



Community of Christ

CHRIST'S MISSION, OUR MISSION

2019 World Conference

The dates are growing close, but you still have time to get ready. The next World Conference will be April 6–13 in Independence, Missouri. The event, with a theme of “Discover,” will offer members several items of business to read, study, and pray about.

2019 World Conference Resolutions

The following resolutions have been submitted to the World Conference after approval by mission center conferences, World Church quorums, or World Church teams that support the World Conference. These resolutions will be considered according to parliamentary procedures as defined in Robert’s Rules of Order, Newly Revised, 11th Edition, and the standing rules of the 2019 World Conference.

A-4 Priesthood Release for Cause

From the First Presidency

Summary: Upon passage this would rescind World Church Resolution 1192 and present key principles and mutual understandings of ministry by priesthood members. It also would detail reasons for releasing priesthood members for cause and acknowledge the responsibility of the First Presidency for developing and maintaining policies and procedures related to such release.

Resolution

Whereas, “The demands of a growing church require that [instruction given in former years] shall be evaluated and subjected to further interpretation” (Doctrine and Covenants 147:7); and

Whereas, WCR 1192, Ministerial Silences and Appeals (adopted 1986) needs to be updated to reflect current terminology and understandings; and

Whereas, The church has been given additional understanding into God’s vision for priesthood ministry; therefore, be it

Resolved, That WCR 1192 be rescinded; and, be it further

Resolved, That the World Conference affirms the following provisions for the development of policies and procedures regarding priesthood release for cause:

I. Principles

- a. All disciples “are called according to the gifts of God unto them” (Doctrine and Covenants 119:8b). Some are called to priesthood ministry as a focus of their call as disciples.

- b. The priesthood should “be made up of those who have an abiding faith and desire to serve [God] with all their hearts, in humility and with great devotion” (Doctrine and Covenants 156:8a).
- c. “Priesthood is a sacred covenant involving the highest form of stewardship of body, mind, spirit, and relationships. The priesthood shall be composed of people of humility and integrity who are willing to extend themselves in service for others and for the well-being of the faith community” (Doctrine and Covenants 163:6a).
- d. Priesthood members are expected “to continually magnify their callings through spiritual growth, study, exemplary generosity, ethical choices, and fully accountable ministry” (Doctrine and Covenants 163:6c).
- e. God “ultimately is concerned about behaviors and relationships that uphold the worth and giftedness of all people and that protect the most vulnerable. Such relationships are to be rooted in...Christ-like love, mutual respect, responsibility, justice, covenant, and faithfulness” (Doctrine and Covenants 164:6a).
- f. Church policies “provide a clear way for disciples to respond to [priesthood] calling. They also define the difference between a sense of call as potential and the need to align one’s life with principles of moral behavior and relationships that promote the well-being of the church community” (Doctrine and Covenants 165:4b).
- g. All presiding administrative church officers should uphold the “worth and giftedness” of all persons impacted by administrative actions and “protect the most vulnerable” (Doctrine and Covenants 164:6).

II. Mutual Understandings

- a. Priesthood members agree to serve according to the church’s expectations for Christian and ministerial conduct and to uphold the current version of “Covenant Principles for Faithful Priesthood Ministry” as found at www.CofChrist.org/common/cms/resources/Documents/priesthood/Covenant-Principles-English.pdf.
- b. Priesthood members provide affirmative ministry consistent with current versions of the church’s official documents such as the current version of *Sharing in Community of Christ*. When there is personal disagreement with a position, priesthood members are guided by “Faithful Disagreement: Definition and Principles” at www.CofChrist.org/common/cms/resources/Documents/FAITHFUL-DISAGREEMENT-PRINCIPLES.pdf.
- c. A priesthood member can be released from priesthood by presiding administrative church officers for established causes outlined below in Section III.
- d. Releasing a priesthood member for cause is an administrative action that does not affect church membership.
- e. Administrative policies and procedures should assure that a priesthood member subject to release:
 - i. Is informed of the allegations in writing. Where possible, personal contact by the presiding administrative church officer is encouraged.
 - ii. Has reasonable time to consider the allegations.
 - iii. Has opportunity to resolve the relevant issues, if possible and appropriate, before administrative action is taken.

- iv. Has opportunity to appeal the decision to release for cause to the next-higher presiding administrative church officer.
- f. All priesthood status changes will be reported to the World Church secretary through established procedures.

III. Causes

1. Causes for release include, but are not limited to:
 - a. Conviction of a serious crime as defined by applicable laws.
 - b. Deliberate disregard of church law as expressed through church bylaws, relevant World Conference Resolutions, First Presidency official rulings, and current World Church policies and established practices.
 - c. Deliberate disregard of the properly exercised authority, action, or direction of a presiding administrative church officer.
 - d. Public and private statements that attempt deliberately to undermine the well-being of the church. This includes print, broadcast, and social media (electronic) communications.
 - e. Deliberate failure to preserve confidential information given with the expectation of ministerial confidentiality, with the understanding that reporting mandated by law or when physical harm of self or others is likely are exceptions.
 - f. Such other disregard for the principles of Christian conduct as may result in the loss of power and standing to minister effectively.
2. An additional cause is priesthood inactive status for at least three years.

And, be it further

Resolved, That the First Presidency is responsible for developing and maintaining administrative policies and procedures related to priesthood release for cause and appeal in harmony with this resolution.

A-4 Priesthood Release for Cause Background Statement

Three resolutions, G-1, G-2, and G-4, approved by the Canada East and Canada West mission centres were submitted to the 2016 World Conference. The resolutions were about priesthood morality and related church policies.

During the 2016 World Conference the First Presidency ruled G-4 out of order because it conflicted with church bylaws and WCR 1192 Priesthood Silences and Appeals. Then the Presidency ruled that G-1 and G-3 were almost identical in their approaches, and whatever the Conference decided about G-1 would apply to G-3.

G-1 Issues of (Priesthood) Morality was considered by the World Conference. After discussion a motion to refer to the First Presidency was approved. The motion to refer placed the matter in the hands of the Presidency to act as determined best for the church.

The Presidency already was addressing the issue before the 2016 World Conference. The President's Address of October 2015 included comments on moral behavior and relationships related to priesthood calling and ministry. It listed areas of concern: sexual conduct, cohabiting before or instead of marriage, and drinking intoxicants.

The president's 2016 World Conference sermon included comments on social trends and then commentary on Doctrine and Covenants 164:6a. The church was assured that the principles of moral behavior and relationships identified in Doctrine and Covenants 164:6a have certain meanings and related behavioral boundaries.

Following the 2016 World Conference the Presidency developed a “Commentary on Principles” to interpret principles of moral behavior and relationships identified in Doctrine and Covenants 164:6. This commentary was developed with the assistance of the World Church Leadership Council and the Standing High Council. It was published through the *Herald* and the World Church website in French, Spanish, and English for study and discussion. The document said the commentary would be used by church officers to inform their consideration of various issues, including questions of priesthood morality raised at the 2016 World Conference.

Before the 2016 World Conference the Presidency and Standing High Council discussed the adequacy of WCR 1192 Ministerial Silences and Appeals in relation to the concerns raised by the resolutions from Canada. Conversations continued after the 2016 World Conference. Subsequently, it was determined that WCR 1192 was not adequate because of outdated content. The Presidency drafted legislation for the 2019 World Conference to rescind and replace WCR 1192. The proposed replacement resolution is A-4 Priesthood Release for Cause.

A-4 uses terminology that coincides with the current “Priesthood Status Categories” document (effective 1 July 2017). Please note that the administrative action titled “Silence” in WCR 1192 was changed to “Involuntary Release” in the “Priesthood Status Categories” document. In response to questions and feedback from the fields, the category of “Involuntary Release” is being changed to “Release for Cause.” All documents will be updated to reflect this change.

If approved A-4 will rescind WCR 1192 and replace it with a resolution that identifies foundational “Principles” related to priesthood ministry and expectations for moral and holistic lifestyles. It proposes “Mutual Understandings” that provide additional direction for the development of policies and procedures. The “Mutual Understandings” section includes a list of provisions that ensure related administrative processes are fair. A-4 also identifies general causes (reasons) that result in the administrative action, Release for Cause. Finally, A-4 acknowledges the First Presidency will develop detailed administrative policies and procedures in harmony with the resolution.

If A-4 is approved the Presidency will work with the World Church Leadership Council and others to develop detailed administrative procedures, including culturally sensitive adaptations if needed. The Presidency plans to develop administrative procedures that include opportunities for reconciling ministry prior to administrative action when possible and options for involving several authorized people in decision-making about releases and appeals if desired.

C-2 Standing Rules of the 2019 World Conference

From the Conference Organization and Procedures Team

Summary: Passage would give the World Conference a framework for operating through Standing Rules. They would encompass things such as certifying delegates, voting, basic procedures, publication of minutes, speaking during business meetings, and adjusting the agenda. This item also would establish *Robert’s Rules of Order, Newly Revised* as the source for governing the Conference in all cases when not inconsistent with bylaws and these standing rules. Standing rules may be suspended by a majority vote of the body without debate.

Resolution

1. The Credentials Committee shall report the names of certified delegates and alternates at the opening of the Conference. The Credentials Committee shall be authorized to certify alternates as delegates according to predetermined guidelines, without further reference to the Conference. (Guidelines: Alternate delegates certified by the Credentials

Committee shall be listed in the order of votes cast for them at their election. They shall be seated by the team in place of regular delegates who cannot attend, in the order of such listing. The Credentials Committee's action in this regard shall be based on a written statement signed by the administrative officer and secretary of the Conference, indicating which properly selected delegates cannot be present. This statement must in the hands of the Credentials Team no fewer than 10 days before World Conference. If a permanent vacancy occurs due to an emergency during the 10 days before or during Conference, the Credentials Committee may seat the next-listed alternate, if requested in writing by the administrative officer of the Conference or the officer's designee.)

2. The First Presidency shall identify delegations without full representation whose delegates will cast proportional* votes equal to the number of delegate votes provided in the rules of representation. Whenever a vote is taken using an electronic response system, proportional voting will be automated. If the Conference votes by another method, the chair has discretion to call for a counted vote.

**For each delegation using proportional voting, a ratio will be established by dividing the number of delegates the jurisdiction is entitled to by the number of delegates registered and certified, carried out to the second decimal place and rounded to the nearest whole number.*

3. Conference registration badges are to be worn during any delegate caucus or mass meeting and during Conference business sessions.
4. In compliance with WCR 1290, legislation to be considered at World Conference shall have been approved by a mission center conference, quorum, council, the Presiding Bishopric, orders of the World Church, or committees of World Conference. For such legislation to come before the World Conference, the World Church secretary must receive it at least one year before the Conference.
 - a. During World Conference, the quorums, councils, the Presiding Bishopric, orders of the World Church, mass meetings, and caucuses authorized by the First Presidency shall meet for fellowship, spiritual growth, educational pursuits, and to consider pre-submitted legislation and other matters to be brought before the World Conference. With the approval of the First Presidency, proposals from councils, quorums, the Presiding Bishopric, orders of the World Church, mass meetings, and authorized caucuses may be submitted during World Conference if urgent or required because of actions during World Conference.
 - b. During World Conference, these urgent resolutions shall be presented to the World Church secretary. Any of the above bodies may consult with the Resolutions Team regarding wording and form before submitting resolutions to the World Church secretary.
5. The minutes of World Conference business meeting shall not be approved by the Conference each day. They will be approved after the Conference by a team of people from the Standing High Council appointed by the First Presidency on behalf of the Conference body. To help delegates, the First Presidency will provide a summary of the prior day's business and actions in each daily *Bulletin*.
6. No delegate shall speak in debate more than once on the same question on the same day or longer than three (3) minutes without permission of the Conference, granted by a two-thirds ($\frac{2}{3}$) vote without debate. In the case of the mover and first speaker in opposition, five (5) minutes shall be allowed. These time limits shall be doubled for non-English-speaking delegates whose remarks require translation. Individuals called to provide information are not governed by this rule.

7. The chair may allow additional time for delegations to gain clarity by discussion among themselves before voting.
8. All proposed amendments should be submitted to the World Church secretary one day before their expected consideration to allow for translation.
9. At the chair's discretion, voting may be done by raised hands or an electronic response system. When using an electronic response system, results will be displayed for delegates.
10. The First Presidency shall formulate and adjust the agenda each day as required. Therefore, the printed agenda is for guidance only and shall not be considered as general or special orders.
 - a. Near the beginning of Conference, the assembly shall receive the opportunity to prioritize business items with the exception of those required for the ongoing management of the church. This prioritization shall guide the First Presidency as it formulates and adjusts the agenda.
11. Delegates seeking the floor to ask a question will not receive special preference in recognition. They may obtain the floor in the same manner as those wishing to speak in debate.
12. To allow adequate debate, the motion to "close debate" may be moved only on the immediately pending motion. The chair is justified in ruling any motion to close debate out of order until a diversity of viewpoints has been well expressed.
13. After any main motion is introduced, at least two speeches in favor and two opposed shall be allowed before the chair entertains any amendment or any motion to refer.
14. Generally, points of order shall not be recognized while someone is speaking. They shall be called on when no one has been assigned the floor.
15. Questions of privilege (e.g. temperature, difficulty hearing, and so on) shall be addressed to the Conference directors and shall not interrupt the proceedings.
16. As provided in the Bylaws of Community of Christ, the rules in the 11th edition (2011) of *Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised* shall govern the Conference in all cases to which they are applicable and when they are not inconsistent with the Bylaws and these standing rules.
 - a. At the discretion of the chair, the assembly may be resolved into the Committee of the Whole, during which an alternative common-consent process may be used to facilitate discernment on any matter properly before the World Conference. The First Presidency shall appoint a chair for the Committee of the Whole. During the committee's deliberations any rules in the 11th edition (2011) of *Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised* and any World Conference standing rules that conflict with the common consent process shall be suspended.
 - b. When the Committee of the Whole concludes its work, it shall report the results to the assembly. Using an alternative common consent process, the assembly then will approve or disapprove the matter.
17. Any of these standing rules may be suspended by a majority vote of the body without debate. In such a case, the regular rules in the 11th edition (2011) of *Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised* shall come into force. Rules that relate to the fundamental rules of parliamentary procedure may not be suspended (i.e., the right of each member to speak in debate, make motions, and vote). A two-thirds ($\frac{2}{3}$) vote shall be required to amend or rescind these standing rules.

C-5 Dates for Future World Conferences

Submitted by the Conference Organization and Procedures Team

Summary: The Conference Organization and Procedures Team (COPT) researched how other conventions (religious and non-religious) set dates for conventions. The team could not identify any group that used a system like Community of Christ's, with delegates debating and voting on the next Conference dates. Most organizations realize multiple factors go into selecting dates. In an international body such as Community of Christ, these factors become too numerous to discuss and debate adequately at World Conference. Consequently, the COPT believes the Conference often makes decisions out of parochial views that do not take into account the total needs of the church. The COPT therefore recommends the following resolution be adopted by the 2019 World Conference to allow the First Presidency to set dates for World Conferences after appropriate consultation.

Resolution

Whereas, Community of Christ Bylaws state, "These conferences meet at the call of the responsible administrative officers, at times and places determined by the bodies concerned, or without such provisions at time and places set by the responsible administrative officers," (Article III, Section 6); and

Whereas, The First Presidency presides over the World Conference and traditionally has proposed dates for the next World Conference based on a unique understanding of the logistics, finances, staffing, and scheduling that would impact dates, and

Whereas, WCR 1288 provides that "Conferences be scheduled to meet every three years;" and

Whereas, It is difficult for delegates to be aware of many factors impacting the scheduling of a World Conference; and

Whereas, Consideration of future World Conference dates can be time consuming; and

Whereas, World Conference legislative time should be focused on issues and proposals that matter most for the ongoing development of the church; now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the World Conference authorize the First Presidency to set the dates and locations for future World Conferences in compliance with WCR 1288; and be it further

Resolved, That the dates for each World Conference be announced by the First Presidency at the preceding World Conference.

D-3 World Church Budget and Audit Processes

Submitted by the Presiding Bishopric

Summary: This resolution would rescind and replace World Conference Resolution 1306. The total number of Community of Christ employees serving on the World Church Finance Board would be limited to 25. Community of Christ employees would not be eligible for any of the 30 board seats elected by the World Conference. The World Church Finance Board would be reduced by five seats by changing the number of elected members from the Order of Bishops from nine to four. The new configuration would ensure the majority of the board members would not be employees, creating a more representative body of the World Conference, which is not comprised of a majority of employees. Also, the procedure for nominating and

voting for members of the World Church Finance Board would be established by the First Presidency based on changing technology available to expedite voting at each Conference.

Resolution

Whereas, World Conference Resolution (WCR) 1306 authorizes the World Church Finance Board to annually review and approve the World Church audit, approve the annual Worldwide Mission Budget, and make recommendations to the World Conference concerning special appropriations, and

Whereas, WCR 1306 establishes the World Church Finance Board as a 60-member body with 30 members elected by World Conference (15 elected each Conference) and nine members elected by the Order of Bishops (five being elected some years and four being elected in other years), and 21 members based on their positions on the World Church Leadership Council, and Whereas, The only requirement to be elected is to be a church member in good standing, and Whereas, It is common to limit the number of employed staff members on governing boards to minimize conflicts of interest, and

Whereas, An employed staff member is anyone who receives compensation (which does not include reimbursement of expenses) in the name of Community of Christ, and Whereas, The number of non-employed bishops is limited, and the Order of Bishops gathered at World Conference is small and less representative than the World Conference, and

Whereas, the World Conference has and can continue to elect bishops who are not Community of Christ employees as members, and

Whereas, The Presiding Bishopric has received input that the size of the board is too large for effective meeting participation, and

Whereas, Having an even number of bishops elected by the Order of Bishops is easier to manage at each World Conference, and

Whereas, According to the current resolution elected members may not serve more than twelve (12) years on the board, and

Whereas, The technology used to automate elections is changing rapidly; now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That WCR 1306 be amended to read as follows:

World Church Audit and Budget-development Policy

1. The World Conference shall establish a World Church Finance Board responsible for annually reviewing and approving the World Church audit, approving the annual Worldwide Mission Budget, and making recommendations to the World Conference concerning special appropriations. The board shall present projections to each World Conference for annual budgets for the next inter-Conference period. These projections shall be based on the best estimates of potential church income and expenses, but they shall not bind the World Church Finance Board in developing and approving annual Worldwide Mission Budgets should circumstances change or income vary. The World Conference shall discuss these projections, and the input gained shall be considered by the World Church Finance Board in forming and approving these annual budgets.
2. The World Conference may establish parameters for the World Church Finance Board in developing and approving annual Worldwide Mission Budgets.
3. The World Church Finance Board shall be presided over by the First Presidency and shall be composed of up to fifty-five (55) members as follows:
 - First Presidency (3)

- Council of Twelve Apostles (12)
 - Presiding Bishopric (3)
 - President, High Priest Quorum (1)
 - Senior president of seventy (1)
 - Presiding evangelist (1)
 - Four (4) bishops elected by the Order of Bishops at World Conference to represent the order, with each elected for a six-year term. Terms would be staggered so two (2) will be elected at each World Conference.
 - Thirty (30) members elected by the World Conference to represent the church at-large, with each elected for a six-year term. Terms would be staggered so fifteen (15) would be elected at each World Conference.
4. The First Presidency is authorized to appoint board members when vacancies occur between World Conferences. These appointments must follow the same criteria for the vacancy being filled.
 5. The bishops elected by the Order of Bishops as members of the World Church Finance Board shall be church members in good standing, may be current employees of Community of Christ in local or World Church jurisdictions, and may not serve more than two (2) consecutive full (six-year) terms without a three-year break in service. A term completed by a person appointed to fill an inter-Conference vacancy is not a full term.
 6. Individuals elected by World Conference as members of the World Church Finance Board shall be church members in good standing, shall not be current employees of Community of Christ in local or World Church jurisdictions, and may not serve more than two (2) consecutive full terms (six years) without a three-year break in service. A term completed by a person appointed to fill an inter-Conference vacancy is not a full term.
 7. The Worldwide Mission Budget shall provide funds to cover travel expenses as requested by World Church Finance Board members.
 8. The First Presidency, in consultation with the Presiding Bishopric, shall make nominations to the World Church Finance Board for election by the World Conference. In addition, each World Conference shall allow nominations from the floor. These nominations shall occur early enough to allow biographical sketches of the nominees to be available to the World Conference before the election. In the nomination process, attention shall be given to balanced representation, including factors such as vocation, geographic residence, age, gender, church leadership experience, and church jurisdiction. The First Presidency shall form the specific procedures to conduct voting, including use of prevailing technology as appropriate. The 15 individuals receiving the highest number of votes shall be declared elected. The First Presidency shall provide the specific procedure in the event of ties.
 9. The First Presidency shall appoint a team to handle preliminary preparation of the budget. This committee shall be composed of World Church personnel responsible for church programming, finance, and field ministries.
 10. The annual audit and budget shall be made available on the church website. The *Herald* shall publish an annual report on the audit and budget, and a summary report shall be made to each World Conference.

D-3 World Church Budget and Audit Processes

Background Statement

The 2019 World Conference passed World Conference Resolution (WCR) 1306 authorizing the World Church Finance Board to annually review and approve the World Church audit, approve the annual Worldwide Mission Budget, and make recommendations to the World Conference concerning special appropriations. WCR 1306 did not change the membership of the board as a 60-member body with 30 members elected by World Conference (15 elected each Conference), nine members elected by the Order of Bishops (five being elected some years and four being elected in other years), and 21 members based on their positions on the World Church Leadership Council. Historically the only requirement to be elected to the board by World Conference is to be a church member in good standing. The requirement to be elected to the board by the Order of Bishops is to be a church member in good standing and a bishop.

The board is to serve as a representative of the World Conference. In recent years, it has been observed that the World Conference has elected a growing number of church employees to the board. This has raised concerns that if a majority of the board members are employees of the church, then the board no longer represents the World Conference. Additionally, based on research regarding best practices for governance, it is common to limit the number of employed staff members on governing boards to minimize conflicts of interest. An employed staff member is anyone who receives compensation (which does not include reimbursement of expenses) in the name of Community of Christ.

This resolution would result in not allowing employed staff members to be elected by the World Conference. Additionally, this resolution would reduce the number of bishops elected by the Order of Bishops from nine to four. If all four bishops elected by the Order of Bishops are employed staff members, then the maximum possible number of staff members would be 25 with 30 members who are not staff members. This would ensure the majority of seats are not held by staff members and would reduce the size of the board by five positions.

This resolution also would clarify the language associated with terms and term limits to match what has been practiced and broaden the language associated with automating elections so amendments are not required as technology changes.

Although the resolution is brought by the Presiding Bishopric, it received input from the First Presidency, World Church Leadership Council, and World Church Finance Board before passing the resolution and submitting it for 2019 World Conference consideration.

G-1 Nonviolence

*Submitted by the British Isles Mission Centre
and the Western Europe Mission Center*

Summary: World Conference Resolution 1273 identifies Community of Christ as a peace church and encourages us to seek ways to achieve healing and restorative justice. Members in these mission centers recall the Christian Crusades, the colonial history of mother nations, and the nationalisms that led to world wars from 1914–1918 and 1939–1945. In addition, in 2018 the world commemorated the end of World War I. This resolution calls for Community of Christ to reject all forms of violence, including acts of terrorism, war, and the financing of wars. It also calls the church to confront and resist injustice while rejecting the notion that violence on Earth and violence against Earth can be addressed separately. Further it urges Community of Christ to

continue supporting peace education and inviting members to embody Christ's nonviolence through local, global, ecumenical, and interfaith actions.

Resolution

Whereas Jesus taught in Matthew 5:44 "love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you"; and

Whereas, No known Christian writings between 100 CE and 313 CE approve of Christian participation in warfare; and

Whereas, The founding vision of Community of Christ was of the peaceable kingdom of God on Earth, a nonviolent Zion with economic justice for all; and

Whereas, Community of Christ has been admonished from its earliest days to hear the words of the Living Christ and to listen again to the voice that calls us to the great and marvelous work of building the peaceable kingdom of God on Earth; and

Whereas, Community of Christ has a logo, inspired by Isaiah 11:1–10, that shows how nonviolence is central to the way we conceive of peace; and

Whereas, Community of Christ, today is called to become a prophetic people that embodies in the lives of its members the ministries of the Temple through the pursuit of peace, reconciliation, and healing of the spirit; and

Whereas, Community of Christ's Enduring Principles and Mission Initiatives call us as a people to share Christ's peace throughout all of creation and embody God's love for all creatures; and

Whereas, Previous World Church Resolutions such as WCR 1177, WCR 1216, and WCR 1227 have supported nonviolent methods in establishing peace; and

Whereas, Biblical scholarship continues to highlight the potential for nonviolent peacebuilding inherent in the New Testament's witness to Jesus; therefore be it

Resolved, That Community of Christ reject all forms of violence, including acts of terrorism, war, and financing wars, and act upon Christ's invitation to practise nonviolence and (confront and resist) injustice; and be it further

Resolved, That Community of Christ reject the notion that violence on Earth and violence against Earth can be addressed separately and affirm the importance of addressing the environmental causes of conflict; and be it further

Resolved, That, through its Enduring Principle of Worth of All Persons, Community of Christ opposes all ideologies of violence and injustice, including those expressed in diverse forms of nationalism, populism, racism, and bigotry; and be it further

Resolved, That Community of Christ continue its support of peace education and invite its members to embody Christ's nonviolence through local, global, ecumenical, and interfaith actions toward justice and peace for all.

G-1 Nonviolence

Background Statement

World Conference Resolution 1273 [2000], identifies Community of Christ as a peace church and encourages us to seek ways to achieve healing and restorative justice. On this note, in the Christian world today, churches are striving to revive the role nonviolence plays in our shared faith. Community of Christ was urged in Doctrine and Covenants 165 to "remember that the way of suffering love that leads to the cross also leads to resurrection and everlasting life in Christ's eternal community of oneness and peace."

In March 2017, a field peace team for Europe was created to consider holistic peace—personal, relational, economic, political, social, and environmental—as integral to the Enduring

Principle of Pursuit of Peace (Shalom). When the idea of this resolution emerged, we asked questions like: “What role should nonviolence play, as an integral part of the gospel of Jesus Christ and of our understanding that in the pursuit of peace, peace is the way? What does it mean to become a people of the Temple, and to be a church pursuing peace on and for the Earth? What does the way of suffering love mean? How can we practice this in the world today?”

Members in the British Isles and Western Europe mission centres in Community of Christ recall the Christian crusades, the colonial history of mother-nations, and the nationalisms that led to world wars from 1914–1918 and 1939–1945. In addition, in 2018, the world commemorated the end of World War I. We believe previous World Church resolutions paved the way for this consideration. Among them are WCR 1177 [1982] (...“We, as a church, promote peace” and “We, as a church, oppose all forms of destructive violence, such as national and international conflict, war, withholding of food, terrorism, and mental and physical abuse...”); WCR 1216 [1990] (... “to include in the ministries of the Temple creative initiatives for peace and justice on behalf of the poor and oppressed peoples of the world, including initiatives designed to facilitate nonviolent efforts on the part of peace-loving people to reconcile oppressors and oppressed”); and WCR 1227 [1992] (...“intensify our efforts to heal the causes of violence, war, prejudice, discrimination, greed, hunger, and oppression”... “That we pledge... [to] be actively engaged in the pursuit of peace, all as taught to us by Jesus Christ”).

For those reasons, and because the 2019 World Conference will celebrate the 25 years since the Temple in Independence, Missouri, USA, was dedicated to the pursuit of peace, reconciliation, and healing of the spirit, a resolution on nonviolence is timely and right.

G-2 Domestic and Family Violence

From the Australia Mission Centre

Summary: This would raise awareness of continuing domestic-violence issues by urging the World Conference to support groups that seek to end the problem. Also, it would call on congregations to review and respond challenges brought in several previous resolutions.

Resolution

Whereas, Globally, according to the World Health Organization, about one in three women has experienced physical violence, and almost one in five has experienced sexual violence since the age of 15 (www.who.int/mediacentre/factsheets/fs239/en/); and

Whereas, Violence in familial and domestic settings continues to be recognised worldwide as a significant public-health issue for women, men, and children; and

Whereas, Familial and domestic violence and sexual assault are crimes that cause endless and unacceptable suffering; and

Whereas, It is within our calling to support those who are acting to prevent the victimization associated with familial and domestic violence, for in Doctrine and Covenants 163:4a we read, “God, the Eternal Creator, weeps for the poor, displaced, mistreated, and diseased of the world because of their unnecessary suffering. Such conditions are not God’s will. Open your ears to hear the pleading of mothers and fathers in all nations who desperately seek a future of hope for their children. Do not turn away from them. For in their welfare resides your welfare”; and

Whereas, the challenges brought to the church in WCR 1195 (1986), WCR 1235 (1992), WCR 1250 (1996), and WCR 1276 (2002) remain and require revisiting in order to be met with renewed vigor, therefore, be it

Resolved, That

1. The 2019 World Conference express its solidarity with and show active support for those organizations and community groups that currently aim to eradicate familial and domestic violence wherever it occurs.
2. Congregations worldwide be called upon anew to prioritize with urgency the admonitions found in WCR 1195, 1235, 1250 and 1276.

G-2 Domestic and Family Violence Background Statement

As with many other countries around the world, Australia suffers from significant issues stemming from domestic and family violence. Whether this is physical or emotional violence, the world is less because of this abuse.

We've been called as a church movement to consider how we can apply our principles to assist the world in need of compassion and peace. Through this resolution we are encouraging the church to consider how it can partner with organisations and community groups to continue working towards ending violence of this kind. We're aware of the limited resources the church has in many places, which is why this resolution emphasises partnerships and support rather than creating programs.

Additional World Conference Agenda Items

Use of Common Consent Process for G-1 Nonviolence

Two resolutions submitted from the British Isles and Western Europe mission centres are identical except for one word in the first "resolved." With the permission of the presiding officers of the two jurisdictions and the originating field Peace Team, a single resolution, identified as G-1, will be considered by the 2019 World Conference. This resolution will include both words, combined as shown in parentheses in the following:

Resolved, That Community of Christ reject all forms of violence, including acts of terrorism, war, and financing wars, and act upon Christ's invitation to practise nonviolence and (confront and resist) injustice; and be it further...

G-1 will be considered through parliamentary procedure later in the week of World Conference. However, given the likely variety of perspectives on this legislation and the importance of having time to hear each other fully, a portion of the common-consent process will be used to consider each of the four resolved statements of G-1.

The common-consent process has three main parts: listening carefully, surveying, and refining together. Because of this proposal's scope and the time constraints of World Conference, the Conference will use only the steps that involve listening carefully and surveying. It will not attempt to refine the proposal using the common-consent process. As stated above, final action on this legislation will occur through parliamentary procedure. The First Presidency believes this approach will help the body deliberate this resolution.

2019 World Conference Discussion: Guidelines for Serving the Lord's Supper

The 2019 World Conference agenda will include time to discuss draft-updated guidelines from the First Presidency regarding serving the sacrament of the Lord's Supper. The draft guidelines will be provided to the church before Conference so delegates can prepare to offer comments, ask questions, and provide feedback before the guidelines are finalized following Conference.

The First Presidency released "Guidelines for Administration of the Lord's Supper" in 1994. Those guidelines responded to action taken at the 1994 World Conference to support serving the Lord's Supper to persons who are not baptized and confirmed members of the church. The 1994 statement acknowledged that questions remained, and the guidelines did not attempt to answer all of them. A time of church-wide dialogue on the sacrament of the Lord's Supper was called for in anticipation of gaining additional insights based on experience and further reflection.

Theological, pastoral, and practical questions have arisen from the church's experience with serving the sacrament of the Lord's Supper in various settings according to the 1994 guidelines. Worship planners and presiders have tried to keep the integrity of this sacrament while responding with sensitivity to the needs of individuals, families, groups, and cultures. Significant questions that have emerged include:

- Can people baptized by Community of Christ priesthood, but not yet confirmed, participate in the Lord's Supper since others can if they choose to do so?
- Can children from Community of Christ families not yet baptized or confirmed participate in the Lord's Supper like children from non-Community of Christ families do at the discretion of their parents?
- World Conference Resolution 401 states: "That the act of conveying the emblems to those partaking forms a part of the work of 'administering the sacrament'" which, according to Doctrine and Covenants is the responsibility of certain priesthood offices. How does this resolution relate to Communion services in which participants are not served individually by priesthood members, such as when people go to a table to take the emblems for themselves after they are blessed?
- More groups are offering opportunities for people to participate fully online in congregational and mission center activities. Can people participate "remotely" (online) in the sacrament of the Lord's Supper?

Consideration of these and other issues led the First Presidency to determine it is time to update "Guidelines for Serving the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper." Before the 2019 World Conference the Presidency will release draft "Guidelines for Serving the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper." These draft guidelines will not change any provisions from the 1994 guidelines for the practice of open Communion. They will provide additional clarification on how that practice will be lived. Also, they will provide instructions on how to serve Communion in new circumstances emerging in the life of the church.

Before the guidelines are finalized and released to the church, the Presidency would like to receive comments, questions, and feedback from representatives of the worldwide church. The 2019 World Conference agenda will include an opportunity for this to occur.