

COSROW Monitoring Report

HTC Annual Conference 2026 May 31 and June 1

This report is provided to the Horizon Texas Annual Conference in compliance with The United Methodist Church Book of Discipline paragraph 2102. This daily report will be offered in narrative form and will only include the monitoring team's observations. The team recognizes that age, race, gender, ability, and sexuality are not always observable in this manner. A more robust report, including specific demographic information, will be compiled and provided after the conclusion of the Annual Conference.

Our Observations:

Sunday Opening Worship

Strengths:

A balance of men and women, clergy and lay of varying genders, races, ages, and roles in the church provided leadership throughout the service. Very strong young adult presence.

Areas of growth:

There were no leaders with observable disabilities.

The language throughout the service in songs, liturgy, scripture, etc., was overwhelmingly male.

Continuous use of "stand as you are able."

The volume and lights were not friendly for the neurodiverse, visually- or hearing-impaired.

Monday Laity Session

Minimal diversity of speakers in age and race.

Only one young voice who offered a prayer.

Consistent masculine language for God.

Monday Clergy Session

Good balance of deacon/elder, gender, age, and race represented in presentations.

The layout of the room made it difficult to see the speakers and the commissionees/ordinands.

Monday Memorial Service

Strengths:

Great integration of the laity choir, including the SEEDS Deaf choir.

Balanced representation of clergy/laity leadership.

Strong female representation in leadership.

Communion was allergen-free, so all could partake from one loaf.

Areas of growth:

No youth or young adults with speaking leadership roles.

Monday Plenary Sessions

Strengths:

Some speakers used broader, inclusive language throughout their speaking time.

Hearing-assistance devices, live captioning, Spanish, and ASL interpretation aren't just available, but integrated.

Visible voting (raising hands) for full participation for our Deaf and Hard of Hearing siblings.

A gender-neutral bathroom was available.

Areas of growth:

Monitoring instructions were not announced.

Binary language was used (men/women, male/female) regularly from the dais.

Instructions for communion could have been clearer, possibly with ushers guiding traffic to improve egress/ingress.

Visibility in the conference center room is not great. It is hard to see the whole dais.

The captioning on the bottom of the screen is difficult to see if you are sitting in the back half of the room.

No self-identified LGBTQIA+ leadership or presenters.

Suggestions:

Work to normalize self-identification when addressing the gathered body.

Encourage and integrate gender-neutral language wherever possible, especially when addressing the gathered body or speaking about God.

Adjust the language of "please stand (as you are able)" to something such as "please rise in body or in spirit."

COSROW Monitors:

Thomas Baughman

Wendy Campbell

Rev Barbara Dunlap

Rev Laurie Eckeberger

Rev Danielle Kim

Pastor Deana Lowe

Rev Carol Montgomery

Rev Heather Gottas Moore

Rev Dana Norton

Rev Jessica Wright

Questions or comments? heathergottas@gmail.com