

Bishop Webb sends letter on Council of Bishops time with the Commission on a Way Forward

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Note: On Nov. 9, Bishop Mark J. Webb sent the following letter to the Upper New York Conference.

Dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ,

Greetings in the name of Jesus Christ!

A press release from the Council of Bishops regarding our meeting this week and specifically our work with the preliminary report from the Commission on a Way Forward is available [here](#). I encourage you to read this release in a spirit of prayer and hope-filled faith. There are some important pieces to remind you of. First, this is the beginning of a journey that still has many miles to travel. The Council of Bishops engaged in prayerful, thoughtful, and respectful conversation that will continue over the next few months as we work together toward a final recommendation(s) to be presented to the Church and specifically the delegates of the 2019 special called session of the General Conference. Second, the three models presented by the Commission on a Way forward represent the work as of today. These models may represent the whole, portion or none of what the final recommendation(s) contain. Finally, the Council of Bishops did not vote on any of these models. Currently there is no recommendation for a way forward. That recommendation will come sometime after the May 2018 Council of Bishops meeting.

Between now and that meeting in May, I am committed to continuing to lead conversations throughout the Upper New York Conference that will add to and build upon the conversations we have engaged in previously. We will use the models offered by the Commission as a spring board for these deeper conversations. This commitment will be carried out with members of our delegation to the special session of the General Conference, as well as clergy and laity throughout Upper New York.

We continue in a season of urgent prayer for The United Methodist Church. Jesus is still Lord of the Church, our focus remains on the mission of making disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world, and we trust the leading and guidance of the Holy Spirit for the days that lie ahead. May we never forget the words of Jeremiah, as he proclaims: “For I know the plans I have for you, declares the Lord, plans for welfare and not calamity to give you a future and a hope.” (Jeremiah 29.11)

As always, I am blessed to share this journey with you. Thank you for your faithfulness to the mission and ministry in the name of Jesus Christ. Let us pray for one another!

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