Mission in Europe Fund

Bishop Stefan: The OPM funds will most likely remain at the current level. However, there has been a decline in general donations to the FMIE. The FMIE is therefore very grateful for all donations - especially from the "traditionally receiving" countries. In order to involve as many countries as possible not only in receiving, but also in sharing, and to have more planning security, the idea came up of asking the countries to include a specific FMIE grant in their annual budget. This issue will be discussed at the spring meeting of the Executive Committee 2024.

Working groups and other responsibilities

Bishop Stefan: Leaders of children and youth work in our Central Conference met in Budapest (Hungary) in September 2023. The plan is to once again have a co-leadership consisting of two people for the children and youth working group. One of these two people will be Cedric Zangger from Switzerland; the decision on the other person is still pending.

Adrian Wenziker, Chairman of the Central Conference Council for Finance and Administration, has fallen seriously ill and is unable to continue in office. Stefan Hafner has agreed to act as interim chairman until the 2025 Central Conference. Further discussions about the future of this council and its composition/leadership will have to be held before the 2025 Central Conference.

Prayer manual 2024/2025

Urs Schweizer: Superintendents have been asked to submit prayer requests for the 2024/2025 Prayer Handbook of the Methodist Church in Great Britain. Please ensure that this information is sent to Urs Schweizer by January 5, 2024!

It is important that the information is up-to-date in the period from August 2024 to August 2025!

Dates and data

Office of the Central Conference

Meeting of the European Methodist Youth and Children's Forum

Bishop Stefan: From February 16 to 18, 2024, the meeting of the European Methodist Youth and Children's Forum will take place in Hamburg (Germany). This is the successor meeting of the EMYC. 1-2 participants from our Central Conference (preferably the co-leaders of the Children and Youth Working Group) will be represented.

Meeting of the Executive Committee in March 2024

Markus Bach: The Executive Committee meeting will take place in Vienna (Austria) from March 14 to 17, 2024. A request to the working groups: During the summer meeting of the Executive Committee in Cluj-Napoca, we agreed that all working groups should describe their current situation and formulate their needs and current challenges. Please make sure that you have this information available for the Executive Committee meeting in March. I ask you to send me your reports by the end of January 2024.

On Saturday, March 16, 2024, there will be a theme day with a focus on working with children and young people.

Stefan Schröckenfuchs: Does this affect the number of people who are scheduled for the hotel reservation? Please let me know in good time.

Bishop Stefan: We don't yet know exactly who will be attending. But we will let you know. We will discuss this with each other in the preparation group for the theme day.

Meeting of the delegates of the CC MSE to the General Conference

Bishop Stefan: The meeting of the delegates of the CC MSE to the General Conference will

take place on March 17 and 18, 2024, from 12:00 to 12:00 in Vienna (Austria).
A joint meeting with all Central Conference delegates to the General Conference in Charlotte (USA) will take place from April 19 to 21, 2024.

World Council of Methodist Churches / Methodist World Conference

Urs Schweizer: The five members of the World Council of Methodist Churches of the CC MSE for the coming years are Simone Viljoen (Austria), Agata Myslinska (Poland), Sup. László Khaled (Hungary), David Field (Switzerland) and Bishop Stefan Zürcher.

The Methodist World Conference will take place from August 13 to 18, 2024. It is open to everyone. Young people between the ages of 18 and 35 have the opportunity to receive a scholarship from the World Council and additional support from the Bishop's Office in Zurich. We had asked for nominations to be submitted by November 20 of this year, but have not yet received any positive responses.

Next meetings of the Executive Committee and Central Conference

Markus Bach: An online meeting of the Executive Committee will take place in the evening on July 4, 2024.

The next meeting of the Executive Committee will take place on September 27 and 28, 2024; the location is yet to be determined.

The next meeting of the Central Conference of Central and Southern Europe will take place from March 13 to 16, 2025. The location is still to be determined.

Bishop Stefan closes the online session at 9.15 pm with a prayer by *Andrzej Malicki*.

For the record:

Markus Bach, Secretary ZK MSE

The present minutes of the 79th online meeting of the Executive Committee of the Central Conference of Central and Southern Europe of November 23, 2023 were examined and declared correct.

The examiner of the protocol:

Lea Hafner and Jörg Niederer

V. Institution of the Central Conference

elected for the quadrennium 2021 - 2024

Office	Clergy:	Laypeople:
Bishop, Chair	Patrick Streiff (till 30.6.2023) / Stefan Zürcher	
vice-Chair		vacant
Secretary	Markus Bach (CH)	
Treasurer	Iris Bullinger (CH)	

Executive Committee

Members with voting rights:

Bishop, Chair	Patrick Streiff (till 30.6.2023) / Stefan Zürcher	
Vice-Chair		vacant
Secretary	Markus Bach (CH)	
Treasurer	Iris Bullinger (CH)	
AC Austria	Sup. Stefan Schröckenfuchs	Ben Nausner
AC Switzerland-France-North Africa	Sup. Serge Frutiger	Lea Hafner
AC Czech Republic	Sup. Ivana Procházková	Martina Chlupáčková
AC Hungary	Sup. László Khaled	Dávid Csernák
AC Poland	Sup. Andrzej Malicki	Bozena Daszuta
AC Serbia-North-Macedonia-Albania	Sup. Daniel Sjanta	Emil Zaev
Chair WG Episcopacy	Jörg Niederer	

Members with voice, but not vote:

Bishop in retirement from 1.7.2023	Bishop Heinrich Bolleter Bishop Patrick Streiff	
France and Belgium	Sup. Grégoire Chahinian (Vice Etienne Rudolph)	
Algeria und Tunesia	Sup. Freddy Nzambe	
Rumania	Sup. Rares Calugar	
North Macedonia	Sup. Marjan Dimov	
WG Theology and Ord. Ministries	Zoltán Kovacs (HU)	
WG Children and Youth		vacant
WG Church and Society	Marietjie Odendaal (CH)	
WG Women's Work	Monika Zuber (PL)	
Coordinator of the Women's Work		Barbara Bünger (CH)
WG Liturgy	Erica Stalcup (CH)	
WG Discipline and Legal Affairs	Sup. Wilfried Nausner (AL)	

Council on Finance and Administration

Chair
Adrian Wenziker (CH)
Stefan Hafner (CH)
Daniel Burkhalter (CH)

Pension Board

Chair: Bishop Stefan Zürcher
Members of Council on Finance and Administration: Adrian Wenziker (CH)
Stefan Hafner (CH)
Daniel Burkhalter (CH)
Additional person: Markus Hafner (CH)
Pension Benefits Officer: André Töngi (CH)

Committee on Investigation

AC Austria	Stefan Schröckenfuchs	Roland Siegrist
AC Switzerland-France-North Africa	Hanna Wilhelm (convener)	
AC Czech Republic	Petr Procházka	
AC Hungary	László Khaled	Grethe Jenei
AC Polen	Sławomir Rodaszyński	
AC Serbia-North Macedonia-Albania	Ana Palik-Kunčak	
Reserve:		
AC Austria	Martin Obermeir-Siegrist	
AC Switzerland-France-North Africa	Gunnar Wichers	
AC Czech Republic	Pavel Procházka	
AC Hungary	Zoltán Kovács	
AC Polen		Olgierd Benedyktowicz
AC Serbia-North Macedonia-Albania	Marjan Dimov	

Committee on Appeals

AC Austria	Wilfried Nausner (convener)	Gerhard Weissenbrunner
AC Switzerland-France-North Africa	Etienne Rudolph	
AC Czech Republic	Pavel Hradský	
AC Hungary		Henrik Schauer mann
AC Polen	Józef Bartos	
AC Serbia-North Macedonia-Albania		Maria Parnicki
Local pastor	Ruedi Stähli (CH)	

Reserve:

AC Austria		Hayford Boateng
AC Switzerland-France-North Africa	Theo Rickenbacher	Marc Berger
AC Czech Republic		Josef Thal (CZ)
AC Hungary	Márton Hecker	
AC Polen		Bozena Daszuta
AC Serbia-North Macedonia-Albania	Lila Balovski (RS)	
Local pastor	Christine Moll (CH)	

Judicial Court

Members	Martin Streit (CH)	Christa Tobler (CH)
	István Csernák (HU)	Philipp Hadorn (CH)
		Bernhard Pöll (AT)
Reserve:	Jean-Philippe Waechter (FR)	Regula Dannecker (CH)
	Milen Stefanov (HU)	vacant

Counsel for the church

Counsel	Markus Bach (CH)
Reserve	Stefan Schröckenfuchs (AT)
	Petr Procházka (CZ)
	Gábor Szuhánszky (HU)
	Etienne Rudolph (FR)

Working Group Episcopacy

AC Austria	Stefan Schröckenfuchs
AC Switzerland-France-North Africa	Jörg Niederer (Chair)
AC Czech Republic	Ivana Procházková
AC Hungary	László Khaled
AC Polen	Andrzej Malicki
AC Serbia-North Macedonia-Albania	Daniel Sjanta

Working Group Theology and Ordained Ministries

Zoltán Kovács (HU - Chair)
David Field (CH)
Michael Nausner (AT)
Daniel Sjanta (RS)
Edward Puślecki (PL)
Jana Daněčková (CZ)
(and 1 Person of the Central Conference Germany)

Working Group church and Society

Marietjie Odendaal (CH - Chair)

David Chlupáček (CZ)

Dorothee Bührma (AT)

Working Group Children and Youth

vacant (Co-Chair)

vacant (Co-Chair)

and the delegates of the Countries to the EMYC

Working Group Women's Work

Monika Zuber (PL - Chair)

Maria Đurovka-Petraš (RS)

Murielle Rietschi Wilhelm (CH)

Coordinator of the Women's Work in the Central Conference: Barbara Büniger (CH)

Working Group Liturgy

Erika Stalcup (CH - Chair)

Esther Handschin (AT)

Jana Křížova (CZ)

Working Group Discipline and Legal Affairs

Wilfried Nausner (AT/AL - Chair)

Petr Procházka (CZ)

Serge Frutiger (CH)

László Khaled (HU)

Representatives beyond the Central Conference CSE in Commissions and Working Groups

European level:

European Methodist Council (EMC) and Joint Commission of UMC in Europe

Bishop	Stefan Zürcher	
	Adrian Myslinski (PL)	Lilla Kardosné Lakatos (HU)
	Vladimir Fazekas (RS)	Anna Shammas (CH)

European Commission on Mission (ECOM)

Connexio Co-Chair		Daniel Hänni (CH)
Connexio General Secretary		Ulrich Bachmann (CH)

Fund for Mission in Europe (FMIE)

Bishop	Stefan Zürcher	
		Lilla Kardosné Lakatos (HU)
Manager FMIE, with voice, but not vote		Andreas Stämpfli (CH)

European Las Seminary

Christa Wichers (CH)

Methodist e-Academy (Governing Board)

Bishop	Patrick Streiff, Chair	
	Zoltán Kovács (HU)	
	Christoph Schlupe (CH)	

Community of Protestant Churches in Europe - CPCE (South-East Europe regional group)

Wilfried Nausner (AT/AL)
Novica Brankov (RS)

Worldwide level:

Standing Committee on Central Conference Matters

Bishop	Stefan Zürcher Petr Procházka (CZ)	Christine Schneider-Oesch (CH)
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Connectional Table

Stefan Schröckenfuchs (AT)

General Board of Global Ministries (GBGM)

Andreas Stämpfli (CH)

In Mission Together (IMT)

AC Czech Republic	Jana Křížová	
AC Hungary		Laura Tordaj-Szuhánski
AC Polen	Adrian Myslinski	
AC Serbia-North Macedonia-Albania		Jennifer Moore (NMK) Maria Đurovka-Petraš (RS)
Coordinator		Urs Schweizer

General Board of Church and Society (GBCS)

if newly constituted after GC 2020 [Philipp Hadorn]

Division on Ministries with Young People (DMYP)

Young adults	Maria Sonnleithner (AT)
Youth	Stanislava Bako (RS)
Adult works with young people	vacant

General Commission on Archives and History (GCAH)

Judit Lakatos (HU)

World Methodist Council:

World Methodist Historical Society – European Section

Vize-Chair Judit Lakatos (HU)

World Federation of Methodist and Uniting Church Women (WFMUCW)

Vize-Chair Continental Europe Lilla Kardosné Lakatos (HU)
Editor «Tree of Life» Ligia Istrate (RO)

World Evangelism

Regional Secretary Central and Southern Europe vacant

VI. Addresses

Last update: November 2023

Bishops:

Zürcher Stefan Bishop	Badenerstrasse 69, Postfach 2111, CH-8021 Zürich 1 0041-44-299 30 60, bishopzuercher@umc-cse.org
Bolleter Heinrich Bishop i.R.	Grenzweg 9, CH-5036 Oberentfelden 0041-62-723 02 71, heinrich.bolleter@umc-cse.org
Streiff Patrick Bishop i.R.	Pianostrasse 32, CH-2503 Biel/Bienne 0041-32-323 34 45, bishopstreiff@umc-cse.org

Mitarbeitende in der Zentralkonferenz:

Affolter Roland	Föhrenweg 14, CH-5103 Möriken 0041-62-893 07 31, roland.affolter@methodisten.ch
Bach Marian	Trollstrasse 10, CH-8400 Winterthur 0041-44-620 38 22, marian.bach@bluewin.ch
Bach Markus	Trollstrasse 10, CH-8400 Winterthur 0041-44-212 17 39, markus.bach@umc-cse.org
Bach Sarah	Waldeggstrasse 41 CH-3097 Liebefeld 0041-31-731 03 49, sarah.bach@methodisten.ch
Bachmann Ulrich	Postfach 1328, Badenerstrasse 69, CH-8021 Zürich 1 0041-44-299 30 70, ulrich.bachmann@connexio.ch
Baier Esther	Baumgartenstrasse 21, CH-3018 Bern 0041-79-903 87 85, esther.baier@methodistinnen.ch
Balovski Lila	Lenjinova 12, RS-26202 Jabuka 00389-64-123 77 49, lila.balovski@gmail.com
Bartos Józef	ul. Długa 3, PL-31-147 Kraków 0048-692-15 91 75, jozef.bartos@umc-cse.org
Becher Nicole	Regensbergstrasse 148, CH-8050 Zürich 0041-44-657 28 75, nicole.becher@methodistinnen.ch
Berger Marc	4, rue de Neuf-Brisach, FR-68180 Horbourg-Wihr 0033-389-41 50 60, marc.berger@umc-cse.org
Bertschinger Jürg	Sommerhaldenstrasse 50, CH-5200 Brugg 0041-56 442 49 44, tremolo@gmx.ch
Bitterli Markus	Langhagstrasse 17, CH-4600 Olten 0041-62-296 55 04, markus.bitterli@gmx.ch
Boateng Hayford	Felix Slavik Strasse 4/4/19, AT-1210 Wien 0043-2602-65 077, ybhayford@gmail.com

Both Manuel Wolfensbergstrasse 26, CH-8400 Winterthur
0041-52-222 38 85, manuel.both@methodisten.ch

Brankov Novica Lukijana Musičkog 7, RS-21000 Novi Sad
00381-661 31 22, novica.brankov@umc-cse.org

Brunner Andrea Bahnstrasse 31, CH-8610 Uster
0041-44-940 12 43, andrea.brunner@methodisten.ch

Brunner Ursula Ernst-Jung-Gasse 5, CH-8400 Winterthur
0041-55 244 27 34, ubrunner11@gmail.com

Bullinger Iris 111, Chemin des Verjus, CH-1228 Plan-les-Ouates
0041-79-685 56 77, iris.bullinger@umc-cse.org

Bünger Barbara Römerweg 102, CH-4574 Lüsslingen
0041-32-622 99 36, barbara.buenger@umc-cse.org

Bünger Matthias Rössliweg 1, CH- 4852 Rothrist
0041-62-794 12 30, matthias.buenger@methodisten.ch

Büürma Dorothee Neutorstrasse 38/51, AT-5020 Salzburg
0043-690-1000 44 24, dorothee.buurma@emk.at

Burkhalter Daniel Postfach 1328, Badenerstrasse 69, CH-8021 Zürich 1
0041-44-299 30 83, daniel.burkhalter@umc-cse.org

Calugar Rares Str. Sanzaienelor 19, Cluj-Napoca / Romania
0040-745-47 95 60, rares.calugar@umc-cse.org

Chahinian Grégoire 2, rue du Sésame, FR-68320 Muntzenheim
0033-781-07 66 94, gregoire.chahinian@umc-cse.org

Chlupáček David Nad Splavem 4, CZ-586 01 Jihlava
00420-777-32 27 58, david.chlupacek@umc-cse.org

Chlupácková Martina Nad Splavem 4, CZ-586 01 Jihlava
00420-777-03 26 44, mchlupacek@seznam.cz

Csernák David Alée des Freesias 1. D13, BE-1030 Bruxelles
0036-30-281 85 49, david.csernak@umc-cse.org

Csernák István Kiláto utca 7, HU-2112 Veresegyház
0036-28-38 40 13, istvan.csernak@umc-cse.org

Daněčková Jana Jana Ziky 1730, CZ-347 01 Tachov
00420-732-49 14 94, jana.daneckova@umc.cz

Dannecker Regula Fehrenstrasse 8, CH-8032 Zürich
0041-79-234 28 18, regula@dannecker-legal.com

Daszuta Bożena ul. Łąkowa 1, PL-26-026 Zaborze
0048-604-15 56 08, bozena.daszuta@umc-cse.org

Dimov Marjan ul. Zagrebska br. 1, MK-2400 Strumica
00389-71-64 62 36, marjan.dimov@umc-cse.org

Đurovka-Petraš Maria Generala Vjesta 10, RS-21469 Pivnice
00381-21-75 61 28, maria.durovka-petras@umc-cse.org

Eggert Waldemar ul. Sienkiewicza 22, PL-14-100 Ostróda
0048-501-021 06 93, waldemar.eggert@umc-cse.org

Fazekas Vladmir M. Gupca 21, RS-222 40 Šid
00381-64-209 82 13, vladimir.fazekas@gmx.at

Field David Augustinergasse 11, CH-4051 Basel
0041-61-262 04 09, david.field@umc-cse.org

Flemming Thomas ul. Wrocławska 71c, PL-55 095 Domaszczyn
0048-507-25 36 83, thomas.flemming@op.pl

Frutiger Serge Sunneraistrasse 36, CH-8634 Hombrechtikon
0041-55-535 31 20, serge.frutiger@umc-cse.org

Fux Thomas Prechtlerstrasse 25, AT-4030 Linz
0043-732-27 21 00, office@servitas.at

Gyurkó Donát Tallián Gyula u. 8, HU-7400 Kaposvár
0036-20-824 82 73, donat.gyurko@umc-cse.org

Hadorn Philipp Florastrasse 17, CH-4563 Gerlafingen
0041-79-600 96 70, philipp.hadorn@umc-cse.org

Hafner Lea Schulgässli 17, CH-3812 Wilderswil
0041-79-798 76 46, lea.hafner@umc-cse.org

Hafner Markus Schulgässli 17, CH-3812 Wilderswil
0041-33-822 06 14, markus.hafner@methodisten.ch

Hafner Stefan Pilatusstrasse 10, CH-8203 Schaffhausen
0041-52-672 74 01, stefan.hafner@umc-cse.org

Handschin Esther Sechshauser Strasse 51/1/7+8, AT-1150 Wien
0043-676-720 91 46, esther.handschin@umc-cse.org

Hänni Daniel Untere Scheugstrasse 1, CH-8707 Uetikon am See
0041-44-790 11 52, daniel.haenni@umc-cse.org

Harman János Zentai utca 21, HU-6729 Szeged
0036-30-928 22 27, juhar8@gmail.com

Haslebacher Claudia Moosgärtenweg 20, CH-3177 Laupen
0041-78-952 52 95, claudia.haslebacher@umc-cse.org

Haviř Josef Teyschlova 27, CZ-635 00 Brno
00420-728-33 75 72, jozkah@seznam.cz

Hecker Márton Bezerédj u. 2/c, HU-7200 Dombóvár
0036-70-778 04 77, hecker.marton@metodista.hu

Hradský Pavel Husova 14, CZ-301 24 Plzeň 3
00420-776-14 19 18, pavel.hradsky@umc-cse.org

Hummel Alfred Rue d'Alsace 17, FR-68490 Petit Landau
0041-79-258 36 96 hummel.alfred@orange.fr

Isenring Martine Rotfluhstrasse 73, CH-8702 Zollikon
0041-44-392 15 17, degen.isenring@bluewin.ch

Istrate Ligia Str. Nicolae Teclu nr. 10, Sibiu/Romania
+40-740-48 41 60, ligia.istrate@umc-cse.org

Kardosné Lakatos Lilla Baranyai tér 2. Fsz. 1 H, HU-1117 Budapest
0036-70-625 84 84, lilla.lakatos@umc-cse.org

Khaled László A. Rákóczi u. 2, HU-2092 Budakeszi
0036-70-771 07 08, laszlo.khaled@umc-cse.org

Kleiner Markus Hauptstrasse 27, CH- 8632 Tann
0041-55-240 27 51, markus.kleiner@methodisten.ch

Kłusek Krzysztof Zwycięstwa 1, PL-64-800 Chodzież
0048-697-65 06 54, krzycho777@wp.pl

Kohli Philipp Holbergstrasse 9, CH-8302 Kloten
0041-44-814 37 20, philipp.kohli@methodisten.ch

Kovács Zoltán Apáczai Csere J. u. 6, HU-3529 Miskolc
0036-20-770 39 95, zoltan.kovacs@umc-cse.org

Křížova Jana Ječná 19, CZ-120 00 Praha 2
00420-777-63 42 27, jana.krizova@umc-cse.org

Lakatos Judit Vizakna u. 38/B, HU-1141 Budapest
0036-70-940 41 92, judit.lakatos@umc-cse.org

Malicki Andrzej ul. Mokotowska 12 m. 7, PL-00-561 Warszawa
0048-601-14 31 75, andrzej.malicki@umc-cse.org

Mazotti Barbara Rte de Bonmont 9, CH-1275 Chésereux
0041-22 369 04 06, barbara@mazotti.com

Moll Christine Seminarstrasse 21, CH-5400 Baden
0041-62-752 14 17, christine.moll@methodisten.ch

Moll Silja Meisenweg 27, CH-3014 Bern
0041-77 404 62 73, silja.moll@methodisten.ch

Moll Stefan Seminarstrasse 21, CH-5400 Baden
0041-56221 66 68, stefan.moll@methodisten.ch

Moore Jenifer Ul. Pariska br. 22/1-14, MK-1000 Skopje-Karposh
00389-78-75 74 22jmoore@umcmission.org

Moser Brigitte Klosestrasse 10, CH-3600 Thun
0041-79-425 53 66, brigitte.moser@umc-cse.org

Myślińska Agata Przbyłkiewicza 83, PL-33-100 Tarnów
0048-530-19 10 21, agatasko@gmail.com

Myśliński Adrian Przbyłkiewicza 83, PL-33-100 Tarnów
0048-530-19 10 21, adrian.myslinski@gmail.com

Nausner Ben Reindorfgrasse 35/2/10, AT-1150 Wien
0043-680-214 77 92, ben.nausner@umc-cse.at

Nausner Michael Fanjunkarevägen 2, SE-70365 Örebro
0046-70-591 98 94, michael.nausner@gmx.de

Nausner Wilfried Millergasse 21/12, AT-1060 Wien
0043-664-7375 89 05, wilfried.nausner@umc-cse.org

Niederer Jörg Oberwiesenstrasse 65, CH-8500 Frauenfeld
0041-76-502 55 52, joerg.niederer@umc-cse.org

Nzambe Freddy 39-41, av. Taha Hussein, TN-1089 Tunis-Montfleury
00216-71-39 72 39, freddy.nzambe@umc-cse.org

Obermeir-Siegrist Martin Wiener Strasse 260a, AT-4030 Linz
0043-650-779 90 08, martin.siegrist@umc-cse.org

Odendaal Marietjie Riehenring 129, CH-4058 Basel
0041-61-692 42 61, marietjie.odendaal@umc-cse.org

Oppliger Barbara Spengelgass 12, CH-9467 Frümssen
0041-81-757 25 17, barbara.oppliger@rhytop.ch

Palik-Kunčak Ana Dr. Janka Gombara 22, RS-21211 Kisač
00381-21-82 81 39, ana.palik-kuncak@umc-cse.org

Parnicki Marija Dr. Janka Gombara 65, RS-21211 Kisač
00381-21-82 76 69, marija@ehons.org

Pöll Bernhard Sechshauser Strasse 56/II/4, AT-1150 Wien
0043-1-892 79 22, bernhard.poell@emk.at

Procházka Pavel Purkyňova 1700/2A, CZ-692 01 Mikulov
00420-608-23 21 19, pavel.prochazka@umc-cse.org

Procházka Petr Ječná 545/19, CZ-120 00 Praha 2
00420-777-93 92 67, petr.prochazka@umc-cse.org

Procházková Ivana Ječná 545/19, CZ-120 00 Praha 2
00420-777-86 44 61, ivana.prochazkova@umc-cse.org

Procházková Lenka Agátová 19, SK-900 45 Malinovo
00421-905-75 48 12, lprochazkova@gmail.com

Puślecki Edward ul. Mokotowska 12/9, PL-00 561 Warszawa
0048-22-621 46 65, edward.puslecki@umc-cse.org

Rickenbacher Theo Schwandenhübelstrasse 19b, CH-3098 Schliern
0041-31-961 51 50, theo.rickenbacher@methodisten.ch

Rietschi Murielle Colmarerstrasse 29, CH-4055 Basel
0041-61-501 85 01, murielle.rietschi-wilhelm@umc-cse.org

Rodaszyński Sławomir ul. Winogrady 76, PL-61-659 Poznań,
0048-784-03 11 94, slawomir.rodaszynski@umc-cse.org

Rudolph Etienne 8 rue Marco Diener, FR-68000 Colmar
0033-678-15 82 45, etienne.rudolph@umc-cse.org

Šálková Miluše K Lomu 506, CZ-398 11 Protivin
00420-608-51 99 29, salkova.milus@umc.cz

Schluep Christoph Dennlerstrasse 25d, CH-8047 Zürich
0041-44-242 73 35, christoph.schluep@methodisten.ch

Schmid Jürg Winklenstrasse 32, CH-3714 Frutigen,
0041-33-671 45 31, jg.schmid@bluwin.ch

Schneider-Oesch Christine Dättlikerstrasse 37, CH-8427 Freienstein
0041-44-865 39 56, christine.schneider@umc-cse.org

Schröckenfuchs Stefan Sechshauser Strasse 56/1/9, AT-1150 Wien
0043-699-114 84 210, stefan.schroeckenfuchs@umc-cse.org

Schweizer Urs Postfach 2111, Badenerstrasse 69, CH-8021 Zürich 1
0041-44-299 30 60, urs.schweizer@umc-cse.org

Shammas Anna Badenerstrasse 69, Postfach 1328, CH-8021 Zürich 1
0041-76-473 31 00, anna.shammas@methodisten.ch

Siegrist Roland Prechtlerstrasse 25, AT-4030 Linz
0043-732-65 71 37, ev@emk.at

Sjanta Daniel Ive Lole Ribara 55, PAK 308013, RS-26210 Kovačica
00381-64-158 66 30, daniel.sjanta@umc-cse.org

Stalcup Erika Place de la Riponne 7, CH-1005 Lausanne
0041-21-312 82 90, erika.stalcup@umc-cse.org

Stähli Ruedi Kapellenweg 8, CH-5210 Windisch
0044-56-441 20 74, ruedi.staehli@methodisten.ch

Stämpfli Andreas Allmendstrasse 7, CH-4410 Liestal
0041-61-641 60 21, andreas.staempfli@umc-cse.org

Steiger Esther Höhenweg 26, CH-5102 Ruppenswil
0041-62-897 17 09, e.st@bluewin.ch

Stekla Julia Slomiana 40, PL-43-382 Bielsko-Biała
0048-668-04 14 00, juliastekla@o2.pl

Streit Martin Bernstrasse 68, CH-3018 Bern
0041-76-571 78 14, martin.streit@methodisten.ch

Szuhánszky Gábor Márta Mária Otthon, Rákóczi u. 2, HU-2092 Budakeszi
0036-30-999 99 52, gabor.szuhanszky@umc-cse.org

Tankler Üllas Riisika 2, Silla küla, EE-86604 Pärnu
00372-50-11 690, Utankler@umcmmission.org

Taubenhansl Vladislava Zelzer Str. 23, DE-93495 Weiding
00420-731-87 26 87 vlada63@gmx.net

Thal Josef Ul. Jar. Haška 1, CZ-586 01 Jihlava
00420-777-11 03 45, josef.thal@seznam.cz

Tobler Christa In der Hub 19, CH-8057 Zürich
0041-44-261 78 54, christa.tobler@umc-cse.org

Töngi André Postfach 2111, Badenerstrasse 69, CH-8021 Zürich 1
0041-44-299 30 63, andre.toengi@umc-cse.org

Tordaj Dušan Mihala Kardelisa 12, RS-21211 Kisač
000381-64-285 47 50, dusan.tordaj@umc-cse.org

Tordaj-Szuhanski Laura Kiscelli-utca 73, HU-1032 Budapest
0036-30-593 48 05, szuhlala@gmail.com

Vigh Bence Kiscelli utca 73, HU-1032 Budapest
0036-20-284 88 13, vighbence.metodista@gmail.com

Weissenbrunner Gerhard Gottschedgasse 28, AT-8042 Graz
0043-316-42 81 63, gerhard.weissenbrunner@umc-cse.org

Weller Bettina Hechtweg 21, CH-4052 Basel
0041-79-655 13 23, bettina.weller@bluewin.ch

Wenziker Adrian Dennlerstrasse 1, CH-8048 Zürich
0041-44-972 30 72, adrian.wenziker@umc-cse.org

Wichers Christa Weiherstrasse 7, 4800 Zofingen,
0041-62-751 14 33, christa.wichers@methodisten.ch

Wichers Gunnar Weiherstrasse 7, 4800 Zofingen,
0041-62-751 14 33, gunnar.wichers@methodisten.ch

Wilhelm Hanna Ahornstrasse 13, CH-4127 Birsfelden
0041-61-311 76 56, hanna.wilhelm@umc-cse.org

Zaev Emil Bul. 3ta. Mak. Brigada, br.41/1-20, MK-1000 Skopje
00389-70-31 16 78, emil.zaev@umc-cse.org

Zolliker Corina Sonnegstrasse 3, CH-8406 Winterthur
0041-78-704 46 86, corina.zolliker@hotmail.com

Zolliker Stefan Trollstrasse 10, CH-8400 Winterthur
0041-52-212 17 39, stefan.zolliker@methodisten.ch

Zuber Monika ul. Słowackiego 26, PL-19-300 Ełk
0048-695-61 12 06, monika.zuber@umc-cse.org

Zürcher Simon Rinderwaldstrasse 8, CH-3725 Achseten
0041-33-673 17 14, simon.zuercher@methodisten.ch

