

GCORR Equity Monitoring Report No. 6

“Rejoice in the Lord always. Again, I will say, rejoice!” (Philippians 4:4, ESV)

Bishop Eben Kanukayi Nhiwatiwa, of the Zimbabwe Episcopal Area, energized the gathering by proclaiming, “We have a lot to rejoice about!” From the vantage point of equity and inclusion, we truly have much about which to rejoice. The Saturday morning worship service offered a pathway to worldwide equity. People could see their respective cultures and styles of music reflected in the shared worship experience. Bishop Nhiwatiwa expressed this when he invited praise responses from the various countries and continents represented in the gathering so that “all may enjoy and experience worship together.” We moved a few steps closer to this vision.

The Apostle Paul’s letter to the Philippians challenges us to even greater self-awareness: “Whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just...think about these things.” (Philippians 4:8 ESV)

Overwhelmingly, the data and reflections from the monitoring team indicate a very mindful process in the majority of legislative committees and their sub-committees' work. The Monitoring Report presented by the General Secretaries of GCORR and GCSRW in the Saturday morning plenary indicated an important movement toward a balance of speakers based on gender. This is a cause for rejoicing.

However, there were two very serious incidents reported by two legislative committees that are not in keeping with the Apostle Paul’s admonition to be true, honorable, and just. Briefly stated:

- A white female Observer from the United States entered a Committee Room and moved a chair to the first row adjacent to the established bar for delegate members of the Committee. She proceeded to take a photograph of the name tag of an African

Central Conference delegate sitting inside the bar. This was reported to the Chairperson, who advised the woman to move her chair back into the observers’ area and refrain from interacting with delegates within the bar. She ignored the directions. A Central Conference participant assigned as the official Page of the Committee then asked the observer to move; she ignored the direction. Finally, the official Monitor went to her and informed her that she must move away from the bar so that the delegates could do their work. The behavior of the Observer was perceived as intentional intimidation of a delegate.

- In a sub-committee of another legislative committee, a white male from the United States intentionally invited input from the Central Conference members of the committee regarding a piece of legislation that is specifically related to a conference in the Central Conference. Before the interpreters could complete the translation of the request, another white male stood, went to the microphone, and stated that he could address the petition. This white male proceeded to speak for Central Conference members rather than honor the time necessary for translation of the question and communication of their own responses. The voices of the Central Conference delegates most directly affected by this legislation were silenced by someone who presumed to know more. This is a clear expression of presumed privilege and the absence of intercultural competence.

As we begin a new week of working together in full plenary sessions, we offer these equity questions to incorporate into your daily deliberations:

What are we seeking to become as a truly

worldwide church?

Whom and what do we prioritize in our deliberations?

What outcomes are desired from proposed legislation?

What factors and forces contribute to the

expectations?

Who will benefit and in what ways?

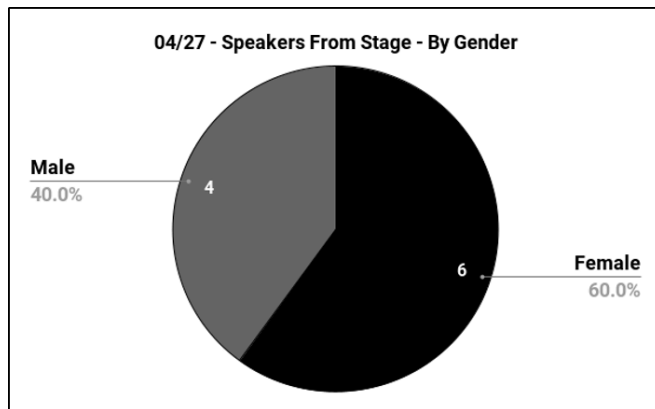
Who will gain or lose power (authority, access)?

Who will gain or lose resources (budgets, staff, ministries, buildings)?

GCSRW Monitoring Report, April 29

Our morning session again began with spirited music from great musicians and vocalists, and enthusiastic preaching from Bishop Eben Nhiwatiwa.

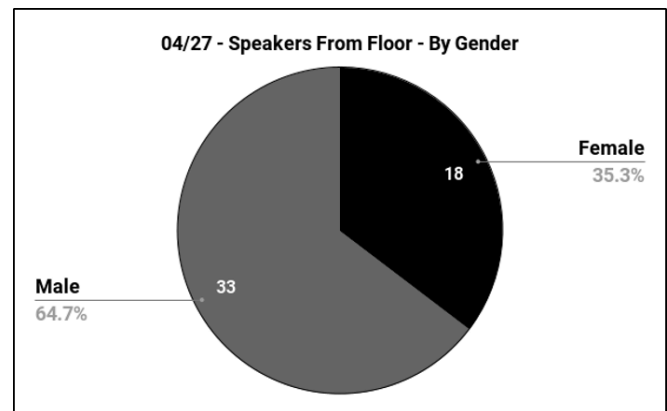
Six women and four men spoke from the stage at Thursday’s (04/27) plenary. The daily administrative committee reports were presented by six females and two males. This breakdown has been consistent throughout the week. We celebrate the leadership provided by these faithful and gifted women, and we look forward to their continued leadership in the week ahead of us.



During the nominations process we witnessed an increase of persons speaking from the floor. Many began their time at the microphone by stating their name, gender, clergy or lay, and annual conference. As we move into our full plenary sessions next week we can be more mindful of how helpful this courtesy can be for the gathered

body.

The morning demonstrated the great interest the delegates have in providing nominations. However, it also demonstrated a great disparity between male and female speakers. 64.7% of the speakers from the floor identified as male, 35.3% identified as female. No speakers identified as nonbinary.



In looking at participation in the legislative committees, it is good to see more balanced participation. The monitoring reflects 50.4% of the speakers identified as male, 48.7% identified as females, and 0.9% identified as nonbinary.