

Strengthening Governance Working Group Report October 2014

The Strengthening Governance Working Group will facilitate a conversation at the October Board meeting with a goal of having several concrete proposals or ideas that the Linkage team can use in linkage work during November. Our larger goal is to have a concrete proposal to discuss and gather feedback at GA2015.

We are providing four documents to serve as background for the conversation at the October 2014 meeting:

- 1) The Final Report of the 1993 Commission on Governance
- 2) The 2009 Final Report from the 5th Principle Task Force
- 3) A summary of the responses to the survey that we administered after General Assembly. This survey sought feedback on the Values and Principles that were presented at GA.
- 4) A summary of the ideas that Strengthening Governance Working Group has developed. We will use these ideas as the starting point for the Board conversation in October. This summary is included in the document titled "Strengthening Governance Working Group Notes."

In addition to developing a framework for the larger conversation that we plan to have at GA2015, the Working Group is also proposing that the Board take steps now to encourage a more multi-cultural delegate body and to strengthen the preparedness and accountability of those delegates. It is clear not only from the survey that we administered this summer but also from previous linkage work that the financial barriers to participation are the bedrock issue that must be addressed if we want to have a delegate body that is more representative of our congregations and is more diverse and multicultural. In 2014 the Board provided money to help congregational leaders to attend General Assembly. For 2015 we are proposing that we again make money available, but that we do it in a manner that broadens the pool of potential delegates that would be eligible and at the same time provides additional support beyond the financial for delegates. This proposal is described in the document titled "Proposal for GA Scholarships."