



Community of Christ

CHRIST'S MISSION, OUR MISSION

Official Minutes of Business Meeting Sunday, June 5, 2016

Call to Order

The 2016 World Conference convened its second legislative meeting at 3:00 p.m. Sunday, June 5, 2016, in the Conference Chamber of the Auditorium, Independence, Missouri. President Stephen M. Veazey was in the chair.

Opening Hymn and Prayer

The meeting began with the hymn, "Amen, Siakudumisa!" led by W. Theodore (Ted) Stewart Jr. at the organ. Llewellyn A. (Lew) Shepherdson from the Canada East Mission Centre offered the invocation.

Announcements

The chair recognized World Conference Director Susan K. Naylor. She introduced her assistant directors, Emily G. Penrose-McLaughlin and Tammy F. Lindle, and made several announcements. She then made an announcement about the voting time for the polling system and conducted polling on a demographic question. The results:

Your Discipleship Category	Percent	Number
A. Bishop, Évêque, Obispo	7.23%	135
B. Deacon, Diacre, Diacono	2.09%	39
C. Elder, Ancien, Anciano	31.05%	580
D. Evangelist, Évangéliste, Evangelista	8.89%	166
E. High Priest, Grand Prêtre, Sumo Sacerdote	16.38%	306
F. Member, Membre, Miembro	11.99%	224
G. Priest, Prêtre, Sacerdote	8.62%	161
H. Seventy, Soixante-dix, Setenta	11.56%	216
I. Teacher, Instructeur, Maestro	2.19%	41
Totals	100%	1868

Statement Introducing Letter of Counsel about World Church Leaders

President Veazey made the following statement to the Conference:

I want to make a few introductory comments concerning the letter of counsel about World Church leaders.

First, this letter provides a summary about each person being released from leadership roles. No words are adequate to express the true depth of appreciation I have for each one of them. I pray the Holy Spirit will bless them with awareness of the worldwide church's gratitude for their many years of faithful, sacrificial, servant ministry.

Second, this document presents short summary statements of testimony about each person called to new responsibilities. Much more could be said about each one. However, I trust the Holy Spirit to confirm with the body the validity of each call. I hope it is understood that I would

not introduce a call if I did not have a strong testimony of it and confirmation from trusted colleagues in leadership.

Third, some questions have been raised about the necessity of filling World Church leadership quorums, especially during a time of financial constraint. As I prayed about this question and related questions for several months, I received three kinds of guidance: 1) The importance of filling various quorums, 2) ways to decrease the number of those serving only as general officers, and 3) who should be called in current circumstances to fill various roles.

To be clear, personnel costs in the World Church leadership section of the budget are being reduced. These savings are achieved primarily through an integrated First Presidency-Presiding Bishopric leadership model, if approved, and especially an increasing number of general officers serving in dual or multiple assignments on behalf of the church. A list of people serving in dual responsibilities or multiple assignments is found in the “Financial Questions and Answers” section of the Presiding Bishopric’s World Conference *Financials* report on page 25. Since the printing of that report, more steps have been taken. They include assigning an apostle to supervise a field and serve as a mission center president.

Finally, I want to comment about the one called to be presiding bishop also being called to serve as a member of the First Presidency. As I prayed about the leadership needs of the church, the Holy Spirit confirmed that an integrated leadership approach would benefit the church for a period of time. Furthermore, the Spirit confirmed that Sister Stassi D. Cramm was uniquely gifted with skills, experience, leadership competency, and decision-making courage to serve both as presiding bishop and as a member of the First Presidency.

For several months we have been working on an understanding of when Stassi will function as a member of the First Presidency, if approved, and when she will function as presiding bishop, if approved. However, the steps she already has taken as acting presiding bishop to tackle pressing financial issues and her thorough communication style confirm to me the wisdom of the Spirit’s guidance that brings us to this time of consideration of her calls.

I now relinquish the chair to President [K. Scott] Murphy for formal consideration of the letter of counsel about World Church leaders.

Letter of Counsel about World Church Leaders

President Murphy assumed the chair and indicated the letter of counsel about World Church leaders was in the Saturday/Sunday *Bulletin* beginning in English, Spanish, and French on page 6. He reminded the assembly of the letter of counsel regarding the presiding quorums dated January 30, 2015 which noted early retirements for Susan D. Oxley (who was released as an apostle and member of the Council of Twelve Apostles) and James A. Poirier (who was released as a counselor to the presiding bishop and member of the Presiding Bishopric), with both releases effective June 30, 2015.

The chair recognized Apostle Barbara L. Carter, who moved that “calls contained in the letter of counsel about World Church leadership, dated March 31, 2016, be approved.” The motion received a second.

Recognition of Those Retiring from Leadership Service

Each person present who was being released gave a statement to the Conference. They were President Becky L. Savage (also accepting her call to the office of evangelist), Apostle Andrew Bolton, and Presiding Evangelist David R. Brock. After each statement, the assembly offered a standing ovation, and each person then withdrew from the rostrum.

The chair noted that Stephen M. Jones and James A. Poirier, former members of the Presiding Bishopric, and former Apostle Susan D. Oxley were not able to be with the Conference that day. They were remembered in this time of recognition, and the chair called for them and their families to be held in prayer.

To honor those who were retiring after long and faithful service to the church, the assembly rose and sang the hymn, “Blest Be the Tie that Binds.”

Consideration of New Calls

The chair called the names of each person called to new responsibilities in church leadership and asked them to come to the front of the rostrum. They were Stassi D. Cramm to the office of presiding bishop and as a counselor to the president of the church and a member of the Quorum of the First Presidency; Janné C. Grover, Robin K. Linkhart, and Lachlan E. Mackay, each to the office of apostle and members of the Council of Twelve Apostles; Steven E. Graffeo to the office of counselor to the presiding bishop and member of the Presiding Bishopric; Michele K. McGrath to the office of bishop and as a counselor to the presiding bishop and member of the Presiding Bishopric; Jane M. Gardner to the office of evangelist and as presiding evangelist; and David N. Anderson to the office of president of the Quorum of High Priests.

The chair indicated the photos and statements of acceptance by these individuals were printed in the Saturday/Sunday *Bulletin* beginning on page 9 in English, Spanish, and French. The chair thanked each for their faithful discipleship and response to the calls. Those called left the room during consideration of their calls.

Moment of Blessing

Katie L. Harmon-McLaughlin and Richard W. Holmes provided a moment of blessing, which included the assembly singing “Santo, santo, santo.”

Reports of Councils, Quorums, Orders, Mass Meetings, and Caucuses

The chair indicated that each council, quorum, order, mass meeting, and caucus had considered these calls, and all were approved by substantial majorities. The chair further indicated the reports of each of these bodies would be published in the *Bulletin* later in the week.

Approval of Calls

Each call was taken up and voted on individually, including two separate votes for Stassi D. Cramm—one to the office of presiding bishop and the other to the office of counselor to the president of the church and member of the Quorum of the First Presidency. Each call was approved by a show of hands. The chair then indicated when the ordinations or setting apart would take place.

President Veazey assumed the chair and indicated his thanks to the assembly for its prayerful consideration and support for acceptance of the calls. He again stressed his testimony of the calls at this time in the life of the church.

Ruling on Item G-4

President Veazey shared the following statement:

Ruling Regarding Resolution G-4, Cultural Considerations and Issues of Priesthood Morality

Resolution G-4 Cultural Considerations and Issues of Priesthood Morality, found in the *Legislation* booklet in English and Spanish starting on page 18 and in French starting on page 17, would require that applying administrative sanctions specified in World Church policies regarding priesthood

morality to be decided locally on an individual basis following consultation with the First Presidency. Unfortunately, the First Presidency must rule this resolution out of order for the following reasons:

1. WCR 1192 Ministerial Silences and Appeals, approved in 1986, provides direction about the reasons (grounds for) and procedures for priesthood member silences. This resolution specifies the responsibilities and rights of those involved and the process of appeal to ensure such rights are protected. WCR 1192 specifically states that it "...shall govern all future silencing procedures." Resolution G-4 proposes an approach to priesthood member silences that clearly conflicts with WCR 1192 without amending or rescinding it.
2. G-4 also conflicts with Community of Christ Bylaws, which state, "No legislative body can rightfully take to itself administrative or judicial functions" (Bylaws of Community of Christ, Article III, Section 6b). The First Presidency and other World Church officers, such as members of the Council of Twelve Apostles, have responsibility for establishing and implementing church administrative policies and procedures. G-4 seeks to remove the administrative responsibilities of World Church officers and to place them elsewhere.
3. An important aspect of procedures to remove priesthood authority is an appeal process involving a series of church administrative officers and, if necessary, the Standing High Council. G-4 proposes that local church officers, such as pastors, consult with the First Presidency and then decide whether to remove priesthood authority. Since appealing a decision to the First Presidency is potentially one of the last steps in the appeal process, having pastors consult with the Presidency about whether to remove priesthood authority could violate the integrity of the appeal process.

For these reasons the First Presidency regrettably rules G-4 out of order.

Ruling Regarding Items G-1 and G-3

President Veazey then drew attention to Resolutions G-1 and G-3 in the *Legislation* booklet in English and Spanish starting on page 17 and in French starting on page 16, and made the following statement to the Conference.

Both resolutions request the First Presidency to consider a review of relevant documents related to issues of priesthood morality as well as policies and procedures for removing priesthood authority.

They do not, however, mandate changes. They only request consideration of changes. These resolutions also uphold the role of World Church officers in determining church administrative policies.

Resolution G-3 is very similar in its approach to G-1. The First Presidency believes they should not be considered as separate items. There is a parliamentary principle that "the same or substantially the same question cannot be [brought up]...during the same session" of an assembly (*Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised*, page 88). The World Conference includes many business meetings but is only one legislative session devoted to a single agenda.

Therefore, the chair rules that, however it is disposed of by the assembly, G-1 will carry the intent of G-3 with it. Therefore G-3 will not be considered separately. While G-1 is being considered, it will be in order to offer amendments if some wording in G-3 better expresses the will of the Conference.

Preparation for Prioritization of World Conference Business

President Veazey made the following statement:

Before we adjourn the business meeting for today, we would like to give the delegates some information to prepare for tomorrow. Consider it homework; or pre-work for our business meeting tomorrow.

The prioritization process of Conference business will take place during tomorrow afternoon's business meeting.

Please turn now in your Conference materials to the *Legislation* booklet beginning in English on page 52, in Spanish on page 55, and in French on page 54.

On these pages you will find information about the prioritization process. You will notice that not every resolution is on the list for prioritization.

Some examples of items not included on the list are related to:

- the ongoing management of the Conference and the church, such as the budget projections and Conference dates,
- World Church leadership calls for future quorums and election of persons to various boards.

There is a chart to assist you in determining what priority you wish to give to these items of business. This chart is found in your *Legislation* booklet in English on page 53, in Spanish on page 56, and in French on page 55.

Please turn to this chart, and when you are there, please strike out Items G-4 and G-3. In harmony with items just provided by the earlier ruling by the First Presidency, these items will not be included in the prioritization tomorrow because they will not come before the Conference.

A revised copy of this chart will be printed in the *Monday Bulletin*. So, as you are determining the priority you wish to give to each item of business, be sure you use the chart in your *Monday Bulletin* rather than the one in your *Legislation* booklet.

Delegates should do the following:

1. Read the material carefully before tomorrow afternoon's business meeting.
2. Rank your preferences using the chart in the *Monday Bulletin*.
 - Rank from 1 to 7 with 1 indicating your first choice, number 2 your second choice, and so forth through your top 7 choices.
3. Preparation is essential because you will enter your preferences into your polling device tomorrow.
4. Remember, your input is important. The First Presidency wants your preferences to count in how we make decisions about the agenda.

If you wait until the business meeting tomorrow there will not be enough time to do your ranking properly. So please, complete the chart before you come to tomorrow afternoon's business meeting.

Closing Hymn and Prayer

The assembly sang the closing hymn, "I Have Called You by Your Name," after which Emily E. Garubo from the Philippines in the Southeast Asia Mission Center offered the benediction. The assembly adjourned at 4:51 p.m. to meet again at 10:30 a.m. Monday, June 6, 2016.

Susan D. Sloan
World Church Secretary