

## Proceedings of the 2008 General Conference of The United Methodist Church

**Wednesday Afternoon,  
April 30, 2008**

*(Continued from page 2539)*

**MARJORIE H. SUCHOCKI** (California-Pacific): I would like to agree with our first speaker against, but to bring John Wesley into it. Wesley says on p. 70 of *A Plain Account of Christian Perfection* that it is as natural to make a mistake as it is to breathe. He further counsels in his seventh advice—sixth advice—on those seeking to press on to Christian perfection, that we should expect contradiction and opposition of all kinds from within the body of the faithful. He also suggests in Advice No. 1 to those seeking Christian perfection that it is pride when we refuse to learn from one another. The Wesleyan spirit is embodied in the statement that says “we agree to disagree.” We are a beloved body here; in that love we dare to recognize the depth of our understanding and our love for one another even in the midst of disagreement. It becomes a witness to the world of how Methodists can live together in love even in disagreement.

**BISHOP WHITAKER:** Thank you. I see someone in section D who would like to speak for the amendment. This would be the last speech for the amendment. Mic. 10, please.

**RICHARD C. HOFFMAN** (Western Pennsylvania): This is actually a point of order. I wanted to ask that if we could suspend the rules at any time to move the motion before us?

**BISHOP WHITAKER:** It is in order at this point on this amendment to call for the previous question.

**HOFFMAN:** I'd like to do that. Thank you.

**BISHOP WHITAKER:** All right. A previous question is called for. Is there a second? I'm gonna try a hand vote. If you would like to

move the previous question on the amendment that we are presently discussing as we perfect the Majority Report, if you'd please lift the hand. If you're opposed, please lift the hand. You have called for the vote then by moving the previous question, so I'm gonna turn to the chair. The chair has the privilege of speaking to the amendment, and then I'll ask our secretary if you'll read the amendment before we vote.

**BREWINGTON:** We have learned one thing, Bishop, over time is that, over time we have come to a point where we need to determine that it is important that we give ourselves some more time. And that's exactly what this intends to do.

**BISHOP WHITAKER:** Thank you, sir. Now I'm gonna ask our secretary if he would clarify for us the amendment that is before us on which we're about to vote.

**REIST:** It may be helpful in this instance if people would follow along on 1186, the bottom of the page, right after the boldface “we challenge all members of our community.” Follow that through to “sacred worth.” The motion is that we delete, beginning at that point. All the text that follows, until the next place it comes back in with...in...where it's...one, two, three, four...four lines from the bottom. “In the meantime” is deleted and substitute is “therefore.” So it would read: “We affirm that all God's children are of sacred worth. Therefore, let us seek to welcome, know, forgive, and love one another as Christ has accepted us, that God may be glorified through everything in our lives.”

*(pause)*

### *Human Sexuality*

**BISHOP WHITAKER:** OK. We're now gonna vote on this amendment as a perfection of the

Majority Report, which is Calendar Item 1186. Please enter “1” for yes, “2” for no. The question is now before you. When the clock appears on the screen, then you may vote. [*Yes, 355; No, 534*]

*(pause)*

The amendment does not pass. There are 534 votes against and 355 for. Now we are still in the process of perfecting the Majority Report, unless you are through with making amendments; but I see persons asking to be recognized. Mic. 11. No, back here in the—yes, sir, you're the person I recognize. I think mic. 11 is closest to you; perhaps it was 8.

**ALLEN PINCKNEY JR.** (New York): I would like to make an amendment, p. 2267, down to line 10, where it says, “regarding homosexual persons and practices.” I'd like to delete “until” and replace it with “as...the Spirit leads us to new insight.” Then delete “in the meantime,” and begin the sentence with “Let us seek to welcome, know, forgive, and love the one,” and continue the rest of the text.

**BISHOP WHITAKER:** Is there a second to the amendment? All right, you may speak to it.

**PINCKNEY:** I believe that God is working on us as we continue to grapple with this issue regardless of what side we are on, but that the spirit of the petition is that we be in relationship with one another. And I believe God is in the process as we continue to be in relation with one another and to grapple with this matter.

**BISHOP WHITAKER:** OK, thank you. Let's see if there's anyone wants to debate or whether you would like to vote on this. I see no one asking to be recognized, so I'll turn to the chair, if he'd like to comment.

**BREWINGTON:** Bishop, I don't believe that that amendment takes

away from the spirit of the petition. I believe that it is consistent with the spirit of the petition.

BISHOP WHITAKER: OK. All right. All right, I'll ask the secretary to clarify the amendment, and then we shall vote.

REIST: On line 10, on p. 2267, it would read...well, let me begin the sentence and read through it: "We therefore ask the church, United Methodist and others and the world, to refrain from judgment regarding homosexual persons and practices as the Spirit leads us to new insight. Let us seek to welcome, know, forgive, and love one another as Christ has accepted us, that God may be glorified through everything in our lives." It is a deletion of the words "until" and "in the meantime" that appeared in the original text.

BISHOP WHITAKER: All right. We're gonna vote on this amendment. Is this a point of order? All right. You will enter "1" for yes, "2" for no. The question is now before you. When the clock appears on the screen, you may vote on the amendment. [*Yes, 524; No, 380*]

(*pause*)

BISHOP WHITAKER: The amendment does prevail. 524 votes to 380 votes. [*Yes, 524; No, 380*]

Now let me share with you where we are. We have a celebration moment that is planned and we are past time for the celebration moment and we are also in need of a break, I think. I think we are probably coming close to perfecting the Majority Report, but just to test the house, let me see if there is anyone who wants to make another amendment to the Majority Report or if you are ready to have perfected the Majority Report. Yes, I think what we will do is, I believe I—

Is this an order of the day?

I think I am going to have to recognize an order of the day. We'll pause in our perfection of the Majority Report and we'll have a celebration moment and following the

celebration moment then I'll give some instructions for a break. This is a presentation about Trinity United Methodist Church in Des Moines, Iowa.

BISHOP SHARON A. BROWN CHRISTOPHER: We, the Council of Bishops, have shared with you our vision pathways, the ways all of us are making visible the commonwealth of God as we make disciples of Christ. One of the pathways is to expand our racial-ethnic ministries; another deals with revitalizing existing congregations. Today I'd like to take you to an urban church in Des Moines, Iowa, that is modeling both those pathways and so much more that we all can admire and hopefully mirror in our home churches. Like the young man in this story, may we be blessed to have all our congregants feel their church is "my whole family."

(*video presentation*)

A church home that gives people joy—what a gift in our connection! As we hear in Ephesians 2—

(*applause*)

As we hear in Ephesians 2: "You are no longer strangers, but you are citizens with the saints and also members of the household of God." Congratulations to all of you at Trinity and all of you who are committed to helping your local church become a welcoming, vital presence in your communities, true dwelling places for God. Thanks be to God.

BISHOP WHITAKER: Amen.

(*applause*)

We are at a point of recess and so we are going to take a 15-minute break and we will resume our afternoon session precisely at 10 minutes after 4 o'clock. We are in recess.

(*music*)

(*applause*)

BISHOP WHITAKER: Let me ask everyone to please come to order

and be seated, so that we may resume our session this afternoon.

(*pause*)

REIST: Bishop, I have an—a couple of quick announcements. (*unintelligible*)

BISHOP WHITAKER: Excellent.

(*pause*)

(*music*)

BISHOP WHITAKER: All right. Let me ask everyone to please be seated and to cease conversation. And I would like to offer an opening prayer for this session.

The Lord be with you.

FLOOR RESPONSE: And also with you.

BISHOP WHITAKER: Let us pray.

(*prayer*)

BISHOP WHITAKER: As we live together in community, we hold one another accountable. I want to acknowledge that I made a statement, in jest, that was offensive to many of you, if not to all of you. I stated earlier in jest something about the chair having gender confusion, and that was inappropriate for our discussion, so I want to apologize to the body.

Also, I want to hold some of you all accountable. It's come to the attention of the chair that there are persons who are still using cell phones while we're in session. Please be aware that not only having cell phones on, but actually using them for conversation, is contrary to the covenant that we've made with one another, and I would ask that if anyone is using a cell phone, if you would please turn the cell phone off. It is not appropriate to use it during our session today.

Now, I want to turn to our secretary, who has a really important announcement.

REIST: I was handed the information that Western Pennsylvania

Annual Conference had upped their bid to \$8,000,

(laughter)

but immediately after that, I got a bid from Oklahoma for \$8,100.

(laughter)

BISHOP WHITAKER: I'm wondering where the East Coast is in this bidding war.

(laughter)

Now, I'm gonna turn to the chair of Church and Society 2. He needs to inform us of an error that occurs in the *Daily Christian Advocate* pertaining to this Majority Report.

*Perfecting Majority Report  
Human Sexuality*

BREWINGTON: Thank you, Bishop. And I want to thank the members of this body for their steadfast review of the documents. It is because it clearly shows that they're reading, Bishop. There is an editorial error, and I'd like to point that out to the body, if I may. In the *DCA*, on p. 324, Petition No. 80449, the original petition, that being the petition from which the one which is currently before you originates, had a section in the third paragraph on p. 324. It starts with the words, "We know that all God's children are of sacred worth." Does everyone see that? In the *DCA*, that is not indicated as being part of the initial petition. It was, but it was deleted by the committee, and the subcommittee, and then the committee when it was placed before the committee for a vote, and then submitted to the—for publication in the *DCA*. So if the editorial portion of the *DCA* were to be accurate, and there would not be this error, you would see that portion starting with "We know that all God's children..." going down and over to the next page, and ending in the middle of the paragraph on p. 325 with the word *marriages* would be on the page but would have a line

through it, as though it were being deleted. That should have been as part of the document which was published; it was not. However, the document which is before you in the *DCA* is the complete version of the petition as it came out of committee. Additionally, there is a single sentence in the *DCA* that says, and it has lines through it—it is on p. 2266 in the lower part of that full paragraph—that says, "Those who say we cannot condone homosexuality have a faithful witness. Those who press for total acceptance also have a faithful witness," is crossed out. That is because that was a version of an amendment that was attempted in the committee, but then was replaced with the language which is in bold after it. Editorially, it should not have been there; only the final portion which is there, that being in bold, should have appeared before you, because that deletion was a deletion of the subcommittee's work, not the work of the originator of the petition, as presented in the *Advanced DCA*. I ask that we be able to proceed with that understanding.

BISHOP WHITAKER: Thank you. We can understand how this mistake, regrettable though it is, could have been made, and so hopefully that is something that the house would find acceptable. Is there any objection? All right, thank you all for your understanding and we will proceed with the form that we have before us now, knowing that there was a section that should have been shown as deleted that was not shown and that there was something shown as being deleted that should not have been shown.

BREWINGTON: That is correct.

BISHOP WHITAKER: Now let me tell you where we are. I'd like to explain simply where we are in the process. We are in the process of perfecting the Majority Report. What that means is that we can receive amendments to change the majority report if they are approved by the body. We are not debating the majority report yet. We have not yet

considered the Minority Report. We also will have an opportunity to make amendments to the Minority Report and therefore "perfect" it; and after we have perfected the Minority Report, then we can have debate on the Minority Report and we will vote on the Minority Report and then we go back to have our debate and vote on the Majority Report. So we are a long ways from the end.

But you know there has been significant conferencing going on around these issues so far. It would help us if we can move forward and that would require a little self-discipline and restraint on our part in terms of making amendments that may not be absolutely necessary. So I would ask for you to give that some consideration before you proceed. But we are still open to receiving amendments to the majority report and there was a person in section B that tried to speak earlier. I recognized her and asked her to be seated. I am going to recognize her at this time if she would still like to make her amendment at mic. 2.

ESTER S. DALISAY (Philippines East): Sir, with your explanation—Ester Dalisay, Philippines East, Ester Dalisay, Philippines East. I heard your explanation earlier that we are going to also to make improvement on the Minority Report. My motion is supposed to be to delete a sentence in the original petition which is already included in the Minority Report. So thank you very much for the opportunity.

BISHOP WHITAKER: Thank you and that is a good example to all of us. What you want to do is to present to the house the original motion and also we are allowing by our rules an alternative and you want to perfect those so that they provide the house with a choice. And so we are not trying to debate the whole issue before us now but trying to perfect these two reports so the house may have an appropriate choice before it. Thank you for that. Yes, over here in section B. Mic. 1. Is this an amendment?

SANDRA BURNETT (Memphis): No, it is a question for clarification, Bishop.

BISHOP WHITAKER: OK.

BURNETT: I believe when the chair of the committee made the correction just recently, there is still one inaccuracy, possibly.

BISHOP WHITAKER: All right.

BURNETT: The first sentence that he indicated to be deleted, I believe *is* in the Majority Report with an amendment to it and I believe maybe his deletion was to start with the second sentence of the third paragraph, the sentence that begins “we have disagreed.” Can that be clarified for us?

BREWINGTON: I am being told by the secretary that that is correct, Bishop.

BISHOP WHITAKER: Could you reiterate what she was saying for the understanding of the house?

BREWINGTON: Yes, in the column, the far-right column, on p. 2266, under the bold where it says “we challenge all members,” the next sentence where it says “we know that all are of God—are God’s children and of sacred worth,” that was—that sentence is properly in the body of the document and then the portion that was deleted from the *Advance DCA* would start with the sentence “we have disagreed about scriptural teachings.” But the document which is in the *DCA* on p. 266 is still an accurate version of the document adopted by the committee.

BISHOP WHITAKER: Thank you very much. I think that is—should be clear to the body. All right, in section D, I will recognize the person there. Mic. 10.

JOHN W. SETH (Western Pennsylvania): Bishop, if it is appropriate, I would like to table what is before us until we have it and it’s in appropriate written form.

BISHOP WHITAKER: I believe that would be a motion to postpone debate.

SETH: That sounds great. So moved.

BISHOP WHITAKER: All right. Is there a second? I think I did hear a second. It is a debatable motion. You may speak to it.

SETH: I know that you have made mention that the body is clear. I personally have stood back here a number of times during the last 10 minutes with my card up, trying to indicate it was very unclear to me personally. If I am correct, I think I heard the fourth item that was incorrect in the printed form. I need this in the correct form so that I might appropriately vote on it.

BISHOP WHITAKER: Thank you, sir. Let’s see if anyone would like to speak against it. Yes, if you would please go to mic. 3.

JACK RYDER (Northern Illinois): I had the same concern but the solution that I was going to seek was that after we are done with whatever more amendments there may or may not be, that we ask the secretary to read the final version of the entire report—I know it is relatively long but it’s really only like a column and a quarter—to read the final version of the Minority Report and if it needs to, the Majority Report, whichever, before we vote.

BISHOP WHITAKER: Thank you for that speech and the suggestion contained therein. Yes, mic. 8, I believe would be closest to you. This would be a speech in favor of the motion to postpone debate?

LINDA U. KING (Kentucky): No, sir, it’s a question.

BISHOP WHITAKER: All right.

KING: Would it be possible that the correction be typed and put up on the screens for us to read it, instead of it being read to us—it’s so lengthy.

BISHOP WHITAKER: Thank you for the question. Let me inquire of those who have the technical capacity to do that.

REIST: It would take us about, I think, 15 to 20 minutes to do that

and we would be running about the same time to produce it as a photocopied sheet.

BISHOP WHITAKER: It seems then that you need to make a decision as a house whether you want to postpone a debate or whether you would like to move ahead and have the secretary orally present the correct report. So, is there anyone else would like to speak to this motion?

FLOOR: (*unintelligible*)

BISHOP WHITAKER: I mean a motion for the amendment would be what is in order, I believe—for postponement. Is there some would like to speak for the postponement? Yes, over here, and then I will recognize those of you who would like to speak against. Mic. 2.

SAMULONDO MATELO (simultaneous translation) (Lukoshi): Bishop, would you please allow me to ask this question. It is the first time that I express myself in front of the conference. I did not have the privilege of being at the committee that debated the subject matter that we are discussing now. It is a little bit confusing to me when I hear Minority Reports and Majority Reports. Because reading the *DCA*, I would say that the Minority Report is the report that I would choose. That is, in favor of heterosexual unions and monogamous unions. And we are calling this *minority* and I would like to know how? Thank you.

BISHOP WHITAKER: Well, let me try to answer that question. We have a report from the committee, the Legislative Committee of Church and Society 2, that report from the whole committee is before you and we’re calling that the Majority Report because it is a report of the majority of the members of that committee. Under our rules, we do allow for a minority within the committee to offer an alternative to the body. And that’s the Minority Report. It’s a very complicated series of rules, but basically what it means is, we can have the opportunity to change both reports—the Majority Report, which comes from the

whole committee, and the Minority Report, which comes from just some members of the committee—before we debate both of those reports. And when we debate, we debate the Minority Report first and then we go to the Majority Report. It's rather confusing to all of us—you're not the only one—but these are our rules and I'm trying to keep us operating in accordance with them. But I will consider that also, maybe a speech in favor of postponement because of the confusion you're experiencing and then I'll recognize someone in mic. 3 who will speak against it.

M KIM MOORE (Kansas West): I believe that what we have in front of us is the correct text. The wording is correct as the committee chair carefully explained. It is only the derivation, the source markings, that are a problem. So I don't think there is any meaningful confusion and we have 115 other items to consider. I oppose tabling.

BISHOP WHITAKER: Is the house ready for a vote now?

MULTIPLE SPEAKERS ON THE FLOOR: Yes.

BISHOP WHITAKER: All right. If you would enter "1." We're voting on a motion to postpone further consideration of this item because an editorial... failure to make proper editorial revisions in the printed text. If you'll enter "1" for yes; "2" for no. When the clock appears on the screen, you may vote.

(pause)

I'm told that because of the break, you'll need to activate your keypad by touching any key.

(pause)

UNIDENTIFIED MALE SPEAKER: Thank you.

(pause)

BISHOP WHITAKER: [*Yes, 145; No, 551*] You did not approve the motion to postpone. So where we are is that we can still receive, if

necessary, amendments for the perfection of the Majority Report. Yes, I recognize this person here in front of me in section A. If you would go to the mic., please.

(pause)

*Limiting Debate on Human Sexuality*

JACQUELIN E. WASHINGTON (Detroit): If I am in order, I would like to suspend the rules for the purpose of restricting debate.

BISHOP WHITAKER: All right. The motion is in order. Is there a second?

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKERS: Second.

BISHOP WHITAKER: All right.

WASHINGTON: I move—

BISHOP WHITAKER: Please go ahead.

WASHINGTON: I move that we limit debate to two speakers per side and two minutes each.

BISHOP WHITAKER: What we'll do; we've got two motions to vote on. First of all, we know why you want to suspend the rules to limit the number of speakers. So we need to have a two-thirds majority, not debatable, so I'm going to ask you to use your keypads to vote on this request to suspend the rules. Please enter "1" for yes if you would like to suspend the rules so that we can limit debate, vote "2," press "2" for no. When the clock appears on the screen, you may vote. [*Yes, 686; No, 203*]

(pause)

The motion is approved to suspend the rules. Now I'm going to receive your motion. And would you please clarify whether or not you would like to have a suspension of the rules for the rest of the General Conference or only for this session, this afternoon, to limit debate?

WASHINGTON: I would like to limit debate to two speakers per side at two minutes each for the rest of this day.

BISHOP WHITAKER: Thank you. Is there a second? If you are in favor of this motion to limit debate to two speakers on each side at two minutes each for the rest of this day, if you'd please lift the hand. Any opposed? And the motion is approved. Thank you very much. So those are now the rules under which we'll operate this afternoon. Yes, I want to recognize this person here at mic. 3. We're perfecting the Majority Report.

(pause)

H (EDUARDO) E. BOUSSON (Kansas East): Bishop, I would like to provide an amendment.

BISHOP WHITAKER: OK.

BOUSSON: All right, on the fifth—I'm sorry, Eduardo Bousson, Kansas East Conference.

BISHOP WHITAKER: Could you repeat your name for our recorders?

BOUSSON: Eduardo Bousson. That's B-O-U-S-S-O-N.

BOUSSON: All right. So it will be the fifth line from the bottom.

BISHOP WHITAKER: Can you tell us what page you're on?

BOUSSON: I'm sorry, 2267. And it reads...

BISHOP WHITAKER: This is the Majority Report?

BOUSSON: Yes, sir. "Practices as the spirit leads us to new insight" I would like to substitute "new insight" to "a shared vision." And if I have a second, I'll speak to it.

BISHOP WHITAKER: Could you please read the sentence first so we can understand what the amendment would result in.

BOUSSON: Yes, Bishop. The whole sentence would read "We therefore ask the Church, United Methodist and others, and the world, to refrain from judgment regarding homosexual persons and practices, as the spirit leads us to a shared vision."

BISHOP WHITAKER: You know, we've already had a debate on that sentence, and I would like to ask the body, do you feel that we've already addressed his concern in our previous debate?

I think the majority perceives, and I'd like for you to understand why I raise that question—

BOUSSON: I—

BISHOP WHITAKER: —because I think we've already been through this.

BOUSSON: We went—we've been through that sentence. I think the difference between “new insight” and “shared vision” is significant enough for me to make the amendment.

BISHOP WHITAKER: Well, it would not be appropriate for me to apply my too subjective judgments on your analysis, so I'm going to allow you to make your motion and then speak to it. You may speak to it.

BOUSSON: Bishop, I must confess, I must confess to my brothers and sisters that I will prefer for the primary motion to pass. But, you know, Bishop, friends, I—you can ask my colleagues, you can ask my bishop—I've been wrong before. And I think that it is important for us to be opened to the leading of the spirit, not for new insights, but for us to be unified in a shared vision, and that's why I wanted to provide that amendment.

BISHOP WHITAKER: Thank you, that's—and that's helpful explanation for the reason for the amendment. Is there someone who'd like to speak against the amendment? There is a question. Please come to mic. 2, sir. I see no one desiring to speak, and so after your question, perhaps we can vote on this amendment.

GRUMMETTI NAPOLEON ADAMU (Nigeria): I am getting more confused? What is an assured vision? Who assures it? And what is the other one? The longer this debate lingers, the more confused we are, Bishop. I would like a clarification

on what an insight—an assured vision is.

BISHOP WHITAKER: OK. The amendment used the language “shared vision” and I think the purpose of the amendment-maker was to emphasize what we hold in common despite our differences and that's why the language was important to him. And I am sorry that you're confused; I'm sure you're not the only one. Let me try to explain this again.

All we're doing is trying to prepare the Majority Report and the Minority Report so that they're in their final form so that we will have alternatives before us on which we will debate and vote later. And so we have not gotten to the point where we're gonna have that debate or vote yet, and I realize it's confusing. OK, we're gonna vote on this amendment, I believe. Is this—would you like to speak to the amendment, or can we vote on this amendment? I think the house would like to vote, but he's in order to speak.

KUNLE TAIWO (Rocky Mountain): I think what the gentleman is asking was not answered. What is missing is in pronunciation. He thought the amendment meant “assured” and who is assuring, that is the question he heard he raised. What is meant is a shared vision and that's where the misunderstanding is.

BISHOP WHITAKER: OK, thank you very much. All right I'm going to ask you to vote on this amendment. I'm gonna try a show of hands on this one. If you are in favor—I'm gonna ask the secretary, please read the amendment for us and the chair has to speak to it first. Excuse me.

REIST: The sentence would read “we therefore ask the church, United Methodist and others, and the world, to refrain from judgement regarding homosexual persons and practices as the spirit leads us to a shared vision.”

BISHOP WHITAKER: And the chair has a privilege of speaking this if you would like.

BREWINGTON: Nothing to say, Bishop.

BISHOP WHITAKER: All right, I will use the keypads if—we're going to vote electronically on this amendment. Please enter “1” for yes and “2” for no. When the clock appears on the screen, you may vote.

(pause)

The amendment does not pass; 620 against, 282 in favor of the amendment. [Yes, 282; No, 620]

Now friends, we could wordsmith the majority report until the Kingdom comes; and I think there comes a time when we have to recognize that a committee of 1,000 is not the most efficient committee in the world. The issue—

(applause)

the issue is, do we have before us in substantive appropriate form, you know, the proposal on which we can make a decision and vote. And we have the Majority Report; we've spent much of the afternoon perfecting it, and I'd like to ask the house informally, Are you ready to move on to the perfection of the Minority Report?

FLOOR: Yes!

BISHOP WHITAKER: I think that is the sense of the house, and so now I am going to ask if there are any amendments for the Minority Report, not for the Majority Report. All right, I recognize this person at—near mic. 2 in section A. This is—has to be about the Minority Report, please.

OLHA TYSHLOVETS (Ukraine-Moldava Provisional): Can I make a motion to suspend the rules now? Is it in order?

BISHOP WHITAKER: It is in order. Could you explain why you would like to suspend the rules?

TYSHLOVETS: I move to suspend the rules so that we could limit the no. of amendments that we can make to petitions throughout the end of this Plenary session until the end

of the day, and if I have a second, I can speak to it.

BISHOP WHITAKER: All right, the question is whether you would like to suspend the rules so she may make this motion to limit amendments. If you would like to suspend the rules, would you please show the hands? If you are opposed, would you please show the hands? It's very close; I think it's difficult for me to tell whether there's a two-thirds majority so I'm gonna ask you to vote electronically. The question is whether you would want to suspend the rules for the purpose of limiting amendments. If you are in favor of suspending the rules, if you'd please enter "1" for yes, "2" for no, and you may vote when the clock appears on the screen.

(pause)

The amendment to suspend the rules does not quite get the two-thirds majority required. [Yes, 585; No, 319]

OK. So, what is before us is the Minority Report. I recognize a person here; mic. 3.

RYAN M. RUSSELL (Pacific Northwest): Bishop, it's my understanding that on p. 331 of the *Book of Discipline*, paragraph 543.7 states that central conferences have the power to make such changes and adoptions to the *Social Principles*. It only restricts that constitutional amendments and general rules—central conferences can do—can and do adapt the *Social Principles* to special conditions and missions of the church.

BISHOP WHITAKER: I stated earlier that the *Social Principles* do apply to the whole church. I think that is accurate; however, you are also accurate, that there is freedom to make some—some changes that are relevant to the missional context of the central conferences. And so, thank you for clarifying the previous statement that not only I made, but other presiding officers have made. So hopefully that helps the body un-

derstand how the *Social Principles* are used outside the United States.

All right, I want to recognize someone; yes with the—no, the lady with red, purple, or something... I was looking for the right color. Mic. 5.

LINDA CAMPBELL-MARSHALL (New England): Thank you, Bishop. I would like to make a motion that the last words in the Minority Report, which are stricken, might be restored, should this Minority Report pass. I'd like to speak to it.

BISHOP WHITAKER: Thank you. Is there a second? You may speak to it.

#### *Homosexuality and the Family*

CAMPBELL-MARSHALL: I was in the legislative group in the year 2000 when this line was placed in this paragraph. It looked, at that time, to us, as though it were not an affirmation of what many were wanting to make sure we didn't affirm, but it did speak to families. As a local church pastor and also as a former district superintendent, I found this line in this paragraph to be a place to which I could go when families were anguishing over whether or not they needed to leave our church in order to remain faithful to their children. Sometimes it was a very unhappy time in their family. I think this is a very positive statement to families and friends. They can still love their children and be United Methodists. I implore us to return these words to the paragraph. Thank you.

BISHOP WHITAKER: Thank you. Now, we can debate this amendment or I can go right to the chair of the Minority Report and let him speak and then we can vote, if you would like. So, would you like to do that?

FOX: Bishop, that's restoring the lines "we implore families and churches not to reject or condemn lesbian and gay members and friends. We commit ourselves to be in ministry for and with all persons." That's very much in the spirit of this

Minority Report and we would accept that.

BISHOP WHITAKER: All right, if—let's vote on that by hands. If you would approve that amendment, if you'd lift a hand. Opposed by the same sign. And it is approved and we thank you for your spirit of accommodation. All right, are there any other amendments to the Minority Report? I am going to recognize the gentleman who is near mic. 5, in section B.

JOHN A. DENMARK (Florida): Bishop, I would like to propose an amendment to the Minority Report.

BISHOP WHITAKER: Yes, go ahead, John.

DENMARK: At the end of the sentence on p. 2267 in the middle column—at the end of the sentence "incompatible with Christian teaching" I would like to propose that we add "faithful, thoughtful people who have struggled with this issue deeply disagree with one another. Yet all seek a faithful witness. We continue to reason and pray together with faith and hope that the Holy Spirit will continue to move us all toward unity." If there is a second I can speak to it.

BISHOP WHITAKER: Is there a second? Is there a second? Second? You may speak to it.

DENMARK: Thank you. I truly believe that these words speak to the truth of where we as United Methodists across the world stand when it comes to this issue. For us to use these words "speaks to the truth of" the last two or three hours, and I think it's a profound thing for us to stand in a confessional place to say that we are of one mind when it comes to the salvation of the world through Jesus Christ but not when it comes to this issue.

BISHOP WHITAKER: OK. Let me see if there is anyone who'd like to speak against the amendment. I do see a placard, over here. Yes, sir, if you'd please go to mic. 9, I think.

MIKE F. CHILDS (Mississippi): I stand to speak against that because

in effect it is making the Minority Report synonymous with the Majority Report and taking away the choice we have. The simple truth is we're not of one mind on this. We think the Scripture is clear that homosexuality's practice is incompatible with the Christian lifestyle and there are many of us that can't live with less than that because we believe that is the truth. We speak the truth in love but we can't leave out the truth. And to water this down is just compromising the truth, the Scripture, and is more than we can live with. Thank you.

BISHOP WHITAKER: All right, that's a speech against. I recognize this gentleman here, if you'd come to the closest mic. and this will be a speech for the amendment. And then I will allow one more speech against it according the new rules under which we operate the rest of the day. Yes, sir.

CHARLES SCHUSTER (Rocky Mountain): I understand the fear that drives this debate. I understand the concern. We had that same fear and concern four years ago. To say that making a statement like this in our *Book of Discipline* or in a public way is something new for us would not be right. Four years ago we made that statement. Bruce Robbins and Bill Hinson agreed that we had differences on this subject, but there was a declaration of unity at that General Conference that we're—we were all very proud to claim. It was also noted that any time Bill Hinson and Bruce Robbins could agree on anything, the church would want to take note of that. I do want to lament with sadness Bill Hinson's death...

BISHOP WHITAKER: Thank you.

SCHUSTER: ... after that conference. Thank you.

BISHOP WHITAKER: Thank you very much, Charles. I recognize a person, yes, yes ma'am, if you'd come to mic. 8, I believe it is. And this will be our final speech and then we shall vote.

HOLLY GRANT (East Ohio): I would speak against this amendment because I do not have hope that the Holy Spirit will soon be reconciliation to our community of faith. I have hope that the Lord is Lord and that his will will be done. Thank you.

BISHOP WHITAKER: All right. Now we're going to vote on...

FOX: Bishop, Bishop.

BISHOP WHITAKER: ...on the amendment. Oh, yes sir, I want to—thank you—allow you, Eddie. I apologize.

FOX: Thank you; that's all right, thank you.

BISHOP WHITAKER: I'll let you speak to it and then I'll ask the secretary to read it, then we'll vote.

FOX: Bishop, these are Social Principles. It's very important that this be statements that are clear and not confusing to our people. We would oppose this amendment because it would result in confusion. The next sentence reads: "We affirm that God's grace is for all." So I would hope that you would vote no, pressing "2" not to accept this amendment.

BISHOP WHITAKER: OK, now I'm going to ask our secretary if he would clarify what is the amendment.

REIST: At the end of the line "consider this practice incompatible with Christian teaching," the following words would be added: "Faithful, thoughtful people who have grappled with this issue deeply disagree with one another, yet all seek a faithful witness. We continue to reason and pray together with faith and hope that the Holy Spirit will continue to move us all toward unity."

BISHOP WHITAKER: Thank you; will you please prepare to vote? You will enter "1" for yes if you are in favor of this amendment. Enter "2" for no if you oppose the amendment. The question is now before you and when the clock appears on the screen you may vote. [*Yes, 379; No, 553*]

The amendment does not prevail, 553 votes against, 379 votes in favor of the amendment. Now, we are at 5:00 o'clock. We are approaching time for adjournment for dinner. I don't know how much more debate on the Minority Report is required by this body. If we have a little more debate maybe we can at least complete the perfection of the Minority Report. So, would you like to take a few more minutes and see how...whether we can complete the Minority Report?

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Yes.

BISHOP WHITAKER: Thank you; I am going to recognize you in section D at the far back of the center.

*"Created in the Image of God"*

WILLIAM B. MEEKINS (Western Pennsylvania): I would like to amend on p. 2267, and if you look at the second full paragraph where it says "created in the image of God" I would amend by adding the words "all persons" where it has been deleted. If I can get a second, I will speak to it.

BISHOP WHITAKER: There is a second. You may speak to it.

MEEKINS: We have talked a lot about bringing clarity to this document, and putting the word *persons* I think brings clarity to the Minority Report.

BISHOP WHITAKER: All right. Let me see if the chair of the Minority Report would like to comment.

FOX: The only addition is adding the word *persons*? Is that correct?

MEEKINS: Yes.

BISHOP WHITAKER: Then that's...we'll accept that.

REIST: All right. Is there any objection to including this in the Minority Report from anyone? I don't...

FOX: *All persons.*

BISHOP WHITAKER: All right. Let's...excuse me, Gere...

FOX: Sorry...

BISHOP WHITAKER: Maybe you are better prepared to explain this than others. Could you clarify what the amendment would be and what you would accept?

FOX: My understanding would be after "created in the image of God."

BISHOP WHITAKER: Explain which page you're on.

FOX: P. 2267, the middle column, the third paragraph, including the one deleted, and it will read after "created in the image of God": "All persons need the ministry and ministry of the church in our struggles." So it adds the word *persons* after all.

BISHOP WHITAKER: He wants to restore *persons* to the report that was omitted. If you are in favor of that, if you'd please lift a hand. Opposed by the same side; and it is restored. All right. All right, I see another person near mic. 5. You may come to the mic. We are perfecting the Minority Report.

SUSAN S. GARRETT (Virginia): Bishop, I would like to move the previous question on all that is before us.

BISHOP WHITAKER: Thank you. Is there a second?

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKERS: Yes.

BISHOP WHITAKER: Lots of seconds, actually. If you would like to move the previous question would you please lift a hand? Any opposed? That is approved. So we will vote first on the Minority Report and I think I need to give Eddie a chance to speak before we vote and also the chair of the committee to speak regarding the Minority Report. So, Eddie, you may proceed briefly.

FOX: Thank you Bishop. We are dealing with the Social Principles that the report needs to have clarity, and it must be faithful to Christian teaching. I would ask that you vote yes for the Minority Report. It will retain the language that we consider the practice of incompat...homosexuality is incompatible with Christian

teaching. Friends, let us do no harm to this global connection, our world church, and our relationship in our ecumenical circles. Let us do no harm. I ask that you vote yes for this Minority Report. Faithful to the bible, it will express clearly who we are as a people. Vote yes by pressing "1."

BISHOP WHITAKER: All right. Then I am going to ask the chair of the Church and Society Committee to speak on the Minority Report.

#### *Legislative Committee Responds to Minority Report*

BREWINGTON: Thank you Bishop. As we went through the process of attempting to perfect the Minority Report, I said to myself, "There is nothing perfect about the document." In fact, as I looked at it, it contains the very same things that caused festering sores to exist amongst this body for nearly three decades. I agree with my brother from Africa when he said, "Every time we come back here we keep talking about this thing." And the reason why we keep talking about this thing is because we have done nothing about it! The responsibility that we have is to move forward. Moving forward at this time means that we have to come to a point of truth. The truth is that we disagree, and we must tell the world that we are at a point where we disagree. We should not be in a situation where we continue to breed disharmony and hurt among those very people sitting right next to you. The importance of this is one which is monumental not only for the life of the church, but for the life of our responsibility to each other as our brother and our sisters' keeper. I urge you to push "2," because in this situation, when we get back to the Majority Report, if you so choose to do that, we can then make a determination to move forward and stop the hurt.

BISHOP WHITAKER: Thank you. Now, I'm going to ask the secretary to describe the changes we've

made to the printed Minority Report and after that we shall vote electronically.

Just so that everyone is clear, I'm going to ask the secretary to explain the changes we made to the Minority Report.

REIST: In the last paragraph of the report the fourth line would read, "All persons need the ministry of the church in our struggles for human fulfillment as well as the spiritual and emotional care of a fellowship that enables reconciling relationships with God, with others, and with self."

BISHOP WHITAKER: And we also added the very...the last line that had been stricken.

REIST: And that last line, which was deleted, is restored: "We implore families and churches not to reject or condemn lesbian and gay members and friends. We commit ourselves to be in ministry for and with all persons."

BISHOP WHITAKER: OK. The committee of Church and Society 2 is recommending that you vote against the Majority Report, I mean the Minority Report. But, if you are in favor of the Minority Report you will enter "1" for yes. If you oppose the Minority Report you will enter "2" for no. The question is now before you. And when the clock appears on the screen, please vote. [Yes, 394; No, 293]

(pause)

The Minority Report is approved 394 votes to 293 votes. Yes, point of order. Please come to mic. 5. Please give us your name, sir.

WE HYUN CHANG (New England): I think we were out of order because we were perfecting the amendment and we were never given to debate on Minority Report. In order to call to question we have to fulfill the minimum requirement of two speeches for and against. And we didn't suspend the rule to entertain the call to question.

BISHOP WHITAKER: Thank you for your question. Let me consult with the other bishops for a moment.

*(pause)*

BISHOP WHITAKER: I want to ask Susan Garrett to please come to the mic. because I have a question of information that I'd like to ask her before I can make a ruling on this. Susan, did you ask us to suspend the rules before we moved the previous question?

GARRETT: I believe I did not, Bishop.

BISHOP WHITAKER: OK. If you did not then we are correct and it is not appropriate for us to vote without allowing for debate. So, unless someone moves to suspend the rules so that we can vote, then we must proceed according to our rules with the debate as suggested. Yes, Susan, mic. 5.

GARRETT: May I correct my error? My intention was to move that we suspend the rules and the purpose would be to call the question on all that is before us.

BISHOP WHITAKER: All right. If you would suspend the rules.

UNKNOWN SPEAKER: Point of order.

BISHOP WHITAKER: Yes. Point of order. Mic. 11, I think.

JIM BRYAN (Missouri): There were cards in the air all over this conference floor. Her, with all due respect, her hand was not up. She was not asking for the floor. There were cards all over here asking to speak when it was open and you called on her, which in effect cuts off debate.

BISHOP WHITAKER: Do you all think that Susan's...it's appropriate for Susan to make that motion?

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKERS: No!

BISHOP WHITAKER: All right. Susan, I don't see any unanimity among this crowd, so I will call on somebody else. Yes sir, I believe

you've been trying to get the mic. Also near mic. 5.

WILLIAM (SCOTT) CAMPBELL (New England): I had a question about the vote total. It seemed to me that the vote total was significantly lower than the number that have been voting on these motions all afternoon and I'm wondering if there was a possible technical error.

BISHOP WHITAKER: You know, that's not germane since the vote was not in order. But I will ask our technicians if they have any information and when we get it, we'll share it, Scott. All right, I'm going to recognize all the way in the back, the yellow placard near mic. 11. Mic. 11.

EDNA M. BARRIER (Greater New Jersey): I move to suspend the rules so that we can vote on all that is before us.

BISHOP WHITAKER: All right. We're going to. Is there a second?

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKERS: Second.

BISHOP WHITAKER: All right. If you would, we're going to vote this electronically. For suspension of the rules...requires a two-thirds majority. If you are in favor of suspending the rules for the purpose of taking a vote on all that is before us, if you would please enter "1" for yes, "2" if you are opposed to suspending the rules. When the clock appears on the screen, you may vote. [*Yes, 673; No, 225*]

*(pause)*

You have approved suspending the rules. Now, I think the secretary can answer the question that was asked on the floor regarding the number of votes that were cast when we erroneously voted before. Just for your information.

REIST: I'm going to ask our technician, Steve, to correct me if I say anything wrong, so just wave your hand at me, Steve, if I get this wrong. My understanding is that there's no such thing as an invalid

ballot when you have a simple yes or no vote. The only reason the count was down was because people are not voting and that maybe that people are not voting simply because they don't want to be part of the decision. I don't know what the motivation is, but basically those who voted, their votes were counted.

#### *Minority Report Approved*

BISHOP WHITAKER: All right, now we're going to vote on the Minority Report. This is the Minority Report as it has been amended. It was amended to include the word *persons* in the last paragraph. And it was also amended to include the final sentence that had been stricken previously. And, I think we've already had speeches. I believe it's in order to move ahead with the vote if there's no objection. So, if you favor the Minority Report you will enter "1" for yes. If you oppose the minority report enter "2" for no. The question is now before you. When the clock appears on the screen, you may vote. [*Yes, 517; No, 416*]

*(pause)*

The Minority Report is approved. The vote is 517 to 416. The Minority Report then becomes the Majority Report, and we must vote on the Majority Report, which is the text of the Minority Report. I am going to ask if anyone, the chairs, would like to speak to the Majority Report before we vote a final time. You have that privilege.

FOX: I think that we are clear, Bishop. We would ask that you vote yes for this Minority Report that now has become our report and it will give this very clear message and it will hold fast to the teachings of the Scripture and our relationship with our brothers and sisters around the world; so I would ask that you vote yes by pressing "1."

BISHOP WHITAKER: Mr. Brewington, would you like to make a comment to the body?

BREWINGTON: Bishop, I would ask the body to realize that at this time through the Minority Report and the additions that have been placed in it as part of the amendments, that we have two sections—one that says we do not condone the practice of homosexuality and consider this practice incompatible with Christian teaching, and then a paragraph that says we implore families and churches not to reject or condemn. That is bold-faced on itself, a contradiction. I would urge that you not approve the Minority Report.

BISHOP WHITAKER: All right. Now we, I think, according to our rules, we would need to approve the text of the Minority Report as the Majority Report. So if you are in favor of the substance of the Minority Report to be— Yes? Mic 6, I think. Nope.

REBECCA L. FARNUM (West Michigan): Bishop, can we please pray before we take this vote?

BISHOP WHITAKER: Sure, thank you so much for that. All right, let me see if there is another question and then we'll have the prayer. Mic. I think 9...6, mic. 6.

TURNER ARANT (Mississippi): My question is, if we vote down this report, will we retain the present language that is in 161g?

BISHOP WHITAKER: The answer is yes.

ARANT: Thank you.

BISHOP WHITAKER: All right, let us unite our hearts together in prayer.

(prayer)

All right, if you are in favor, then, of the substance of the Minority Report becoming the Majority Report you would vote "1" for yes; and enter "2" for no if you are not in favor of the substance of the Minority Report becoming the Majority Report. And when the...it is a vote for final adoption of the report. Is there any question in the house about what we are voting on? We are

voting to approve the final report. All right, if you would please vote when the clock appears on the screen. [Yes, 501; No, 417]

(pause)

*Minority Becomes Majority Report;  
Approved*

You have accepted the final report, which had been the substance of the amended Minority Report by a vote of 501 to 417. Now I'm going to ask our Secretary to share with us a reading from the Judicial Council and any other announcements he may have.

*Secretary Reads Judicial Council  
Decision #1096*

REIST: Minority request from the 2008 General Conference for a declaratory decision as to the constitutionality of various petitions related to the provisions of the *Discipline* regarding the Judicial Council Digest: The General Conference is vested with the constitutional authority to determine the number and qualifications of Judicial Council members, their terms of office, and the method of election and the filling of vacancies. The Judicial Council is empowered by the Constitution to provide its own methods of organization and procedure. Any proposed legislation that purports to mandate the Judicial Council to adopt certain policies or take certain actions or that creates a method to sanction, suspend, or dismiss members of the Judicial Council is in excess of the power of the General Conference and is therefore unconstitutional. The petitions, which address recusal, conflicts of interest, and the creation of a commission on judicial conduct, are unconstitutional. The General Conference is empowered to set a minimum number of members to comprise a quorum, and is likewise empowered to require that only the whole of the Judicial Council may consider and decide the constitutionality of acts of the General Conference.

Statement of Fact: On April 27, 2008, the General Conference requested the Judicial Council to issue a declaratory decision as to the constitutionality of four petitions proposing legislation related to the Judicial Council on issues of recusal, conflict of interest, judicial conduct, and quorum for the consideration of constitutional issues. The record of the proceedings reflects that the following motion was made and adopted. I move on behalf of the general decision as to the constitutionality of Petitions 80848-JA-2600; 81107-JA-2600; 81315-JA-2607; 80148-JA-2608.2; in reference to Division 2, Section 2, Article 4.4 of the Constitution, paragraph 16.7 of the 2004 *Book of Discipline*, and Division 4, Article 2.5 and .6, Paragraph 56.5-6 of the 2004 *Book of Discipline*. Petition 80848 provides for the amendment of paragraphs 2603 and 2604, and would require members of the Judicial Council to recuse themselves from any hearing or deliberation where there is a known conflict of interest. The proposed legislation also defines when a conflict of interest exists. Petition 81107 provides for a new paragraph 2605 that would create a committee on judicial conduct with authority to receive and act upon complaints made against Judicial Council members related to incapacity, immoral conduct, breach of trust, or actions that undermine the integrity of the Judicial Council or in other ways violate fair and impartial judicial administration. The stated rationale of the proposed legislation is to provide a method for removal of a member of the Judicial Council for incapacity or inappropriate behavior.

Petition 80148 seeks to amend paragraph 2608 to require that nine members or alternates of the Judicial Council must be present in order to consider any question of constitutionality involving the acts of the General Conference. Beth Capen recuses herself from consideration of Petitions 81107 and 81315. The Judicial Council has jurisdiction under

paragraph 2609.2 of the *2004 Book of Discipline*.

Analysis and rationale: Powers conferred by the Constitution received greater deference than powers conferred by the General Conference. The Judicial Council's constitutional powers may not be infringed by General Conference legislation. If disciplinary provisions are in conflict with the Constitution, the Constitution must prevail. Section 2, Article 4 of the Constitution provides that "the General Conference should have full legislative power over all matters distinctively connective and in the exercise of this power, shall have the authority (7) to provide a judicial system and a method of judicial procedure for the church except as herein otherwise prescribed" (paragraph 16 of the *2004 Discipline*). Paragraphs 56.6 of the Constitution, Div. 4, creates the Judicial Council and states that the Judicial Council shall have authority to provide its own methods of organization and procedure. The Judicial Council is the highest judicial body in The United Methodist Church. Its authority is specified in paragraphs 55 through 57 of the Constitution and in paragraphs 2609 to 2612 of the *2004 Discipline*. The General Conference has the authority to determine the number and qualification of members of the Judicial Council, their terms of office, the method of election, and the filling of vacancies. Paragraph 16: Beyond these enumerated powers, all other matters relating to the Judicial Council's methods of organization and procedure are reserved to the Judicial Council itself under paragraph 56. Paragraphs 55 through 57 of the Constitution relate specifically to the Judicial Council. Paragraph 16 is a general provision that relates to creation of a judicial system and judicial procedures, such as those contained in paragraphs 2701 to 2718, but has no application to the creation, formation, and operation of the Judicial Council. General Conference authority over the Judicial Council is limited to the determina-

tion of the number and qualification of its members, their terms in office, and the method of election and the filling of vacancies.

Petition 80848 purports to compel recusal of a member of the Judicial Council whenever a conflict of interest is known. From a legal standpoint, recusal is a discretionary decision made by a member of a tribunal by which the member makes a personal decision to refrain from participation in a matter for any reason the member deems appropriate. The definition of recusal, which is firmly established in the law, has suffered substantial erosion of meaning as it has come into popular usage. Recusal is distinguishable from disqualification. Recusal cannot be imposed upon the member by rule or requirement, but is solely dependent on the member's knowledge of the member's conflicting involvements or preconceptions and the member's own sense of fairness. Recusal cannot properly be requested or required, but comes from the member's own motivation based on a personal perception of the member's suitability to participate fairly and impartially in the adjudication of the matter before the tribunal. The right of a member of a tribunal to recuse is an inherent personal right to be exercised on the member's own motion and no other. Disqualification is the process by which a member of a tribunal can be removed from considering a matter for cause. Disqualification goes to the very heart of the member's lawful ability to participate fairly and impartially, and can be determined by the tribunal itself. A party may call a disqualifying reason to the attention of the tribunal and therefore identify a basis for disqualification of the member for cause.

The proposed legislation in Petition 80848, which would mandate members of the Judicial Council to recuse themselves from any hearing or deliberation where there is a known conflict of interest, violates the principal of separation of powers

by infringing upon the Judicial Council's constitutional authority to provide its own methods of organization and procedure. The determination of a conflict of interest, as well as the determination of disqualification of a member for a particular case, is within the Judicial Council's constitutional power to determine its own methods of organization and procedure as set forth in paragraph 56. Petition 80848 is unconstitutional.

Petition 81107 would create a Committee on Judicial Conduct with the authority to receive and act upon complaints against members of the Judicial Council. The proposed legislation would grant a Committee on Judicial Conduct the authority to sanction, suspend, or dismiss members of the Judicial Council for acts related to incapacity, immoral conduct, breach of trust, or other action that undermines the integrity of the Judicial Council. The General Conference's ability to delegate is wholly dependent upon the scope of its own powers. The General Conference cannot grant or delegate powers that it does not possess. There is nothing in the Constitution that reserves to the General Conference the power to sanction, suspend, or dismiss members of the Judicial Council. Creation of a Committee on Judicial Conduct would exceed the power of the General Conference stated in paragraph 16. Under the system of checks and balances, the Judicial Council is made accountable to the General Conference through the electoral process and by limitation of terms of service of its members. There is no provision for removal or sanction of Judicial Council members contained in the Constitution. Petition 81107 is unconstitutional.

Petition 80148 proposes legislation that would establish a requirement that the Judicial Council may only consider the constitutionality of acts of General Conference with a full complement of nine members and/or alternates. The General Con-

ference has foreseen circumstances when the Judicial Council will need to meet with less than a full complement of its members. For such purposes, the General Conference has established that a quorum for the conduct of its business shall be seven members (paragraph 2608). The legal definition of a quorum is that number of members of a body necessary to validly and legally conduct business. The General Conference is empowered to determine the quorum set forth in paragraph 2608 by virtue of paragraph 55 that provides the General Conference shall determine the number and qualifications of members of the Judicial Council. A quorum, by definition, is less than the full number of members of the body. Petition 80148 would effectively prohibit the Judicial Council from considering the constitutionality of acts of the General Conference with less than nine members and/or alternates present.

The General Conference possesses the power to require a supermajority of six votes of the Judicial Council to declare acts of the General Conference unconstitutional. It follows that the General Conference, likewise, has the authority to require that all seats of the Judicial Council be filled whenever a constitutional issue involving an act of the General Conference is before it for determination. In doing so, the General Conference is not setting a quorum but rather is setting a requirement on the number of the Judicial Council members that must be present in order to consider and decide any constitutional question involving an act of the General Conference. While we find and determine this to be within the constitutional authority of the General Conference to establish such a requirement, we caution that exigencies, such as illness or interrupted travel and other practical considerations, may mitigate against imposing such an inflexible rule. Moreover, such a requirement would permit one member to remove himself or herself from the deliberations to prevent the Judicial Council from

discharging its responsibilities. The rationale offered in support of Petition 80148 is to ensure that at no time will a minority of fewer than four members of the Judicial Council be able to decide a constitutional question involving acts of the General Conference. The proposed legislation is a solution in search of a problem and misperceives the Judicial Council's role in conducting constitutional reviews of acts of the General Conference. Although the *Discipline* permits a quorum of seven members to act for the Judicial Council, it also requires that a supermajority of six votes are necessary to declare an act of the General Conference unconstitutional, regardless of the number of members present (paragraph 2608). In the absence of such a supermajority of votes, there can never be a declaration of unconstitutionality of an act of General Conference. With this caveat, the General Conference may require that all members of the Judicial Council must be present in order to consider and decide questions involving the constitutionality of acts of the General Conference.

Petition 81315 would amend paragraph 2607.2 to mandate that each decision or memorandum shall include the names of each participating member of the Judicial Council and how each voted on the matter. It further provides that each decision or memorandum shall indicate each member absent or recused from the matter. The petition would further mandate the adoption of a conflict of interest policy. Both of these matters and the remaining portion of the petition directly infringe on the Judicial Council's authority to provide for its own methods of organization and procedure. The petition contains fatal provisions, similar to those previously discussed in this decision, that infringe on the Judicial Council's authority under paragraph 56 to provide its own methods of organization and procedure. Petition 81315 is unconstitutional. One of the briefs suggests that if Petition 81315 is unconstitutional, then the existing

paragraph 2608 may likewise be unconstitutional. The existing provisions of paragraph 2608 are not part of the request of declaratory decision. We are unaware of any previous challenge to its constitutionality. Nevertheless, the authority for existing paragraph 2608 is derived from paragraph 56 that gives the Judicial Council such other duties and powers as may be conferred upon it by the General Conference. However, such other duties and powers as may be conferred upon the Judicial Council by the General Conference may not conflict with the authority of the Judicial Council to provide for its own methods of organization and procedure.

Decision: The General Conference is vested with the constitutional authority to determine the number and qualifications of Judicial Council members, their terms of office, and the method of election and the filling of vacancies. The Judicial Council is empowered by the Constitution to provide its own methods of organization and procedure. Any proposed legislation that purports to mandate the Judicial Council to adopt certain policies or take certain actions or that creates a method to sanction, suspend, or dismiss members of the Judicial Council is in excess of the power of the General Conference and is, therefore, unconstitutional. The petitions which address recusal, conflicts of interest, and the creation of a commission on judicial conduct, are unconstitutional. The General Conference is empowered to set a minimum number of members to comprise a quorum and is likewise empowered to require that only the whole of the Judicial Council may consider and decide the constitutionality of acts of the General Conference.

April 30, 2008. Shamwange P. Kyungu was absent. C. Rex Bevins, the first clergy alternate, participated in this decision. This is a true copy of Decision 1096 issued by the Judicial Council of The United Methodist Church on Thursday,

April 30, 2008. Keith D. Boyette, Secretary.

BISHOP WHITAKER: Thank you, secretary. We are in recess until we reconvene at 7:30 this evening. Go in the peace of the Triune God.

### Wednesday Evening, April 30, 2008

BISHOP D. MAX WHITFIELD: I know you've had a very long and trying day. Its been a day filled with great emotions, I've been...I've seen you, indeed, come together for holy conferencing and I've seen, indeed, the grace of God poured out upon us in the midst of this. I know that some have experienced great pain and we ask, indeed, that we would continue in the spirit of serving our Lord and Savior; and I'm going ask, if you will, to take your places because we're going to get started this evening and I'm going to call on Bishop Walter Klaiber, if he would come and lead us in prayer this evening as we begin. Please take your places, and Bishop Klaiber, if you will please lead us.

*(prayer)*

Amen. Thank you very much, Bishop. I'm going to ask now if Rosa Washington-Olson will come as Courtesies and Privileges.

ROSA WASHINGTON-OLSON (California-Nevada): Bishop, the Committee on Courtesies has received a request from the North Central New York Delegation to present a 3 ½ -minute video and I would appreciate if you would activate mic. 11 so they can go there and tell us what the video is about. It has been granted from them to have the 3 ½ minutes.

BISHOP WHITFIELD: OK, if the person will go to mic. 11 and make a brief introduction for this; mic. 11. Mic. 11. Yes.

*(pause)*

Mic. 11, if you'll activate that for us.

UNIDENTIFIED FEMALE SPEAKER: Bishop—

BISHOP WHITFIELD: Yes.

UNIDENTIFIED FEMALE SPEAKER: We are the North Central New York Annual Conference standing together in support of the General Conference and its response to our experience to the sins of racism. We show you this video now.

*(video presentation)*

BISHOP WHITFIELD: Thank you, we appreciate that very much. It's a wonderful reminder to us all.

*(applause)*

Turn now to the chair of the Agenda Committee. Youngsook Kang, if you'll come, please.

YOUNGSOOK C. KANG (Rocky Mountain): Thank you, Bishop. Delegates and friends, this evening we will continue our deliberations on calendar items before us. They are not easy items, so as we make our decisions may God's wisdom guide our spirit. As for tomorrow's agenda, we will begin with choral music followed by worship. Then there will be a recognition of retiring Judicial Council members. Then new Judicial Council members will be introduced. Then we will again devote our entire day tomorrow on calendar items and conference business except for a few special orders of the day. They include a celebration of the 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the General Board of Pension and Health Benefits at 12:10 P.M., right before lunch recess. Then at 2:30 in the afternoon we will have a special address delivered by William H. Gates Sr. who is cochair of Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation. I don't think we will have to close doors for Bill Gates. Friends, we are making good progress and still have a few miles to go, so let's get moving. And Bishop, I move the adoption of the agenda for tomorrow.

BISHOP WHITFIELD: OK. The agenda for tomorrow is before you. Any questions?

KANG: For tomorrow.

BISHOP WHITFIELD: OK, for tomorrow is before you. Any questions? I am going to try this with a hand vote on the approval of the agenda for tomorrow. If you will approve, will you lift a hand? OK, down. Opposed, and it is approved. *[Approved by hand vote]*

KANG: Thank you.

BISHOP WHITFIELD: Thank you very much. We are ready now to begin our work together and let me just say a quick word before we do that. And that is to say that we are indeed brothers and sisters in Christ and I hope that indeed that that's the way we will work with one another, treat one another. I have got a couple of procedural kinds of things that I'd like to say in terms of the way we will work and that is to say that when you are trying to gain the floor, if you are in sections A and B, if one person that wants the floor will raise a card, if you are in sections C and D, one person will stand, I'll try to recognize you in that process. I think that way we can do, I am going to avoid most of the cards asking for special privileges in that process. We've got lots of work to do. If you've got something that just has to be done for the sake of the conference moving forward, I will recognize that, but otherwise, I'm going to ignore you or rule you out of order. It is important for us to move forward and to do so in an effective fashion. Now I see a card in the back. I will recognize you but it must be something essential for our work. If it is not, I will rule you out of order. Mic 12.

SCOTT E. DAWSON (West Ohio): Now if I can have a second on this, I can completely say how this is going to help us move through our conference. So what I am going to say is I move to suspend the rules.

BISHOP WHITFIELD: OK, for what purpose?

DAWSON: I need a second before I can speak upon it.

BISHOP WHITFIELD: Well, you are not going to speak, I just like to have what for purpose you are asking for the suspension of the rules?

DAWSON: For the purpose of that we have legislation coming up and we did not have enough time because we were rushed before supper to fully...

BISHOP WHITFIELD: OK, you are asking for extension of the time, is that what you are saying?

DAWSON: I am asking to suspend them.

BISHOP WHITFIELD: OK.

DAWSON: Suspend the rules so we can reconsider Petition 80449.

BISHOP WHITFIELD: OK, that's—the motion is to suspend the rules. If you will suspend the rules, this takes two-thirds. We'll need to active the keypads and so I would ask if you will, to touch those. I've been told as well that it would be helpful if you touch it, it doesn't wake up immediately, give it three or four seconds before you decide that it's not functioning appropriately. I believe that you've had that opportunity. If you will suspend the rules, would you press "1"? If you do not want to suspend the rules, press "2." It does require two-thirds vote. Vote when the clock appears.

(pause)

[Yes, 238; No, 505]

OK, the rules are not suspended and so we are ready now to go to the chair of the committee and we are to Church and Society and Frederick Brewington, if you will come and will guide us, please.

#### *Sexuality and Ministry*

FREDERICK K. BREWINGTON (New York): Thank you, Bishop. Bishop, Church and Society 2 is prepared to go forward on the

next petition. The next item is Calendar No. 739, Calendar No. 739, 739. I am going to give that to you. It is found on p. 2175, 2175 of the DCA. This item refers to Petition No. 81351, 81351, which can be found in the *Advance Edition of the DCA* on p. 431, 431. Bishop, the committee recommends to reject Calendar Item No. 739. The rationale is the petition was rejected by the committee because it included a core assumption that was unsupported by facts or research and that was concerning the confusion of individuals with regard to gender identity. It was seen as vague by the majority of the committee and used language that was not sufficiently caring nor sufficiently complete and attempts to assume sexuality is something that can be overcome.

BISHOP WHITFIELD: OK.

BREWINGTON: We recommend rejection.

BISHOP WHITFIELD: OK, it is appropriately before you. Would someone like to speak for the petition? I do not see anyone. Then if you will prepare to vote. If you would vote for the petition, you would press "1"; if you are against, you'd want "2." The committee's recommendation is to reject. The committee's recommendation is to reject and you will vote when the clock appears. Wait a minute, hold up just a second, we can. I see waving for a device that is needed by one of the delegates.

(pause)

OK, I believe we are ready to vote now. If you would approve the petition, you would vote "1"; if you are opposed to the petition, you vote "2." The committee recommends that you reject it—Can we have the—OK, there it is, vote, press "1" for yes, "2" for no. You will vote when the clock appears.

(pause)

BISHOP WHITFIELD: OK, the petition is not adopted. And we're

ready for the next. [Yes, 180; No, 631]

#### *The Church, Transgenderism, and Transsexuality*

BREWINGTON: Thank you, Bishop. Next item is Calendar No. 1029, that's 1029. Found on p. no. 2251 in the DCA, that's 2251. This item refers to Petition No. 81032, 81032, which can be found in the *Advance Edition of the DCA* on p. 417. Bishop, the committee recommends to reject this calendar item as well—that being 81032. The rationale is that this is a petition that was pulled from the consent calendar, which was located on p. 2251 and was rejected by a vote of the committee of 50 to 6. The committee felt this petition was based on scientific statements that were not supported, assumed facts that confused issues, and used phrases that are accusatory with statements that dismiss the witness of whole parts of God's body. We move to reject.

BISHOP WHITFIELD: OK, the petition is now before you. Does anyone wish to speak? I do not see anyone so I—yes I do, I see a red card. If you'll go to mic. 6, I believe.

TURNER ARANT (Mississippi): I want to speak against the committee's recommendation to reject because there is nothing in the *Discipline* that speaks to transgendering, and I believe that we need—the church needs to let the world know how we stand based on the biblical beliefs. And I would recommend that we vote to adopt the petition as it is in the book to reject what the committee recommended.

BISHOP WHITFIELD: OK, thank you. That's a speech for the petition. Anyone else wish to speak? Yes, I recognize you. Go to mic. 11, please.

JUDITH A. STEVENS (New York): Yes, I too, would appreciate direction about transgenderism, but I do believe that whatever our information that we say defines our United Methodist polity should be

correct information; and the chair of the committee has just told us that the information contained in this petition is not scientifically correct. So I would urge us to support the committee and vote “no” to this petition.

BISHOP WHITFIELD: OK, thank you. Someone else wish to speak? OK, I believe you’re ready to—OK I see a card here. Mic. 5, if you will.

WILL GREEN (New England): I urge everyone to please reject this petition. It creates a new category of discrimination. If we were to adopt this petition we would be singling out new categories of people to harm. Please, vote “no.”

BISHOP WHITFIELD: OK. Does someone wish to speak for the petition? I do not see anyone so let’s prepare to vote. Be clear, if you will, that this is Calendar Item 1029. Yes, I’m sorry. I want to give the committee an opportunity to speak if you’d like to.

BREWINGTON: Bishop, we would agree with the last speaker; in addition, without going through every point and paragraph, a careful reading of this can see the damaging language which we believe would not be appropriate to be part of our *Book of Resolutions*.

BISHOP WHITFIELD: OK, thank you. Now, if we’ll prepare to vote. This is Calendar Item 1029. You’re voting on the petition. The petition is 81032. If you favor it you’ll press “1”; if you’re opposed to it you’ll press “2.” The committee recommends that you reject this petition. If you will, vote when the clock appears.

(*pause*)

BISHOP WHITFIELD: The petition is not approved. 699 against; 175 for. [*Yes, 175; No, 699*]

BREWINGTON: Bishop, that is all we have for now as far as our schedule is.

BISHOP WHITFIELD: OK, thank you very much. We appreciate the work you’ve done.

(*applause*)

BISHOP WHITFIELD: I believe now that we’re ready for a Local Church Legislative Committee. And Cheryl Jefferson Bell is the chairperson for that. Yes sir, I recognize you.

BRUCE C. BIRCH (Baltimore-Washington): I would like to move to suspend the rules for purposes of aiding the work of this, the remaining, for us as a General Conference, by a suspending of the rule related to items taken off the consent calendar. If I can have a second I’d be glad to speak to it.

BISHOP WHITFIELD: OK, is there a second?

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKERS: Second.

BISHOP WHITFIELD: OK, suspension of the rules is nondebatable. I think, if I remember correctly, so the first thing we’re going to do is to decide whether or not you want to suspend the rules. And so prepare yourself to vote when we have the material before us appropriately. If you suspend the rules you’ll press “1,” if you’re opposed to suspending the rules, press “2.” This requires two-thirds vote.

(*pause*)

BISHOP WHITFIELD: You did not suspend the rules. The vote was 494, 62 percent; to 308, 38 percent. So we did not suspend the rules. We’re ready now to go to the Local Church. Cheryl, we’ll hear you. [*Yes, 308; No, 494*]

CHERYL JEFFERSON BELL (Kansas West): Thank you, Bishop. And I am honored—those are my home folk, amen—I’m honored to be serving as the chairperson for the incredible Local Church Legislative Committee. It was in holy conferencing that we conducted our business and we come today to make to you our first recommendation. But first I must thank our officers who all served with faithfulness and diligence to help us handle and process our 117 petitions. On the stage with

me this evening we have what I call the hardest working vice-chair in General Conference 2008, Gil Hanke, layman from Texas Conference. Our secretary is Josephine Deere, a laywoman from the Oklahoma Indian Missionary Conference.

(*applause*)

We also want to acknowledge—we had two subcommittees, Albert Shuler, clergy from North Carolina, chaired the subcommittee 1; and Philip Carver, lay from Iowa, served as secretary. Our second subcommittee was led by Mary Beth Blinn, clergy from Virginia, who chaired that committee; and Carol Smith, laywoman from Missouri.

#### *Church Membership*

Please turn to the first and only item that we will have for you to consider this evening, which can be found on p. 2371, p. 2371 in our *DCA*. It is Calendar Item 1207, 1207. This item refers to Petition No. 80088, 80088, which can be found in the *Advance DCA* on p. 1329, p. 1329. I do want to make note that the version of this petition of *DCA*, or Calendar Item 1207, showed up in a different version, but the correct version you will find, that has been approved, amended, prayed over, and perfected by our committee. We do apologize for any inconvenience that we may have created. Bishop, I want to recommend on behalf of our committee to adopt Petition No. 80088 as amended, Calendar Item 1207. And I would like to invite Albert Shuler, the chairperson for the subcommittee that worked with this petition, to share the rationale.

ALBERT SHULER (North Carolina): Thank you. Bishop, on behalf of the Local Church Committee, I’d like to offer the following rationale for our decision for this petition. As our chair has already stated, we practice holy conferencing, respectfully heard multi-perspectives on this challenging topic. The group

reached consensus that we need to add clarity to the existing text. If you will permit me, I would like to just read this to you. It is the responsibility of the local church working through its pastoral and leadership to educate persons on the meaning of membership as set forth in paragraphs 216 through 221, and to counsel with them regarding their readiness to seek membership with the local church affirming our beliefs that God's redemptive gift of salvation is available to all. The pastor and the congregation are to faithfully receive all persons who are willing to affirm our vows of membership.

My brothers and sisters, we are a connectional church, not congregational. We do not want churches based solely on pastoral preferences. This item emphasizes the role of both pastors and laity in preparing persons for membership. We need to realize that we are not finished products when we join the church; rather, we are on a journey together toward sanctification. If a pastor were to use the teachings of Jesus on money as a litmus test, there wouldn't be any Americans left in our churches. The doors, the opening of our doors to all people, is a radical expression of John Wesley's prevenient grace that we all profess to believe in. This makes us put our money where our mouth is. This is our rationale for our decision.

BISHOP WHITFIELD: OK.

SHULER: Thank you, Bishop.

BISHOP WHITFIELD: Thank you. This has a Minority Report I believe as well, does it not, Cheryl?

BELL: That is right, Bishop, and we would like for Alice Wolfe to come forward on behalf of the Minority Report. Is that in order?

BISHOP WHITFIELD: That it definitely is.

BELL: All right.

*Minority Report: Pastor's Choice*

ALICE M. WOLFE (West Ohio): The Minority Report simply re-

moves the last sentence of the Majority Report. The last sentence would be, that would be removed, "The pastors and the congregation are to faithfully receive all persons who are willing to affirm our vows of membership." The Minority Report removes that and replaces it with the sentence you see there printed in your *DCA*. It replaces it with the sentence "In continuity with our historic Methodist heritage, pastors have the responsibility of discerning one's readiness to take the vows of membership." From the very beginning of our Methodist tradition, pastors have been entrusted with the authority and responsibility to discern the genuineness of an applicant's faith in Jesus Christ and his or her readiness for membership. The responsibility to discerning readiness for entrance into a group resides with the group, not the one wanting interest—entrance, excuse me. In the case of the church as stated in paragraph 340.3a, the pastor is the administrative officer of the local church. But membership in The United Methodist Church is much more than just belonging to a group. Membership is a call to discipleship, a call to repent, which simply means to turn from our sins and then to commit to following Jesus and to be willing to grow in love and obedience in him. Membership is a call from God to discipleship, not a right based merely on our own human desires. If people merely self-select and almost be accepted under any and all circumstances and conditions, then membership basically becomes meaningless.

For example, what about the young woman who wanted to join the church that I am currently serving merely because she did not want to pay the wedding fees for non-members? Without this addition to the Minority Report, I and all pastors would have to allow her to take the vows of membership knowing that she had no intention of fulfilling any of them. Or what about a man who lived next to one of our United Methodist churches and wanted to

join the church merely so that he could have a say and vote in how the church was going to use its property? He was willing to say the vows but he had no intention of being faithful to anything except his own desires to manipulate the church, which could potentially hinder or harm the church's ministry. Or what would happen if a member of the Ku Klux Klan wanted to join the church? What if he sincerely believed that he was doing God's will by persecuting or harming our brothers and sisters merely because they have a different color of skin? What if he wanted to join the church to further his work and recruit more members of the Ku Klux Klan? Without adopting this Minority Report, a pastor would have to allow him to become a member of the church, but at what cost? At great risk to the physical, emotional, and spiritual well-being of our brothers and sisters who just simply happen to have a different color of skin. At great risk to harming people in the community and damaging Christ's witness through the church and at risk of allowing the man to set himself up for charges as outlined in paragraph 2702.3. To absolutely mandate a pastor to receive all persons into membership without any pastoral discernment is opening the door to many harmful and hurtful problems and issues including many of which we may be unaware of at this time. To offer pastoral discernment does not mean denial, but delay. For a time of pastoral support, prayer, love, and nurture with the hope that the person will indeed become ready to fully commit him- or herself to follow Jesus and to truly become a part of the body of Christ. If you believe the pastors continue, should continue to have some pastoral discernment in a person's readiness for membership, then please vote *for* this Minority Report. Thank you.

BISHOP WHITFIELD: OK, now we're, right, what we will be doing is first of all perfecting the Majority Report and after that is perfected,

we'll go to the Minority Report. Then we will have any debate you want to have on the Minority and we'll cast a vote then. After that vote is taken, depending on what you do, then we can continue debate on that process. So, at this point, I will ask if there are amendments to the Majority Report that you would like to make. Any amendments to the Majority Report? Yes, I see a hand back here. This is not a speech for or against. This is only for amendments to the Majority Report. I recognize the one that's, section A, toward the back, go to mic. 4, I believe it is.

YOUTH A C. HARDMAN-CROMWELL (Virginia): Bishop, I wasn't exactly sure which color card to hold up.

BISHOP WHITFIELD: OK.

HARDMAN-CROMWELL: I would like to make an amendment and if you look at the Minority Report, the beginning of the third line from the bottom, that is the rest of they hyphenated word *Pastors*. Do you see where I am?

BISHOP WHITFIELD: You're on the Minority Report and we're perfecting the Majority Report. Only the Majority Report is before us at this time.

HARDMAN-CROMWELL: I'm very sorry.

BISHOP WHITFIELD: OK. Anyone wish to make an amendment to the Majority Report? I do not see anyone, so what we'll do now is proceed to the Minority Report and since you, I recognized you, I will recognize you again and let you make your amendment to the Minority Report.

HARDMAN-CROMWELL: On the Minority Report, the third line from the bottom that begins with the hyphenated portion of pastors, I would like to insert this word, insert this: "[a comma] in consultation with the District Superintendent and Bishop [comma]."

BISHOP WHITFIELD: OK, is there a second? It is seconded, so I'll allow you to speak if you would like.

HARDMAN-CROMWELL: We are a connectional church. If I have membership in one United Methodist Church, then I certainly ought to be able to move to another United Methodist Church, since our church is connectional. I don't think there are many people in this body who have to be reminded that that was not always possible, and that pastors have used their status in the past to keep people out, simply because they did not conform to the homogeneity of the people who were presently in that congregation. If we are a connectional church, then we ought to use our connectionalism to help us make the decisions that we need to make and therefore, we could address all of those situations that my good sisters listed as possible misuses for membership to make determinations and how to handle those situations in consultation with our district superintendents and Bishops. I urge you to support this amendment.

BISHOP WHITFIELD: OK, thank you. Now would someone like to speak against the amendment? Yes, I see a red card here. This is against the amendment, only against the amendment. Either one, mic. 5.

CHARLES S G BOAYUE (Detroit): Bishop and fellow delegates, we all know if we are part of The United Methodist Church already, and I believe we all are, that the bishops and superintendents have more work to do than can be done in any given day. The possibility of me as a pastor in Detroit, when a person comes to become a member of Second Grace Church, thinking about calling my district superintendent and bishop so that together we can form a committee to determine that, is mind-boggling.

(laughter)

I understand what is at issue in this petition. I will urge you to vote against this amendment as quickly as possible so that we can tackle the issues at stake.

BISHOP WHITFIELD: OK, thank you. Someone want to speak for the amendment, for the amendment? Yes, I see, come to mic. 5 out of section B.

DEBORAH A. MCLEOD (Florida): I'm a district superintendent and I always appreciated it when one of my 110 pastors call me if someone else is going to call me because they're upset about a decision they make. So I'm willing to take that responsibility.

BISHOP WHITFIELD: OK, thank you. Someone wanna speak against? I see a card back here in section C, I believe it is. What is that, mic. 9?

MIKE F. CHILDS (Mississippi): It has been the historic practice of our church that pastors conduct confirmation classes and counsel with those who come for membership. Bishops and district superintendents can't do that; it's not practical, as our brother pointed out before. We don't include the congregation because we're not congregational like the Baptists, who vote on every member that comes in, but the pastor does set down with everyone who takes membership vows, to be sure that they sincerely understand those vows and from their heart, intend to their best of their ability to fulfill them. That's the role of the pastor in the Methodist tradition, and there's only one issue driving this, and we all know what it is: it's homosexuality. But to throw out the tradition of 200 years over one issue would be a terrible thing to do. It would be throwing the baby away with the bathwater. So I urge us to take the minority position on this and, and, and not throw away 200 years of tradition that's worked very well. Thank you.

BISHOP WHITFIELD: Thank you. Now we've had two speeches for and two against. This amendment, this has to be something that parliamentary procedure point of order for you to be in order at all. I will recognize you, mic. 12, but it has to be a procedural matter to be appropriate.

ANTHONY C. CARMICHAEL (West Ohio): Yes Bishop, this is a question. I have a question. Does this mean that if I go to a church and I want to join the church, there's a list of questions that I'm asked like do I support the church with my time, my tithes, and things like that? I hear that asked every Sunday when we bring someone in. That if I say I don't want to support the church with my money, I can't join that church?

BISHOP WHITFIELD: OK, I'm not gonna enter into this debate.

(laughter)

I think that's what you're trying to do, so I'm going to ask you to sit down.

I'm gonna get real kinda picky at you tonight. You start trying to do this procedure with me when it's not a procedure at all, it's debate. And so, I'll rule you out of order in that process. I believe it's appropriate for the minority chair to come and to speak if you'd like before we vote.

CAROL E. WILSON (Holston): I certainly appreciate, I appreciate the intent with which this amendment was made, because certainly none of us want to see, you know, abuse in this or prejudice or anything else like that, but as we've already had discussion on whether or not DSs or bishops actually have time for this, I will leave that up to them and I guess you have to make that decision. Personally, I think it sounds and stands better as it currently is. Thank you.

BISHOP WHITFIELD: OK, I believe we're ready to vote. Lemme see if I've got the amendment written correctly and that is that after *pastors*, it would be a comma and then would add the words, "in consultation with the district superintendent and bishop." That is the amendment. If you favor this, you would press "1"; if you do not favor it, you would press "2." You will vote when the clock appears.

(pause)

OK, the amendment does not prevail, 666 against, 270 for. [Yes, 207; No, 666 actual vote count]

So we are back on perfecting the Minority Report. I am going to recognize the gentleman here, mic. 3.

A. MARK CONARD (Kansas West): On the Minority Report, in the line close to the bottom that begins with "our historic Methodist heritage," I move to replace the word *historic* with the word *United*. If I have a second, I will speak to it.

BISHOP WHITFIELD: OK, is there a second? Second, so you can speak.

CONARD: Two things, one is our heritage is broader than simply the Methodist heritage. It is United Methodist heritage and by definition, our heritage is historic. So that seems redundant.

BISHOP WHITFIELD: OK, it is properly before you. Any discussion you'd like to have on, on this? Anyone want to speak against it? I see a red card in the back, section D, go to mic. 11, I believe, you are almost in the middle of that. Recognize the person, yes, please, going to mic. 12, I believe.

MARGARET M. MALLORY (West Ohio): Bishop, are we still on the amendment or are we on the Minority Report itself?

BISHOP WHITFIELD: We are not on the Minority Report itself. We are on an amendment that was just made to replace the word *historic* with the word *United* before the person Methodist.

MALLORY: Thank you much.

BISHOP WHITFIELD: OK, anyone want to speak against the amendment. If not, I assume you are ready to vote. If you would adopt this amendment, you will press "1" for yes; if you will not adopt it, press "2" for no and you will vote when the clock appears.

(pause)

The amendment passes 594, 291 against. [Yes, 590; No, 291 actual vote count] OK, back in the back, I see the, a lady standing. Yes, mic. 9, I believe it is.

TARA THRONSON (Southwest Texas): Bishop, I would like to move to remove the last sentence in the Minority Report and replace it with the following: "In continuity with our Wesleyan tradition of grace, we invite all persons to unite in membership with our church after faithfully exploring the meaning of membership with both the pastor and congregation so that they may, so that they might grow in discipleship on their journey toward perfection." And if I can have a second, I will speak to it.

BISHOP WHITFIELD: Seconded, so it is properly before us and if you will speak, please.

THRONSON: Bishop, I served on the Local Church Committee and as you heard, we had much discussion on this topic. We reached an agreement that the pastor and congregation are to educate regarding membership, including Paragraph 221 which addresses accountability. We are having discussion here on two values; pastoral discernment of membership readiness versus Christian hospitality. Friends, do not be afraid to invite others to experience God's grace and grow spiritually as a member of our church community. I know many young adults who are not part of a church because they think the church is too judgmental. I am concerned that pastoral discernment of membership readiness may have unintended consequences by adding to the perception of judging church folk. We can never know what is on a person's heart or mind when they recite our membership vows, but we can welcome and nurture those who wish to become members of our churches and praise God for that. Please join me in supporting this amendment.

BISHOP WHITFIELD: OK, now would someone like to speak against this amendment. I see a card here in section B, near mic. 5, if you will go to mic. 5.

SHANE L. BISHOP (Illinois Great Rivers): I am against this amendment because once again it's another amendment to a Minority Report that makes it much more similar to the Majority Report and as a delegate, I really think it would save us a great deal of time and effort and energy if we could have two different looking reports to choose from, rather than try to make them very similar to one another.

BISHOP WHITFIELD, OK, someone want to speak for it? I recognize the person in section D, go to mic. 12 as you will, please.

JOHN W. EDGAR (West Ohio): Jesus Christ is my personal Lord and Savior. That is a true statement for me and there really is no one else in this room who can know whether that's true or not. No pastor can truly know whether someone else has a personal relationship with Jesus Christ. I believe that the presenter of the Minority motion has actually revealed why we have to vote this down. She does not know if the person who is joining the church apparently to not pay those wedding fees, may also have Jesus Christ as her personal Lord and Savior and Christ alone has created this moment of intersection to draw her to faith. The pastor does not know. Furthermore, I wanted to speak at this point because I think it's essential that we delete the sentence that is referred to in this amendment because the sentence that's now to be deleted because I believe is factually inaccurate. The entire history of The United Methodist Church goes back to 1968 and I believe it is true that that entire history has on purpose, not given pastors a right to determine church membership and in part, out of the legacy of sinful decisions by some pastors to refuse admission to United Methodist churches to

African Americans. This is not about homosexuality. This is about a priesthood of all believers, a trust that God calls us by name, and it is, this is our moment to not give in to one debate about homosexuality

BISHOP WHITFIELD: Your time is up.

EDGAR: to destroy a fine, a key principle. I hope you will vote no.

BISHOP WHITFIELD: OK, thank you. Some one want to speak against? I believe I saw the card in just the front, yes, if you will go to 9, please.

BISHOP WHITFIELD: Thank you; someone want to speak against, I believe I saw the card in just a—yes, if you will go to 9, please.

GINGER JONES HOLLAND (Mississippi): Thank you Bishop. We've heard a lot about the three simple rules, and one day I turned into the English *Discipline* to p. 72, Paragraph 103, and actually read more of what John Wesley had to say to the societies. And, I just want to share a few of his words that applies to directly what we're talking about. The bottom of p. 72: "There is only one condition previously required of those who desire admission into the societies: a desire to flee from the wrath to come and to be saved from their sins; but wherever this is really fixed in the soul, it will be shown by its fruits." And those three simple rules are followed by how that should occur. And the end of this statement by our founder, John Wesley, has this to say: "These are the general rules of our societies, all of which we are taught of God to observe even in his written word, which is the only rule and the sufficient rule, both of our faith and practice, and, all these we know his spirit writes on truly awakened hearts. If there be any among us who observe them not, who habitually break any of them, let it be known unto them who watch over that soul as they who must give an account. We will admonish him of the error of his ways. We will bear with him for a

season. But then if he repent not, he hath no more place among us. We have delivered our own souls."

BISHOP WHITFIELD: OK. Thank you. Now we've exhausted the debate. I'll turn to presenter for the minority report for any closing remarks.

#### *Who Decides Membership?*

PRESENTER FOR THE MINORITY REPORT: Thank you; if I understood the amendment correctly, part of the amendment suggested consulting not only with the pastor, but also with the congregation. And personally I don't think that would work very well to bring every single person before the congregation for consultation for membership. Secondly, one of the things that was mentioned was unintended consequences. I think we're all looking at it from that perspective and, certainly, no matter what decision we make, there can be unexpected and unintended consequences. The illustrations I gave are very real. The first illustration I gave of the young woman who wanted to join the church, actually, I let her join the church. She has never come back, other than the wedding. And, again, it's not a matter—there's a difference between putting my faith in Jesus Christ and joining the church. When I join the church, I am pledging to support the church with my prayers, my presence, my gifts, and my service. So, if someone is coming to me with ulterior motives in joining the church, then I am allowing them, and permitting them to lie, basically, and to not even to fill the vows that they're not going to make. In addition, when we talked about the Methodists, part of the reason we had the Methodist heritage is because, indeed, it goes back to far beyond the United Methodist Church, when our heritage began with John Wesley, and he gave the class leaders the opportunity and the responsibility of truly seeking whether or not people were ready and willing to

flee from the wrath of God and to repent of their sins. It's not just a matter of saying the vows, but truly repenting, putting our faith in Jesus Christ, and making a commitment to become a part of the body of Christ, which is in addition to our faith in Jesus Christ. Thank you.

BISHOP WHITFIELD: OK. Thank you. I'm going to ask if the secretary will read the amendment to us and then following that we'll proceed to vote. So listen closely to our secretary as he reads the amendment.

REIST: "In continuity with our Wesleyan tradition of grace, we invite all persons to unite in membership with our church after faithfully explaining the meaning of membership with both the pas—," I'm sorry, "faithfully *exploring* the meaning of membership with both the pastor and congregation, so that they might grow in discipleship on their journey toward perfection."

BISHOP WHITFIELD: OK. The amendment is properly before you, and we will be voting, entering "1" for yes, if you support the amendment, "2" if you do not support the amendment; and you will vote when the clock appears. [*Yes, 304; No, 572*]

(pause)

OK, the amendment fails. The vote was 572, no; 304, yes. OK, we're back on the minority report, perfecting it. I'll recognize the person in front, in section D, going to mic. 11. No—I recognize the gentleman. I know that you can't tell when I'm pointing out there where I'm pointing; and I apologize for that.

MARK W. WEBB (Central Pennsylvania): Bishop, thank you. I'd like to try an amendment.

BISHOP WHITFIELD: Go ahead.

WEBB: I'd like to delete the last sentence of the minority report and replace it with the following: "The local church, working through its pastor and its agencies, have the re-

sponsibility of discerning one's readiness to take the vows of membership." If I have a second, I'll speak to it.

BISHOP WHITFIELD: Is there a second? Second. It's properly before you. You may speak.

WEBB: When I served as the pastor of a local church, anyone could fully participate in the life of that congregation. All were welcome. When it came to membership, we were talking about a level of commitment to that body of Christ. And, in our annual conference, we've been working hard at raising the bar of membership. Church growth experts tell us that that is a successful approach in making the church being vital and faithful. I also believe this language, in this amendment, puts us in line with the language that we use in relation to accountability that is already a part of our *Discipline* in relation to membership.

BISHOP WHITFIELD: OK, thank you. Now, would someone like to speak against the amendment? Yes, I see you in section A. If you will rise and go to the mic., looks like five will be the closest.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Bishop, I rise to speak against this amendment. When I was a younger mother, I taught story hour at our little library in Chester, Montana. I shared with the five-year-olds on the floor in a circle around me Robert Frost's *Mending Wall*. Do you all remember the first lines from that poem? "Something there is that does not like a wall, that wants it down." I asked those five-year-olds what they thought that "something" is. Without hesitation, those children, who were from all faiths or no faith, said, 'God!'

BISHOP WHITFIELD: OK, thank you. Someone want to speak for the amendment? Yes, recognize you in section D, near the aisle. Go to mic. 11.

ERNESTO P. CONTRERAS (Mexico): A point of clarification: In

Mexico, there was lay and missionaries that taught us, you know, how to make members, show us—and that's what we practice until now—that everybody could come to church. Oh, they can participate, they can give offerings, they can give whatever, but if they wanted to be a full communion, you know, member, they had to go through a special, you know, meetings with the pastor, and the pastor would recommend them to our administrators of the church, and then would be accepted. But it is always the pastor that takes the first step. I don't know how you do it here, but that's the way you taught us about 100 years ago. Thank you.

(laughter)

BISHOP WHITFIELD: Was that a speech for or against? I'm really, you know, trying to discern, because it was not kind of inquiry that way. He held a green card up, so it would be for the amendment. Yes, I'll recognize you as against. Go to mic. 11, please. And I think this will close the debate on this particular one as well.

TIMOTHY J. RISS (New York): Bishop, I'm against this for two reasons: One is, the last time the *Discipline* of the Methodist Church or the United Methodist Church gave the local congregation authority to block the membership of a new person was in 1936. Incidentally, the last time the pastor was named in the *Discipline* as being allowed to block the membership of a person in the United Methodist tradition was in 1948. At the Uniting Conference of 1939, the *Discipline* went from allowing pastors and the official board that right, to allowing just the pastor that right. And then, in 1952, that right was removed from the pastor's list in our *Discipline*. The second reason I'm against this, is that we are talking all the time as if we never passed by water and the Spirit. There is no distinction between professing and baptized membership in this thinking; and I think we have

moved into another century and if we want to go back to the church of the 1940s and 1930s, we will pass this amendment.

BISHOP WHITFIELD: OK. Now we have had two speeches for and two against. I am going to ask that the secretary will read this. I'll turn again to the presenter for the minority report for final comment and then we will vote.

REIST: "The local church, working through its pastor and its agencies, have the responsibility of discerning one's readiness to take the vows of membership."

REIST: ...local church working through its pastor and its agencies have the responsibility of discerning one's readiness to take the vows of membership.

BISHOP WHITFIELD: OK, would you like to speak?

WOLFE: Yes, I appreciate the intent of this amendment. My only concern is that it muddies the waters a little bit more by saying that the local church be working through the pastor and the agencies. Personally I would ask what agencies are those and how we would go about that. I think the motion, or the Minority Report is clearer without the amendment. Thank you.

BISHOP WHITFIELD: OK, thank you. So we're ready to vote. I, the amendment has been read to you. If you favor it, you will press "1." If you do not favor it, you will press "2" if you want to vote against it. You will vote when the clock appears.

*(pause)*

The amendment does not prevail—757 against, 130 for. [*Yes, 130; No, 757*] OK, y'all want to make this a long night don't you? Yes, I'll recognize you here in front, mic. 2.

*(laughter)*

PAUL D. HILLARD (North Alabama): Bishop, if I'm in order, I'd

like to call for the question on all that is before us.

BISHOP WHITFIELD: OK, I think that will require us to suspend the rules to be able to do that. Is that what you're asking?

HILLARD: Yes, to suspend the rules.

BISHOP WHITFIELD: OK, motion is to suspend the rules and be able to vote on all that is before us. That will require a keypad vote. It requires 2/3 vote and so if we will move toward voting to suspend the rules and to vote on all that is before us. If you favor that, you would press "1" for yes and "2" for no. You'll vote when the clock appears.

*(pause)*

*[Yes, 692; No, 188]*

It does receive 79 percent—692 for, 21 percent against—188. So the, we are on, there's nothing available at this point unless it's parliamentary inquiry, point of order. Now, you know, that's what only before us at this time. Nothing else is available. So I'll recognize you if its, almost the back of this A section. Yes, recogni—, no, go ahead the lady in white there. I can't, it may not be white from that distance. I'll recognize you at mic. 5.

LEAH TAYLOR (Texas): My question is those of us who have wanted to speak for or against the actual Minority Report have never gotten the opportunity to do so because the amendments that are posed are being used as platforms by people who choose to speak not to or against the amendment but to or for the report. The person—

BISHOP WHITFIELD: Let me stop you. We've had the suspension of the rules. The body has chosen to go ahead and not debate the Minority and the Majority Report and that's the prerogative of the body to do that. It may not be the wisest thing but that's the decision of the body in terms of that. OK, I'm, my help behind me is saying that I

called for suspension of rules but did not call for a vote on the previous question and I assume that that was—OK, they tell me that we've got to have two speeches for, two against before that is in, in order. And so we will move at this point to two speeches for, two against. We'll do the Minority Report first. This will be speeches for or against the Minority Report. I recognize the gentleman here in the middle and I'm gonna go to other spots of the, of the arena as I try to recognize others.

JAMES C. PRESTON (Northern Illinois): I rise to speak against the Minority Report. I could speak against it in that I think we've been a bit confused and maybe misled about what our heritage as we've heard from the study about Water and the Spirit, Membership and Baptism. I could speak against it in my own pastoral experience, but I would speak about it in two places. One is I was not born United Methodist, I chose to be United Methodist. I was a Baptist in your annual conference near Lubbock, Texas, and I, when I went to the United Methodist church in Lubbock when I was student at Texas Tech the Spirit moved my heart and I wanted to join that group of Methodists. And so I was led to stand up and go to the front during the invitation of discipleship and said, "I wish to join the church." And I expected for the pastor to say we'll need to meet about it or I expected in my Baptist experience that there would have to be a vote about my membership, but I was just received in the membership of that church after I committed to prayers, presence, gifts, and service because I believe in Jesus Christ as my personal Lord and Savior. I am so glad nobody put a barrier to that membership for me. And I'm here today because of a pastor who I believe was authentic to our heritage, who welcomed me into the membership of that United Methodist church. I also turn to Scripture, friends, if I read the Gospels, Jesus called and people

followed. They did join a membership class, they did wait for pastoral approval, the Spirit moved and they joined the way. And I would not want us to prevent the Holy Spirit's work in our communion of fellowship. Thank you.

BISHOP WHITFIELD: Thank you. I'm going back to the back seat, gentleman in, near mic. 8. If you'll come to the mic. please.

MELVIN R. BOWDAN (Kentucky): Good af—good evening, Bishop Whitfield, we meet each other again. You were in our, our legislative committee and I was on the Legislative Committee for Local Church and I just want to state that I fully support the Minority Report. I think I want to first start out by saying as conference lay leader, this may sound kind of, kind of overly emotional, I don't know, but I have had an opportunity to participate as a part of ord—ordination services for you clergy. And every time the bishop lays his or her hands on you clergy and says, "take thine authority," I get goose pimples because that to me—unless you tell me differently—word, sacrament, and order that means you have a responsibility, you as a shepherd and as a steward over me, I'm part of your flock, and there's a protective element in that. Shepherds protect the sheep. Pastors have an administrative role and an ordering role for the church and for the members of the church. I want to direct your attention to the Minority Report's petition here. Two little words that seem for me to unravel all of that. And it's in that last paragraph. It says "the pastor or pastors and the congregation are to, *are to*, friendly, faithfully receive all persons." You know, I, I hope you, all of you understand, I think we know the language of...

BISHOP WHITFIELD: OK, please, your time is up sir.

BOWDAN: You need to be able to take care of me and to guard me as well to keep people from coming in like Ku Klux Klan, like someone's whose on a coven.

BISHOP WHITFIELD: OK, OK, your time is up and we need to move on.

BOWDAN: Thank you, vote for this amendment please, vote.

BISHOP WHITFIELD: Oh, I'm going to recognize the gentleman here in the front, if you'll come to mic. 5, no, come, yes, mic. 2. It's hard to point—

UNIDENTIFIED MALE SPEAKER: Yeah, it is.

BISHOP WHITFIELD: —and get the person I'm trying to designate.

SAMUEL T. POWERS (Oklahoma): There it is. Thank you, Bishop. I would like to speak against the Minority Report. I would also like to clear up that our understanding of the General Rules was originally applied to the Methodist societies, which is not the same as church membership. That was membership within the societies, which is similar to a discipleship covenant group that we'd have to do today, which is perfectly appropriate to have further steps and expectations. The other thing I'd like to say: that by receiving all people into the church, this is a radical expression of Wesleyan prevenient grace, which is what we believe in. When they come to join the church and accept the vows of membership, this is an expression of justifying grace, which is the moment of salvation for that individual. We cannot judge that as pastors; only God can make that judgment and determination. Some people may say "Well, they can do that on their own outside the church. They can make that profession of faith." And in that sense, we're saying that they're good enough for Jesus, but they're not good enough for the church. Sanctification is the third form of Wesleyan grace, and is only expected within the community of believers through the Holy Spirit as we work together towards Christian perfection in love. I would ask that we reject the Minority Report and adopt the Majority Report. After all, Jesus stated, "I have come to call

not the righteous, but sinners." Thank you.

BISHOP WHITFIELD: OK, thank you. This is person four and I'm gonna go back to the gentleman in the light colored coat, uh or lady. I'm sorry, I can't see, you sat down; I was gonna recognize you. Almost in the back. OK, mic.10.

BOB MOON (South Georgia): Good evening, Bishop. In our particular committee on the local church, even though we came from different perspectives, the truth is, we were not far apart from each other in the heart. I think if you went through this group of pastors, you would be hard pressed to find much of anybody whose heart is not about getting people into the church, rather than keeping people out. As pastors, we need to see this not from the perspective of restriction, but of responsibility to care for the flock. In conversation with a pastor friend, and I ask you to hear this, with a very different theological perspective than I have. I said to him that I still want him or her—in this case it was him—to, with pastoral discernment, stand at the gate to care for the flock that God brings to him. Pastors are good shepherds under the great shepherd. I am not appealing for pastoral discernment if one agrees with me. I am appealing for all pastors to compassionately help people as they move to a decision to follow Christ by becoming members of our church. When pastoral discernment is excluded, I can't help but wonder what unintended consequences may ensue. Pastors, take up the mantle of shepherd. This is not about exclusion, but helping people fully engage their decision under pastoral care and discernment so they can come to a point of making a decision about membership with integrity. Pastoral discernment is simply being a good shepherd. Thank you.

BISHOP WHITFIELD: OK, thank you. We've ig—, we're at that point of moving to first to the minority presenter to make a statement and then to the majority presenter to make a statement and then we'll

proceed to vote on the Minority Report first. So we'll hear you.

CAROL E. WILSON (Holston): Yes, thank you. As one of, someone once said Jesus did indeed come to save and to call the sinners. Without a doubt, he also called us to repent. Some people chose to repent, others didn't and they chose to not follow him, but one of the real points I want to make difference, a distinction on, is that there's a difference between committing to follow Jesus and committing to the body of Christ and saying, "I want to be a part of this body of Christ to support it with my prayers, my presence, my gifts, and my service. I want to be a part of this body." One of the things I wrestled with a young woman who came to me, wanting to join the church just so she could not pay the wedding fees, was, what the man just mentioned, was integrity. For me, keeping my word is very important and I struggle with the fact of whether or not I was being faithful in allowing her to join the church when I knew that she didn't mean it. Was I being faithful to God in that? And I struggle with that. Jesus calls us to let our yes be yes and our no be no. I see it that, as a pastor, a part of our responsibility is the help people realize, is indeed their yes, yes, or are they getting ahead of themselves? Also, too, God calls us to truly follow him and to continue in this journey of sanctifying grace. I think we're all in agreement with that. We are not saying that people have to arrive and be perfected before they come, but to have that willingness and that heart to say, "Jesus, I want to follow you, I want to be a part of this body of Christ, and I want to do all that I can to support and to be the part of the body of Christ that you want me to be, not just in name only." Are we being faithful when we allow people to join the church when they think it's an automatic ticket to heaven? When they distinguish that and think that that is what gets them to heaven, and we don't disciple them and take them to the deeper meaning of what

it really means to be a disciple of Jesus Christ and follow him everywhere. As I mentioned before, this Minority Report is not about denial, but about deferral and waiting for someone to be ready and encouraging them and strengthening them and supporting them until their ready, and so I urge and invite you to please support the Minority Report. Thank you.

BISHOP WHITFIELD: Thank you. Now we'll ask the presenter for the Majority Report to have your time.

ALBERT SHULER (North Carolina): Thank you, Bishop. Let me emphasize a few things before we vote this evening. Providing for the lay leadership of the church, as well as the postoral leadership, it's all about educating and counseling persons who are seeking to unite with our church. Specifying that educational component is to focus on the meaning of membership as set forth in paragraphs 216 through 221. Specifically, this includes instruction: in 217, the meaning of the vows themselves; 218, growth in faithful discipleship; 219, mutual responsibility; 220, the call to ministry of all the baptized; and 221, accountability which says, "All members are to be held accountable for faithfulness to their covenant of baptism." Let me say in closing, or better still, let me ask you a few questions. Are we ruled by fear or faith? Have we no faith in the Holy Spirit at work within the church in transforming a person? Do we honestly believe that this one will influence all of us and cause us to fall away? My brothers and sisters, we are much stronger than that. I strongly encourage you to vote no to the Minority Report.

#### *Membership Minority Report Fails*

BISHOP WHITFIELD: OK, we're ready to vote now; we're on Calendar Item 1207, 1207, on page 2371. We're voting on the Minority Report. When you vote, if you would vote "1" for yes for the Mi-

nority Report, "2" for no. When the clock appears on the screen, you may vote.

(pause)

BISHOP WHITFIELD: The Minority vote, the Minority Report fails, 515, 57 percent, to 384, 43 percent. [Yes, 384; No, 515] So we are now on the Majority Report. It has been perfected and so now speeches for and against are in order. I see the gentleman in, toward the back, near mic.—no, the one—yes, you, if you'll go, yes. Wish I could find a good way to describe what I am pointing at and I can't, I haven't figured that one out yet.

TED VIRTIS (California-Nevada): It's the guy in the dark suit.

BISHOP WHITFIELD: Ah, there's too many of you, I think.

VIRTIS: Part of my role at this time is that of being a district superintendent which has allowed me to reflect a lot on the nature of the job of pastor. One of the ways of describing, at least in my own mind, what the pastor's job is, is that I'm an errand runner for God. And so with that, my task is to go find those that God says I need to find and to let them know they're invited to the banquet. I think some of the difficulty is how we think of what membership is. You know, if membership is trying out for a basketball team, then there is a skill level that is necessary. But really, it's as the bishops who have preached to us the last two days have stated, Jesus says "I chose you," and when somebody says, "yes" to that, my job is to move them in to that community of faith so that they can be formed. I find I get into trouble if I think my role is a "ticket taker" or a "security guard." The last one in Scripture I remember is the security guards who tried to keep the kids away from Jesus. I think that our view of membership is really about allowing someone to receive the gracious call of God and then we as the community lead them into deeper and deeper discipleship.

I urge that you support this petition. Thank you.

BISHOP WHITFIELD: OK, thank you. Someone wish to speak against the Majority Report? Here, recognize someone against, I'm sorry, yes, go ahead. I had folks jumping in the back. I've asked for folks against. Yes, mic. 3.

ANDREAS ELFVING (Finland-Swedish): Thank you, Bishop. Now I am not a pastor, neither am I a theologian, but it would seem to me that common sense tells us that in rare cases, the pastor should have the right to tell a person that maybe you are not ready for membership at this moment. And to take away the right from the pastor, I find unbelievable that we are doing that. So please, folks, vote no on this petition and let's leave the *Discipline* like it is now. Thank you.

BISHOP WHITFIELD: OK, thank you. I am going to turn here to the front, go to mic. 2.

LANE BOYD (Northwest Texas): I urge that we support the Majority Petition and Report. I have always believed that the church is a hospital for sinners and that all of us fall short of the glory of God and we enter the church so that we can grow in God's grace and so the church, therefore, must be inclusive membership wise, if we intend to follow Jesus. And so I have asked myself the question, what would Jesus have us do in this regard? And I recall that Jesus accepted and related to sinners and tax collectors and lepers and other bad characters and Samaritans even as we heard in this conference. And so we all fall into at least one of those categories. We heard also the parable about a man knocking at the door at midnight, there was a crisis and we were instructed to give him fresh bread which comes in the form of faith and hope and love as indicated in a membership in a church. I was privileged to hear Bishop Rueben Job speak the other day at noon. He reminded us that God's grace is available to all of us and that, he compared it also to a radar

covering all areas of the country. And of course, he reminded us, encouraged us also to do no harm. At the same meeting I heard another bishop, Bishop Schnase, speak about radical hospitality and he encouraged us not to close the front door and that radical hospitality suggests in the name of Christ. And also historically it is my understanding that prospective members themselves have always made the decision about readiness for church membership and I repeat and reiterate the comment that was made about John Wesley, excluding people from the societies of the church.

BISHOP WHITFIELD: Think your time is up.

BOYD: I urge support of the Majority Report.

BISHOP WHITFIELD: OK, back in the back, sport shirt, about half way in the middle, go to either side, yes, you, if you'll go one way or the other, looks like going to mic. 10.

MATTHEW G. JOHNSON (Western Pennsylvania): Bishop, we are way in the back, not in the middle.

BISHOP WHITFIELD: OK.

(laughter)

You were in the middle of that section, I believe.

JOHNSON: I understand. I rise to speak against this petition. As a seminary student who has had the privilege of attending general conference, I have gotten to do a lot of extra reading about The United Methodist Church. I just finished reading Lyle Schaller's book *The Ice Cube Is Melting*. And Schaller makes a point. Schaller says that churches grow when they are high expectations, high commitment congregations. He says the real issue we are struggling with is whether we are going to be a covenant community or a volunteer organization. My concern with the petition is this: that when we say to people that they can just come into membership as they please, there is no sense of covenant

commitment, no sense of high expectation, no sense of true discipleship. If we truly want to see the church grow, we need to grow disciples and not just members. That's why I speak against this petition.

BISHOP WHITFIELD: OK, thank you. We have had two for and two against and unless it is a parliamentary inquiry, point of order or something of that nature, you are out of order. We have had the number of speeches for and against. We cannot enter into that. We will allow the two presenters to speak and then we will vote. OK? So I am going to turn to the chair or to the presenter, OK.

UNIDENTIFIED MALE SPEAKER: Let me just say one final thing. Many of us are familiar with the decision of the Judicial Council and how this was addressed that the language of the *Book of Discipline* was permissive and not mandatory. In other words, as reflected in Paragraph 214 of the *Book of Discipline*, it states that all people may become members in any local church, rather than *shall* become members. This is a ridiculous argument because you would not write "all people shall become members in a local church." While this may be our goal, we can't address the decline of church membership by simply adding all the people on the planet to our roll. I encourage you to vote yes for the Majority Report.

BISHOP WHITFIELD: OK, we've had two, we've had all the debate that we can have on this. We are to the point now is voting and only parliamentary inquiry, point of order is in place. I am going to going to recognize you but I am going to say, only for that purpose. Mic. 9.

I just want to ask you to be sure I am clear that if we do not vote in favor of the Majority Report do we retain the current language, is that what we are left with?

BISHOP WHITAKER: Let me just check. I think I know the answer. If the Majority Report is voted down the current language in the *Discipline* remains.

COLLIER: Thank you.

BISHOP WHITAKER: OK. I think we are ready to vote and you will vote "1" if you want this. OK, I'll recognize you but it's only for parliamentary inquiry or point of order. It's not speeches.

DION B. ROMBAOA JR. (Central Luzon Philippines): I just want to ask Bishop if there are provisions in the *Discipline* which is of the same nature of the proposal. Is the proposal just repeating itself in the *Discipline* if it will be approved?

BISHOP WHITAKER: I am going to stop at that point. This is part of the debate that took place earlier and I think that it's inappropriate for me to respond at this time. Different points of the *Discipline* were pointed to in the debate. OK? I will recognize you but it has, it cannot be a speech for or against. It must be a point of parliamentary procedure, parliamentary inquiry or point of order.

TSHIBANG KASAP'OWAN (Northwest Katanga) (simultaneous interpretation): Bishop, the Africans are a bit confused here. Many do not know what they are supposed to be voting on. Since the first missionaries, someone who wanted to be a Christian had to follow a catechism.

BISHOP WHITAKER: OK, let me stop you at this point. You are out of order. It can only be a point. We are voting on the Majority Report found on p. 12, Calendar Item 1207 and it's on p. 2371. That is what is before us. It is not up to the Chair to explain what the implications are. That was what the debate was for and now we are ready to vote. So I'll ask you to sit down if you will.

KASAP'OWAN: OK, I understand.

BISHOP WHITAKER: Thank you. OK, I believe we are ready to vote. I think it is clear what is before us is Calendar Item 1207, found on p. 2371. It is the Majority Report that is before you. The committee recommends acceptance of this Ma-

majority Report. You will vote, if you enter "1" for yes, "2" for no, and you will vote when the clock appears.

(pause)

#### *Membership Majority Report Fails*

OK, the Majority Report fails. The Calendar Item is not adopted, 51 percent, 448 against and 436 for, 49 percent. [Yes, 436, No, 448] So it is not adopted. Now I think that, I want to thank the Committee. I think that this finishes the work that you have at this time. We want to express our appreciation to you for your work and for your work here this evening.

(applause)

OK, turn to the secretary for just a moment for announcement.

REIST: Mary, you may know who you are. If you don't have your car keys, I do.

(laughter)

BISHOP WHITAKER: OK, I see a card in the back. I'll recognize you very quickly.

E. ANDREW GOFF (Louisiana): Would it be possible for the secretary to place on the screen the number of Calendar Items that we still have before us? I think my brothers and sisters need to know what we have before us so that we can ably manage our time before Friday night.

BISHOP WHITAKER: OK, we can turn to the secretary and see if you can help us get the Calendar Items.

REIST: We'll get that...we'll get that projected as soon as we can.

BISHOP WHITAKER: OK, they are going to try to get the calendar items before us as soon as we can. I think that we might have some benefit of having one who has been designated to come and do a health

break for us. Let us stand up for a moment and do some of those wonderful exercises. If that person is available, I am going to ask that he or she would come and lead us for a few moments. Real great. Come if you will.

#### UNIDENTIFIED MALE

SPEAKER: All right, if you want to stand up, push. Stand behind your chair. We are going to do this in two minutes. We are going to work on our neck and shoulders and back. So first, we're gonna work on shoulder circles, so just try to touch your shoulders to your ears and we are going to roll our shoulders forward and then back, and then up to our ears again, and forward and down and back. We're gonna reverse that; shoulders up to your ears. And back and down and forward. And up to your ears and back and down and forward.

All right, now we are going to try to touch our elbows. We are going to put our hands out like we did last—two days ago, and push forward and then put your hands on your shoulders and now try to touch your elbows and then try to stretch them out to the back and hands down. Hands forward, push forward, hands on your shoulders, touch your elbows, and then move your elbows back.

Okay, the next one, is put one hand up on, it doesn't matter which one, the other hand on the side and just gonna lean. Yeah, that's all right. Then put the other hand up and lean. Alright, let's repeat the first one. Put the other hand up and lean. All right one more and we're done. All right. Thank you Bishop.

BISHOP WHITFIELD: Thank you. We appreciate that. Maybe that will help us continue on for a while longer this evening. I'm trying to find my notes for a moment. If you will come back to order please. We got lots and lots of work to do tonight before we finish. If you will come to order and I am going to ask if Faith and Order will be coming at

this time and we'll turn to Mary Elizabeth Moore who is the chair of this committee and will be leading us through the next section. OK, I believe we have the calendar items available to us so if you will take note. That was a request that we had for Calendar Items. If you will please be seated. I know people are wanting to be recognized but I want to be sure to honor what we asked a minute ago and that was for the work that we had before us this evening. We have 122 calendar items. That gives you an idea of the work that is before us. Please take your places and be seated so we can continue our work. I see a yellow card in the far back. I'll recognize you mic. 12, I believe it is.

EDWARD A. KAIL (Iowa): Now that we have got membership straightened out, I would like to offer a motion that the 2008 General Conference request the Connectional Table to create a World Service Special Fund to support the development of episcopal areas in the central conferences.

BISHOP WHITFIELD: Okay is there a second to that?

UNKNOWN SPEAKERS: Second.

BISHOP WHITFIELD: Ok it is seconded. Would you like to speak to it?

KAIL: Yes, please.

EDWARD A. KAIL (Iowa): Yes, please. Friends, last night about this time, the people of Africa and the other central conferences came knocking at the door of the church in the United States asking for bread. We Americans, lying on our beds of ease and prosperity, said, 'Go away, we can't afford to help you. Come back in four years and we'll decide whether to give you what you need.' Brothers and sisters, I stand here embarrassed, even ashamed, that we cannot make a connection between their tremendous need and our tremendous resources. President Sirleaf told us yesterday of the awful proportion of people in Africa exist-

ing on \$1 or \$2 per day. As a pastor, my salary is a matter of public record and I have nothing to hide. My wife, Myra, and I have lived very well on about \$55,000 a year. When we were married 36 years ago, we committed ourselves to a simple rule: save 10%, give 10%, spend the rest with joy and gratitude. Now, if you make less than 55,000, don't listen to me for a while. But I testify to you, if you make as much or more than I do, we can do better than we're doing. Eighteen months ago, Myra and I discovered we could commit 20% of our income to God's work through and beyond the church, and we still live very well, thank you—

BISHOP WHITFIELD: OK, your time is up, I believe.

KAIL: —I extend the call to the church to develop this fund and double your giving in the next year to fill it to the brim.

BISHOP WHITFIELD: OK, I—just a second, let me check because I want to make sure before I make my statement.

(pause)

BISHOP WHITFIELD: I believe that the motion is out of order because we passed the deadline for consideration of all financial matters, whether in-budget or out-of-budget, they must have been presented earlier and have been acted on by the body. That is my understanding that this would have to be referred, and we're past that deadline. That's my understanding as chair. Yes, I'll recognize you, but I'm not—the motion is out of order unless—as I understand it.

KAIL: I'm sorry to disagree, Bishop. Ed Kail—

BISHOP WHITFIELD: Yes.

KAIL: The *Discipline* gives the Connectional Table the responsibility for designating World Service Special projects, and that's all I'm asking them to do.

(pause)

BISHOP WHITFIELD: I've been advised that it, it is out of order. I think it's something that they have the authority to do; beyond this General Conference they can do so, but we cannot direct them in that process. We're ready for calendar items. Unless there's something just burning here, I'm going to, to move to it. OK, I'll recognize you first.

(pause)

BETH ANN COOK (South Indiana): If I remember correctly, last night's bishop who was presiding said that if we suspended the rules, we would then be in order to consider a petition that had financial implications; and I move to suspend the rules so that we could consider the previous motion. Is that in order?

BISHOP WHITFIELD: OK, let me check, I think it's in order. It is in order to suspend the rules, it, and that's the request in order to consider a financial matter. And so, the vote is whether or not you will suspend the rules; and then we will hear the motion thereafter. So prepare to vote. If you would vote yes, press "1" if you would vote no, press "2" when the clock appears. This is to suspend the rules.

(pause)

BISHOP WHITFIELD: OK, you did not suspend the rules, [*Yes, 324; No, 405*] so we're—

COOK: Thank you.

BISHOP WHITFIELD: —now ready for the calendar item; this is the Order of the Day and I'll move to the—Mary Elizabeth.

(pause)

*Remove Exclusionary Language*

MARY ELIZABETH MOORE (California-Pacific): Thank you, Bishop Whitfield. I'm Mary Elizabeth Moore, Chair of Faith and Order. The next item is on p. 2268 of the *DCA*, 2268. It is Calendar Item 1206, 1206. This item refers to Peti-

tion No. 80019, which can be found in the *Advance DCA* on p. 923. The committee move—recommends to reject Calendar Item 1206. I will speak first to the Spirit's movement within our legislative committee, and Kim Reisman will give the rationale for the committee's majority. We also have a Minority Report and Zachary Allen will present that report.

(pause)

We are still in the days of resurrection and in the days after Jesus was raised from the dead, we're told in Acts that he was raised up into heaven and he didn't answer all of the disciples' questions. He left them wondering about many things. So we learn in the Book of Acts that the disciples first began to organize. They chose a disciple to take the place of the disciple who was gone, and they then gathered as we have organized and have—as we have gathered. In light of the struggles and joys, compassion and wonder, questions and hurts, questions and efforts to learn and hear one another, I read a couple of verses from Acts 2.

When the day of Pentecost had come, they were all together in one place and suddenly from heaven there came a sound like the rush of a violent wind, and it filled the entire house where they were sitting. Divided tongues, as of fire, appeared among them and a tongue rested on each one of them. All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other languages as the spirit gave them ability. Now there were devout Jews from every nation under heaven living in Jerusalem, and at this sound, the crowd gathered and was bewildered because each one heard them speaking in the native language of each.

In our legislative committee the Holy Spirit descended and rested on each of us. We, of course, discerned the Spirit in different ways and we spoke many different languages. We did not reflect neatly on the issue in

two sides. We spoke many languages; we had not two sides, we had many perspectives. We were a committee of real human beings, seeking sincerely to discern God's spirit; and we discerned it in different ways and we discerned the word of God in scripture in different ways. But for a moment in time on Sunday afternoon, we could hear one another's languages. We could comprehend what one another was saying, even amid the disagreement. You will make a decision on this petition shortly. Our prayer is that this body will transcend the idea of an issue with two sides. We invite you to listen carefully to the spirit-inspired voices of many human beings who will speak different languages. Please listen carefully to the deeply held convictions of each.

Kim Reisman will now present the rationale of the legislative committee's vote, followed by Zachary Allen, who will speak for the Minority Report.

(pause)

BISHOP WHITFIELD: Thank you.

KIM REISMAN (North Indiana): I come before you tonight with a heavy heart of the environment here. We've had a long and difficult day. And, I know that there's a lot of struggle in this room and that weighs heavily on my heart and on my shoulders. But I have no doubt in my mind that each one of us is here because of our love and commitment to Jesus Christ and our love and commitment to Christ's church. I have no doubt of that. The thing that troubles me and that weighs heavily on my heart is that we could—we who love the church so much—could differ so greatly on how we are to be faithful in the context of that church. However, I have been hopeful this week because of the Spirit that I've experienced. And I want to talk about that for just a second, before I turn to the report.

I really do want to commend our chair, Mary Elizabeth Moore who facilitated our conversation and our work with sensitivity and the utmost kindness. Now this is a topic that lends itself to Holy conferencing. In fact, it requires Holy conferencing. And our entire committee exhibited a commitment to this type of loving conversation, that while it did not diminish the difficulty, nor possibly did it diminish the pain. It resulted in a debate in which each side honored the other and recognized the love that each one of us has for our United Methodist Church.

The committee recommends that you reject Petition 80019. While there were a variety of expressions of rationale, they fell into two main categories: Scripture and mission. The teaching of The United Methodist Church has been in communion and harmony with the church throughout the ages in its assertion that the practice of homosexuality is incompatible with Christian teaching. This interpretation of scripture and tradition was the predominant view expressed in our discussion. It is a view that is held with great conviction and passion both here in the United States and in the central conferences. Mission was also a great concern. Many in our church live and minister in areas where large—with large Islamic populations. A change in our doctrine would be a near fatal blow to their ability to share the Gospel of Jesus Christ with their Muslim neighbors and to minister in His name. Holding fast to our teaching as it is currently stands, allows us to avoid fracture across our worldwide connection. As I bring the recommendation of the committee to reject Petition 80019, I do so in the same Spirit of Holy conferencing that has permeated our time together. Recognizing that while that spirit may not diminish the difficulty of our conversation, it can allow us to continue that conversation with compassion and respect. So I reiterate again the committee urges that you reject Petition 80019.

BISHOP WHITFIELD: OK. Now I believe we will have the presentation from the minority report at this time. And that will be a speech for the majority when we reach that point later in the discussion and if it's more than simply describing it here, you wanna speak to it, it'll be a speech for the Minority Report as well...so you're now ready.

*Minority Report on Exclusionary Language*

ZACHARY ALLEN (West Virginia): The last Minority Report that was brought before the body, it was said to have come out of an act of conscience and so I feel compelled to tell you that this Minority Report also comes as an act of conscience. The Minority Report is simple and is just below the Petition in your *DCA*. It replaces the second and third sentences of paragraph 304.3 in the *Book of Discipline* with the following: "The standard for candidates is to do good, to do no harm, and to continue to grow in love with God." That replacement is good and it is right and it also flows. The thing is, if you read though the *Book of Discipline* you will find the affirmations of our high standards for our candidates for ordain ministry. And so, when you get to that part you would think that it's appropriate to find such a statement. But instead, we have managed to find two awkward and ill-fitting sentences that have been forced together. In this jarring manner we go from the highest standards of holy living in the world to a strange sentence full of negativity saying that the practice of homosexuality is incompatible with Christian teaching.

Friends, I'm under the impression that Christianity teaches love and not incompatibility. Why was this sentence even there? Perhaps it was inserted by a scribal editor, because it seems inconsistent with the language of the *Discipline*. If the phrase was inserted to demonstrate some kind of frailty of human condition then I'm confused as to why it didn't

go further. Why, friends, have we not developed the seven United Methodist deadly frailties? Why did we stop? Why have we've been selective? This selective enforced language diminishes the significance of these paragraphs, not to mention the *Discipline* itself. It is petty and small compared to the high standard of excellence to which we hold our *Book of Discipline*.

If you have ever heard someone say that the church is full of hypocrites, this is one of the reasons. We claim to be open, we claim to use the word *all*, and yet time and time again, we have done nothing to indicate that that's really what we believe. We have somehow determined that there is an exclusive definition to the words *all* and *open*. I have looked high and low and have yet to find any definition for the words *all* and *open* that is exclusive except in The United Methodist Church. Somewhere along the line we determined that there must be levels of sacred worth and then we had the audacity to go about determining who was at what level. It is far better to replace the current language by saying that the standard for candidates is to do good, to do no harm and to continue to grow in love with God. This is something that unites us together as Methodists. It is something that is Wesleyan and what transcends that, is that it is simply the right thing to do. Thank you, Bishop.

BISHOP WHITFIELD: Thank you. I'm going to try to—I'm going to try to make clear what is before us. 'Cause this is a little tricky parliamentary wise, at least for the chair. And that what is before us is Calendar Item 1206, it refers to Petition 80019. Now what we will do first; will be to perfect that petition. You'll find it on p. 923 in *The Advanced DCA* paragraph 923. After that petition has been perfected, then we will move to the Minority Report and we will perfect it. And then we will have the speeches "for and against" the Minority Report and

then we will have "for or against" the majority if the minority does not prevail. So that's what will be before you and so I want to try to be clear about what the amendments are to go to in terms of the Majority Report. They-it refers to Petition No. 80019. I believe that I am correct there, let me check just to make sure with my backup here to make sure that's where we are. So, we're perfecting this particular petition. These are for amendments, I saw a hand here, and I recognize you, near the front. And I'll try to move around the body as I work my way.

ESTER S. DALISAY (Philippines East): Would it not be possible, Bishop, that we perfect first the minority, then the resolution on this? Because if and when the Minority Report becomes the Majority Report, then we have already reduced the amount in making perfection of the Majority Report.

BISHOP WHITFIELD: Well the rules require us to first to perfect the Majority Report. That's the rules that we're operating under, and so I think that that is what we must do. I'm going—the grey suit I believe it is, mic. 9.

DAVID A. BARD (Minnesota): I'd like to offer an amendment to Petition No. 80019. It would be easier if I could just read the entire contents of 304.3 as they would be with my amendment.

BISHOP WHITFIELD: Let's try that.

BARD: And I do have this typed up and also an electronic copy if it becomes necessary to use that later on. "While persons set apart by the church for ordained ministry are subject to all the frailties of the human condition and pressures of society, they are required to maintain the highest standards of holy living, exercising responsible self control, and dedication to the highest ideals of the Christian life. Our understanding of holy living and the Christian life are grounded in Scripture, illumined by tradition, vivified in personal experience and con-

firmed by reason. Throughout history, the church has taught that the practice of homosexuality is inconsistent with holy living.

Some among our United Methodist family, as they read Scripture, prayerfully in light of tradition, experience, and reason, have come to believe that homosexual persons are called by God to ordained ministry and should be eligible for ordination by the church. Others within our United Methodist family who prayerfully engage Scripture, tradition, experience, and reason, believe these provide sufficient rationale for maintaining the prohibition against self-avowed, practicing homosexuals being certified as candidates, ordained as clergy, or appointed to serve in The United Methodist Church. Our traditional teaching and prohibition remain in place. Self-avowed, practicing homosexuals are not to be certified as candidates, ordained as ministers, or appointed to serve in The United Methodist Church. We also remain committed to thinking and praying together as we seek to respond to God's Spirit and as we share and serve together in Christian community, making disciples of Jesus Christ, for the transformation of the world." If there is a second, I'd like to speak to it.

BISHOP WHITFIELD: Is there a second?

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKERS: Second.

BARD: Thank you very much.

BISHOP WHITFIELD: Thank you.

BARD: I am from the Upper Midwestern United States, a place where we find it difficult to talk about faith because it is so personal. And talk about human sexuality, well that sends blood rushing to our cheeks, causes us to look down at our shoes, and ties our tongues in knots. So here goes. No one disagrees that holy living is an essential standard for ordained ministry. Have any of us clergy had a glass of wine since the beginning of the year?

Played a game of cards? Gone dancing? Seen a movie? At one time all these would have been considered suspect by prevailing standards of holy living. At one time, it would not have been a violation of accepted standards of holy living for one person to own another person. In one stream of Christian tradition, celibacy is a required standard of holy living for being ordained. But I shan't ask our married clergy about that. In that stream of Christian tradition, no matter how faithful they are in holy living, women are not allowed ordination. This amendment does not change our current position on ordination and homosexuality, and I am deeply and painfully ambivalent about that. This amendment maintains our current stance. At the same time, it refocuses the paragraph on holy living and invites us to honest and humble reflection on holy living and ordination, prayerfully engaging scripture, tradition, experience, and reason. While we continue to think and pray together, we commit ourselves to share in Christian community and work together to make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world. We've talked a lot about holy conferencing as we have gathered here.

BISHOP WHITFIELD: Your time is up.

BARD: Thank you.

BISHOP WHITFIELD: Thank you. Someone wish to speak against it? OK. I'm going to recognize the person here in the front. Go to mic. 2.

SANUEL ALTUNIAN (Bulgaria Provisional): Bishop, I am against the proposed amendment because it seems to me very controversial. From the one side it looks like it keeps the language of the paragraph as it is in the *Book of Discipline*, saying that homosexuality is not compatible with the Christian faith. And from the other side it says that something very strange, that there are some people in the church thinking that it could be compatible. So there are many people in the church

thinking many different things. But I come from a place in the world, in Europe, where people take the *Bible* seriously and in the Bible homosexuality is described as a sin. So in my Bi—Bible, this is the way God's word looks like and it will be very strange for me if I read in the *Book of Discipline* that there are people in the world thinking that it's not like that. So I really like to oppose to that amendment because of the simple fact. Thank you.

BISHOP WHITFIELD: OK, thank you. Someone wish to speak for the amendment? OK. I see a—yes, please mic. 5.

WILL GREEN (New England): Thank you, Bishop. I come from New England, where we take the Bible very seriously. I appreciate this amendment because it elaborates on standards for holy living beyond prohibitions against homosexual practices. So I support the amendment. Thank you.

BISHOP WHITFIELD: One against. I see the one in—toward the back, yes. If you'll stand, go to mic. 11, that'd be fine.

NATHAN JEFFRIES (Missouri): Bishop, I rise in opposition of the amendment because, well, the best way to do this is to tell you of a story of my friend. Her name is Michelle Baumgardner. She is not gay, quite opposite, she is quite conservative and absolutely despises homosexuality. Michelle, though, is the daughter of a Southern Baptist preacher. This pastor has agreed that his daughter has the call to preach. However, because her denomination is against women preaching, she is not able to do it for her congregation. She is allowed to "speak," but she is not allowed to be ordained and to preach. These people are missing out on a great message. I have heard this message personally. I invite you all to please listen the people who are not allowed to preach because they are not allowed to be ordained. I am against this amendment because I am in favor of the original petition.

BISHOP WHITFIELD: OK, thank you. We've had two for and two against, therefore the debate ceases. We'll turn to the Minority Report, to the chair.

MARY ELIZABETH MOORE: the amendment includes many elements that we discussed in committee, but the committee did not discuss this particular amendment, so I cannot speak for it. I pray that you will vote prayerfully.

BISHOP WHITFIELD: OK. I believe that it's appropriate for the secretary to read the amendment. It is rather long, but so that it's clear that what is before us, I'll ask that the secretary will read the amendment.

REIST: "The current language of 304.3 is replaced with the following: "While persons set apart by the church for ordained ministry are subject to all the frailties of the human condition and pressures of society, they are required to maintain the highest standards of holy living, exercising responsible self-control in dedication to the highest ideals of the Christian life. Our understanding of holy living and the Christian life are grounded in scripture, illumined by tradition, vivified in personal experience, and confirmed by reason. Throughout history, the church has taught that the practice of homosexuality is inconsistent with holy living. Some among our United Methodist family, as they read scripture prayerfully in light of tradition, experience, and reason, have come to believe that homosexual persons are called by God to ordained ministry and should be eligible for ordination by the church. Others within our United Methodist family, who prayerfully engage scripture, tradition, experience, and reason, believe these provide sufficient rationale for maintaining the prohibition against self-avowed, practicing homosexuals being certified as candidates, ordained as clergy, or appointed to serve in the United Methodist Church. Our traditional teaching and prohibition remain in place. Self-avowed, practicing homosexu-

als are not to be certified as candidates, ordained as ministers, or appointed to serve in the United Methodist Church. We also remain committed to thinking and praying together as we seek to respond to God's spirit and as we share and serve together in Christian community, making disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world."

BISHOP WHITFIELD: OK, the amendment is now before you. We've had all the speeches, and so we'll proceed to vote. If you favor the amendment, you will press "1" for yes; if you do not favor the amendment, you press "2" for no. And you will vote when the clock appears.

(pause)

BISHOP WHITFIELD: OK, the amendment is not adopted. There was 560 votes against, 63 percent, to 333 votes, 37 percent. [Yes, 333; No, 560] Yes, I'll recognize you at mic. 5.

BONNIE L. MARDEN (New England): I think that this is a request for clarification. I've heard a couple of speakers talk about the 'historical language' that is currently in the *Book of Discipline*. Could somebody tell me how long this language has actually been in the *Book of Discipline*? If it's about 40 years, is that historical?

(pause)

MOORE: I'm sorry, I think someone might be able to answer this question better than I. I want—it came in, I thought, in the 1970s. I'm sorry, in the 19—late 80s or 90s, but someone else needs to respond. Is there anyone in the house that can?

BISHOP WHITFIELD: OK, we've got a gentleman here that thinks that he can respond to that in appropriate fashion. Very, very quick response.

GREGORY MCGARVEY (South Indiana): In 1972, there was the pro-

posal that we be in ministry with the homosexual community. Don Hand, from Southwest Texas Conference, stood and put before the body those words, "Yes, we want to be in ministry, but we do not believe that homosexual is compatible with a Christian lifestyle." And that's when it started, 1972. We've been debating it ever since.

BISHOP WHITFIELD: OK, thank you, that response. Now what's before us is the Majority Report, which is the petition that you find on p. 923 in the *Advance DCA*. Anyone else want to perfect this, or are we ready to move to the Minority Report? I believe we're ready to move to the Minority Report then, and it's appropriately before you for any amendments or perfection of the Minority Report. I do not see anyone seeking the floor to do that and, so, what I believe is before us now is any debate that you want to have on the Minority Report. I'll recognize the gentleman, yes, right at the front part of section D, I believe it is. Go, yes, yes.

JORGE LOCKWARD (New York): Thank you, Bishop. Sisters and brothers, just like us, the *New Testament* church faced a matter that appeared to contradict the witness of Holy Scripture and centuries of tradition. Peter was called to explain, to give account why he had broken the long-standing rules by going into the house of Cornelius. And he said, "As I began to speak, the Holy Spirit came on them as He had come on us at the beginning. So, if God gave them the same gift as he gave us, who was I—who was I to think that I could oppose God?" Today the Spirit is once again surprising the church, as it continues to call gay and lesbian persons into the ordained ministry, and I am one of those persons. From the time of my first sermon, when I was very young, the call of God has been clear and it has been affirmed by the church, a church that I love. I love Jesus Christ. I know I have been called. But one thing keeps me and many,

many others from fulfilling this call, and it is now before us. There are many among us who understand the practice of homosexuality to be contrary to the witness of Scripture, and to you, I ask you to consider how the church's understanding and, indeed, your own personal understanding of Scripture has changed throughout your life. The Holy Bible does not change. It is we who grow in an understanding of the scriptures, as we humbly continue our journey towards perfect love. There are others who would hesitate out of concern for the unity of the church. Our unity, sisters and brothers, does not lie on what we think about homosexuality.

BISHOP WHITFIELD: OK, your time is up.

LOCKWARD: I would urge you to support the Minority Report.

BISHOP WHITFIELD: OK, back in the far corner of "D" section. Yes, if you will go to the mic. We've had, I believe, two speeches for, one—this'll be one against. The speech from the presenter at the beginning was one; and then that was speech. I'm sorry, I didn't rotate that appropriately; and I'll try to watch myself in the future. Beg your pardon for that. mic. 7.

JOSEPH ROBERSON (South Georgia): I was a member of the Faith and Order Committee, and I want to vote against the Minority Report. The Minority Report as it speaks about the future of our church does not include order and piety of the word of God so much. It's about lifestyle choices. The future of our church depends upon our doctrine, our *Discipline*, and the Word of God whether one is a homosexual a heterosexual or even asexual. The Minority Report is more than simple and good and against hypocrisy. It does not honor the Bible or the *Discipline* of the church. Paul, when he talks about the sins of the flesh, prefaces and says that we must live by the Spirit and do not gratify the desires of the flesh, for what the flesh desires is

opposed to the Spirit; and what the Spirit desires is opposed to the flesh, for these are opposed to each other to prevent you from doing what you want.

I submit that the Minority Report will take us away from our doctrine; and also in the world church, allow people to look at us and also scorn us rather than embrace us and our traditional church heritage.

BISHOP WHITFIELD: OK. Thank you. Yeah, I'm gonna move to this section. Yes, looks like, yes. Move to mic. no. 9. This speech against the Minority Report.

TIMOTHY C. THOMPSON SR. (Mississippi): During the awful period of slavery, when we were forced upon these shores of these United States, we were told by scripture that we weren't human, that we were less than human, and that we were derived from animals. That was not the interpretation of scripture but the misinterpretation of scripture. What we have before us, in my opinion, in this petition, is a matter of authority of scripture. We can debate over and over again about the *Discipline* and what the *Discipline* says, but the real crux of the matter is whether scripture is true. That statement that was deleted about the incompatibility of homosexuality with Christian teaching was based upon the Word of God; it wasn't based upon man's precept—whether I like it or whether I don't like it. We say that it is a matter of interpretation; but when they said that we were slaves because of Ham, when the curse was not on Ham but Ham's decision—descendants, it wasn't an interpretation, it was a misinterpretation.

When you interpret scripture, you will find that scripture is true. Back to saying that at some point, that the Holy Spirit is gonna enlighten us to the point to get us to a new enlightenment of where we should be upon this issue, we misinterpret the fact that the Holy Spirit only validates what the Word of God has already said. It will never speak against the Word of God; it will only uphold

that which the Word of God has already written. Whether I agree upon homosexuality or not, is not the point. God has already spoken against it in the scripture. That's a matter of fact—

BISHOP WHITFIELD: OK. Believe your time is up, sir.

THOMPSON: Thank you.

BISHOP WHITFIELD: Thank you. We've had two for and two against. I'll turn now to the presenter of the Minority Report for comments.

ZACHARY ALLEN (West Virginia): None of us are qualified to judge the lives of others. We heard in a speech against that this petition is about lifestyle choices, and indeed it is; it is about a lifestyle choice to do good, to do no harm, and to continue to grow in love with God.

We have heard several times—we have reminded several times that we should let our "yes" be yes and our "no" be no; and it seems that for several years, the United Methodist Church has been faithful in its desire to let its "yes" be no. Again, I tell you that Christianity teaches love and not incompatibility. The United Methodist Church has a history of hurtful and prejudicial action. Thankfully, this is the only one that I've been alive to witness.

As you prepare to vote, I want you to think about one simple thing: Have we, as the church, in the name of God persecuted and discriminated for so long that we don't even remember how to stop?

BISHOP WHITFIELD: OK. Thank you. I think the spokesperson for the majority can speak.

MOORE: Thank you, Bishop. Our brother is correct that in 1972 the language that he quoted was introduced. It was at least 10 years later when the language of 'incompatibility with Christian teaching' was introduced. Some within our committee believed that God is continuing to open eyes in a new way to see a new view from the one that has been held by the church, to interpret

Scripture in a new way. However, the majority of the committee believes with deeply held convictions that that is not the case and that the teaching of the church at the present time is indeed the teaching that God is leading us toward. You have a choice to make, so we prayerfully invite you to prayerfully vote.

BISHOP WHITFIELD: OK. Appreciate that, and I'm going to ask if for just a moment we pause and pray before we start the voting on these—on this petition. Let us pray.

*(silent prayer)*

Amen. We're on the Minority Report on p. 2268, Calendar Item 1206. This is on the Minority Report. If you favor the Minority Report, you press "1" for yes, "2" for no. You will vote when the clock appears on the screen.

*(pause)*

BISHOP WHITFIELD: The Minority Report does not prevail. 599 against and 67 percent; 298 for 33 percent. [*Yes, 298, No, 599*] Now what we are on is the Majority Report at this time. I wonder if there has been enough debate that you all are read to vote on this. I want to get the sense of the body. If that's where you are will you lift a hand at this point. Down. Opposed. And I believe that means that you are ready to vote. You are voting on the Majority Report which is to reject Petition....Excuse me, you are voting on the petition. I can tell that it is getting that time of night for me. We are voting on the Petition found on p. 923, the recommendation of the committee. I see several flags, but everything, unless it's parliamentary procedure, you are out of order. I will recognize you in the blue coat I believe it is, in D section.

JOE W. KILPATRICK (North Georgia): Thank you Bishop. I am just like you, Bishop; I am just trying to get clear in my mind where we are. My understanding is that a

vote to sustain the committee is a vote no and then the Petition that is before us will be rejected and the language that is currently in our *Discipline* will continue to be there, wherein we say that "the practice of homosexuality," that is to say that we are not to ordain...thank you.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKERS: Point of Order.

BISHOP WHITFIELD: I think you are running into a speech there. The first part of that was helpful, and that is to say that the recommendation as I understand it from the Committee, is to reject this petition and to retain the language that is presently in the *Discipline*. Is that clear? Committee does have the right to speak.

KIM REISMAN (North Indiana) I just have a couple of remarks before we vote that I think are important for us to hear. I find it interesting that in the course of our conversation which has for the most part been holy conferencing, I find it interesting that an amendment was offered that was somewhat of a middle way in as much as it held fast to our current teaching and also honored the fact that we disagree. The interesting thing is that it was spoken against both by someone on one side of the issue and by someone on the other side of the issue. Brothers and sisters we have been debating this issue over half my lifetime with the same basic result. We are significantly split in our opinion. Now I believe in a God who has the power to transform lives and I believe that God can transform our thinking yet the many years of our debate God has for some reason unknown to us chosen not to act. Neither side has been transformed. We continue to struggle, and that tells me something not about God's power but about our need to discern how to live together until God chooses to act. Now I don't know exactly what our next step should be, but I think that I am confident that our experience, our shared experience, bears witness to

the fact that the ritualized argument that we have come to expect from both sides of this issue at these gatherings is not productive and it is not grace filled.

BISHOP WHITFIELD: OK, your time is up.

REISMAN: That being said, the Committee deliberated for an extended amount of time and majority clearly recommended that you reject Petition 80019 and thereby uphold the current Disciplinary teaching of The United Methodist Church.

MOORE: Kim has represented the majority well and the dilemma well. We pray that you will vote prayerfully.

BISHOP WHITFIELD: Now, we are at that point of voting. Unless it's something on parliamentary procedure, parliamentary inquiry, I will recognize you but only for that purpose.

MIKE F. CHILDS (Mississippi): I don't want to argue anything, Bishop. I just want to be clear in my mind if I want to strike the language, I vote "1." If I want to keep the language as it is now, I vote "2." Right?

BISHOP WHITFIELD: That is correct. I am going to try and say that one more time in terms of giving instruction. The Petition strikes the words "The practice of homosexuality is incompatible with Christian teaching. Therefore self-avowed practicing homosexuals are not to be certified as candidates ordained as ministers or appointed to serve in The United Methodist Church." The petition strikes those words. If you favor that you would press "1." If you are opposed to that you will press "2." That is what is before us and the Committee recommends that you reject this and vote no. That is their recommendation. You will vote when the clock appears on the screen.

*(pause)*

*Language Majority Report Fails*

OK, the petition fails. The vote was 579 against, 335 for. [*Yes, 335,*

*No, 579*) I think that that brings us to a conclusion of the items for tonight from Faith and Order. Is that correct? I wonder if we are to a point where the energy and everything else is at a level that you may not want to continue. You have worked hard today. You have worked extremely hard; it has been very emotional work. You have been faithful in staying with this throughout the evening and I am very grateful for the way that you have treated me and the chair and I thank you for that. If you will hold steady however, we do have a couple of items that we need to care for. If you will hold steady, I want to call on Harriet McCabe for presiding officer's report for tomorrow. So Harriet if you will come at this time.

**BISHOP D. MAX WHITFIELD:** I see a card in the back. I will recognize the person in the middle that's waving in the middle, that D Section, almost at the back. Yes, ma'am. I believe it's ma'am. My, my eyes are not good, and it's late, and—mic. 12. Hold steady please.

**ALICE M. WOLFE (West Ohio):** On behalf of the West Ohio Conference, we'd like to ask to close with a time of prayer to pray for everyone. A lot of pain has been experienced here tonight, and no one comes out winners. We all keep struggling, so we'd request to end with a time of prayer.

**BISHOP WHITFIELD:** I'd—that's most appropriate, and I will request that. I'll ask one of my colleagues to lead us; but I wanna turn now to the Presiding Officer Committee.

**HARRIET MCCABE (Northern Illinois):** Thank you, Bishop. I'm happy to report to you the persons who will be our presiding officers tomorrow. Beginning at 9:20 in the morning, we will be led by Bishop Lawrence McCleskey. The afternoon session will be led by Bishop Al Gwinn, and the evening session will be led by Bishop Sally Dyck. Thank you.

**BISHOP WHITFIELD:** OK. Thank you for that report. I'm gonna

turn now to the secretary for any announcements.

**REIST:** Your keypads are recharged every night, but it's been hard to find them among the belongings of some of the delegates.

*(laughter)*

Do you remember when your mother told you to clean your room? Would you please find your name plate or your seat space card on your table, and put your voting device on top of that spot so it can be found by the technicians who will be recharging the keypads.

Some of you have asked about making contributions to the pages and marshals, asked where to write checks. If you write your check to GCFA, GCFA, you can drop it in the GCFA office. Please do not write your check on the Communion table.

I've been asked about why this basketball is sitting in front of me; and in case you haven't heard, there's a bidding war going on. Pacific-Northwest has bid \$8,500.

*(applause)*

You know, if you give me a chance, I'd really raise the bidding on this. I think we could get it going.

Thursday at 1 P.M. in Ballroom B, the Women's Division will show a documentary about the women of Liberia, showing living proof that moral courage and nonviolent resistance can succeed even when the best efforts of traditional diplomacy have failed. Their demonstrations culminated in the exile of Charles Taylor and the election of Ellen Johnson Sirleaf, Africa's first female head of state, and marked the vanguard of a new wave of women taking control of their political destiny around the world.

That concludes my announcements, Bishop.

**BISHOP WHITFIELD:** OK. I wanna express appreciation to the two people who've tried to keep me

presiding with some order and dignity tonight—Bishop Bruce Blake and Bishop Janice Huie. And I—if you will express your appreciation to them. I'm indebted to them immensely—

*(applause)*

for their work this evening.

I'm going to ask if Bishop James Swanson would come and lead us in a time of prayer. It has been a difficult day; it's been a very emotional day. You stayed with it; you've been kind to each other. You've been in holy conferencing, and I've experienced the grace of God as we've gone through this day. James?

**BISHOP JAMES E. SWANSON SR:** Let us be in a spirit and attitude of prayer.

*(prayer)*

### **Thursday Morning, May 1, 2008**

*(applause)*

*(music)*

**MARCIA MCFEE:** Friends, I invite you to begin to find your seats, as we welcome our second choir for the morning. This is a choir that comes from Baltimore, Christ United Methodist Church of the Deaf, the choir from Christ United Methodist Church of the Deaf. We welcome them.

*(applause)*

*(pause)*

*(rhythm and spoken hymn)*

**MCFEE:** Let us give thanks to God for this choir from Baltimore, Christ Church—Christ United Methodist Church of the Deaf.

*(applause)*

Praise God. Friends, I invite you to take your seats for the beginning of worship. Today is the remember-

ing, a time when we gather to remember those who have gone before. And, in the rings of the tree, we see the passage of time, the ways that we mark the passages of our lives. It's important to remember, to remember. I invite you to stand for the invocation.

BISHOP Øystein Olsen: Let us pray.

*(prayer)*

MARCIA MCFEE: I invite you to turn and face the center of the room.

*(music)*

UNIDENTIFIED MALE  
SPEAKER: Praise the Lord. Oh, Lord my God, you are very great. You are clothed with splendor and majesty; you wrap yourself in light as with a garment. You stretch out the heavens like a tent and you lay the beams of your upper chambers on their waters. You make the clouds a chariot and ride on the wings of the wind. You make wind your messengers, flames of fire your servants.

UNIDENTIFIED FEMALE  
SPEAKER: The Creator set the earth on its foundations, it can never be moved. You covered it with the deep, as with a garment. The waters stood above the mountains, but at your rebuke, the waters fled; at the sound of your thunder, they took to flight. They flowed over the mountains; they went down into the valleys to the place you assigned for them. You set a boundary they cannot cross. Never again will they cover the earth.

UNIDENTIFIED MALE  
SPEAKER: God makes springs pour water into the ravines. It flows between the mountains. They give water to all the beasts of the field; the wild donkeys quench their thirst. The birds of the air nest by the waters. They sing among the branches. You water the mountains from your upper chambers. The earth is satisfied by the fruit of your work.

UNIDENTIFIED MALE  
SPEAKER: You make grass grow for the camel and plants for people to cultivate, bringing forth food from the earth, wine that gladdens our hearts, oil to make our faces shine, and bread that sustains our hearts.

UNIDENTIFIED FEMALE  
SPEAKER: The trees of the Lord are well watered, the cedars of Lebanon that God planted. There the birds make their nests. The stork has its home in the pine trees. The high mountains belong to the wild goats. The crags are a refuge for crag coneys.

UNIDENTIFIED MALE  
SPEAKER: The moon marks off the seasons. And the sun knows when to go down. You bring darkness. It becomes night, and all the beasts of the forest prowl. The lions roar for their prey and seek their food from God. The sun rises and they steal away. They return and lie down in their dens. People go out to their work and to their labor until evening.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKERS:  
How many are your works, oh Lord? In wisdom you made them all. The earth is full of your creatures.

*(music)*

*(applause)*

PENNEY SCHWAB: For those who are able, please stand for the reading of the Gospel message today. Today's reading is from Luke 23:39-43 and Luke 24:28-35.

*(Scripture reading)*

The word of God, for the people of God.

ALL: Thanks be to God.

*(music)*

*Bishop Jung's Sermon*

BISHOP HEE-SOO JUNG:  
When Jesus was executed, two criminals were killed along with him. One of these criminals said to Jesus,

"Remember me when you come into your kingdom." Sing it to me again. Many of you know it by heart. Join with me.

*(music)*

BISHOP JUNG: Jesus says this as he was dying on the cross. He says to the one who had been convicted of a capital offense and was dying with him. "You will be with me in paradise." Jesus gave no creeds, he mended in nothing, he did not ask, "What do you believe?" He did not ask about his stance on current issues, theology, or morals. Certainly he did not ask of this criminal, "Have you been good?"

*(laughter)*

Said this convicted criminal, "Jesus, remember me, when you come into your kingdom." Replied Jesus, say, "Truly I tell you, today, you will be with me in paradise." Jesus, remember me. The world remembers his wonderful word; it is related to "member" prior to why the circulation of the authorized 1611 King James translation of the Bible. Member had to refer to a power of the human body, hands, a foot, a heart, ears, that in the English Bible translation of Paul's letter to church at Corinth, that Paul uses a crude metaphor for the church as the body of Christ and speaks of each of us as members of that body. Paul's metaphor and his translation in the King James Version changed at the English language.

The modern English, however, continues to use the archaic sense of the word *member*, when it speaks of dismembering, cutting a body into pieces. As the criminal dying with him, "Jesus, please remember me." He begs to be put back together even at the moment when he's being totally destroyed by the degrading execution. "Yes," Jesus said, "yes, you will be remembered, you will be with me today in paradise." Think of it, think of it, the only story we have of Jesus promising someone that

they will be remembered, that they will be with him in paradise, is this story. You will be with me today in paradise. So then, who will not be remembered by Jesus if we know that the first to be a found as a being with Jesus in paradise is a criminal? If that is so, will other criminals be excluded, will those who disagree with us? How wonderful this love of Christ is. A love that reaches out as he's dying, not only to those who are kill him—killing him, forgive them, Father. But to the criminals being executed with him, this love has no boundaries.

When Jesus remembers us, we are put back together again whether in this life or in the world to come. When we remember sisters and brothers who have passed on to the church triumphant. In they are in our very acts of remembering, brought back together with us, in the living body of Christ. This is why whenever we share the bread and the wine, we join not only with those physically present but with the whole church of Christ including the communion of saints. The body is remembered! It is put together again.

*(pause)*

Here in these days in Fort Worth, Texas, some of you have carried as you pursued the legislative goals. Others have lost. We who have been claimed by Jesus as a power of his body have found ourselves at odds at each other—with each other. I recall the words, Paul's, about importance of every part of the body of Christ. We belong to each other, and we are organically interrelated.

We as United Methodists have changed and grown in many ways over the years. We've begun as a small fire in John Wesley's heart and offered a ray of hope for the broken world. The God's (*unintelligible*) extended it around through many faithful workers. God's hand touches East, West, North, and South in the earth until we are a global church.

How grateful we are as the United Methodists in this amazing and unlimited grace of God. It is such an advance for us, in this two weeks of the General Conference, that God expands and challenges us to what is the centrality for Christians, giving space for others to be. Acknowledging that realities made up of others, loving others by appreciating their differences. So in this beautiful communion of The United Methodist Church, no one is less faithful and less honorable as a member of Christ's body. We are all equal and we are all beloved by God. We are belong; precious to each other.

*(applause)*

How long we refuse to accept? How long we refuse to bring them in, all together in this beloved community? Together we gather here and remember our sisters and brothers, those who have faithfully served our United Methodist Church and gone from our midst. What gifts they brought to us as a church. What sorrow their passing brings to those who loved them dearly. But as we name them in our hearts and minds today, they are remembered. The bodies are brought together. They will be in celebration of God's mystery.

We also remember the tragedy in our past the war and violence of the Holocaust and dehumanization. We remember those who, since we last met, have been killed in the war in Iraq and Afghanistan—those sisters and brothers of ours who served in the armed forces, and those many more of God's children who lived in Iraq and Afghanistan, some fighters, but mostly civilians caught in the cross fire. We also remember many victims in Darfur, Sudan, Kenya, and Palestine, Israel, in conflicted times. We also remember those whose lives were destroyed and uprooted by Katrina, the tsunami, and other natural disasters. May God remember each one of them and continually comfort their families and friends. We also remember the many

lives impacted by the recent violent acts that claimed the lives of the students and teachers on the campus of Virginia Tech and Northern Illinois Tech University campuses and other campus communities in the world. We pray for our young people and those feeling a sensibility of isolation, insecurity, and fear on their campuses, and even in their everyday lives.

When I was a young boy, my friend and I were playing along the shore of the Yellow Sea. Our single nation of Korea had been divided into North and South by the super powers following World War II. For years my childhood, the Korean conflict had been taking place. The brothers in the North had come to fear brothers in the South. Sisters in the South feared those in the North. I remember the day when this friend, Hagun, and I were playing on the shore. He spotted something interesting in the water. He reached for it. It was a mine that exploded upon touch. Instantly, nothing! I didn't feel my friend existed anymore. But I remember him. In that remembrance I wish and pray for the reconciliation and peace in the Korean Peninsula.

*(applause)*

How long, how long we wait. How long we separate it, how long we hate each other. How long put the world defends each other. We remember those who have needlessly died from the starvation and hunger in this world. The earth produces enough to feed every human being but poverty prevents so many from access to the basic sustenance. Meanwhile the garbage cans of the affluent overflows with uneaten bounty. In the Labor Day today, we remember those who labor long hours for low wages and struggle for dignity and basic human rights.

I personally remember, sisters and brothers, I was—one of—the man next to Christ on the cross, who were judgmental and self-righteous. When I first became a Christian, I

was rigid and judgmental. So as a young Christian, I came to believe that my new ways were absolutely right. That everything of my Buddhist, Confucian, and shamanistic past was to be totally condemned. At the time I had so much to learn. When my father died, I, as a young, elegant Christian refused to participate in the rituals surrounding death that brought meaning and closure to my mother, siblings, and wider family. They went to the mountain with his remains as our tradition required. But I stated resistance to follow traditional family rituals. They brought prayer to the God beyond us all but I refused to pray since this god was not specifically named as the God of Christians. My understanding of Christianity as a young convert had more to do with the rejection of everything that seemed not specifically Christian than it did with adopting the ways of Christ.

*(applause)*

It was not until much more recently, after my graduate study and seminary training, that on the return to my home village, I made the mountain pilgrimage to my father's grave. I repented of my elegance and related such a great time in the moment, that I have experienced a release and freedom in my heart. I have peace with my father and my past. And for those who protest the Bible is too difficult, I am reminded of Mark Twain's famous quote, "It is not the parts of the Bible that I don't understand that bother me, but the parts that I do."

*(applause)*

We know many of the things Jesus considered blessed. We know his view on violence and the nonviolent life he himself led. We know of his eventual openness to every sort and category of person he encountered. He continued to welcome the outsider. We know how he forgave even those who executed him. Mark Twain was indeed right. It's the parts

of the Bible that we do understand that really bother me and bother us. They cause us to follow Jesus.

We, The United Methodist Church, stand at a crossroad today. Where are we? We found ourselves in a debate between those who would like the Church to be more flexible in nonessential matters—more open; and those who would like the Church to be clearer about its boundaries—more pure. One could argue that those who expose greater openness are holding fast to biblical principles of hospitality. Those who desire clarity in the matters of boundaries, however, are adhering to biblical principle of holiness. But both holiness and hospitality are excellent values. Both are biblical values; and both are right. Of course, they can be both wrong. The problem is this, when we concern ourselves only with holiness and we become rigid and inward looking, we make an idol of our purity.

*(applause)*

We put the war and defense our doctrine. We continue to fear that somebody will tear down our form of doctrine. We put the fence around, refuse continually. When we concern ourselves only with the hospitality, however, we lose our sense of who we are; our identity is blurred and we lose the language of our own faith. We no longer know why we are Christian and what holds us together in that way.

Either holiness or hospitality can become a problem if we pay attention only to one dimension and exclude the other. Instead we are invited to live in the tension that is created by holding both values, holiness, and hospitality, together at the same time, brothers and sisters!

*(applause)*

We are together in the tension, we need to work it out, we need to continue to expand our limit and thus, our stretching love in grace will be

here with us today. We stand at a crossroad again. A United Methodist have authorized it and has carried it on a war against Iraq. Other United Methodists, including Council of the Bishops, have felt that compelled to say that is not what Christ has taught us. We know loving our enemies is not a praise invented by an old (*unintelligible*) but a command from Jesus Christ our Lord.

*(applause)*

Some United Methodists say they cannot be a part of church that does not condemn virtually everything other than the dominant and traditional understanding of sexual orientation. Other United Methodists have suggested that God's creation is beautiful in its diversity and everyone is deserved of God's work coming in unconditional lovefest into Christ's churches. It is hard. It is difficult. It is hard to focus together. As a former seminary faculty, I retain deep respect for theological learning, but Christian—it is not about being theologically correct. It's about following Jesus. The basic question is not what we intellectually believe about him, though this is not unimportant, but the heart of it all is this, Christians, will you follow Jesus? Will you follow Jesus, brothers and sisters? This is what John and Charles Wesley does so well, at the call of our faith community, it is not the proper observance of rights and preachers, at there call is not correct belief, "if your heart be my heart, give me thy hand," continues to be Wesley's invitation. Not toward the like, nor believe the same things, but together to follow Christ Jesus together.

*(applause)*

Yes, our focused mission is making disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world. The story takes place shortly after the execution of Jesus. His once faithful disciples are despondent, and they are plodding one foot after the other

to Emmaus. The stranger joined them and talked with them, but they don't get it. Filled with fear, sorrow, and despair, neither their eyes can see nor their ears hear the miracle that is in that (*unintelligible*) in the midst. The risen Christ is with them, but to them, he is a stranger. He is a stranger until some time after they arrived in Emmaus. As they ate together, He took the bread, and broke it, and blessed it, and gave it to them. Suddenly, they remembered. The body was restored! The stranger they now recognized as the risen Christ! The dismembered body was now remembered! Why had they not recognized him sooner? That's a mystery we will never solve, but somehow, as they shared this good, blessed eucharistic bread together with a stranger. The disciple became aware he was again present in their midst. Christ is risen, indeed, brothers and sisters! The body of Christ was remembered. Though they had been separated from Christ, they were brought back together. They were remembered, restored. Such mystery is beyond our comprehension, but how glorious it is!

It is not we who save ourselves by having the right opinions about Christ, but Christ himself who saves us, just as we are, brothers and sisters! It is not that we do such a great job of remembering Jesus, hard as we might try, it is Jesus who knows us, who remembers us, who promised to remember even the criminal who died with him! If Jesus promised to remember even such a one as him, one with such abysmal qualification, cannot he be trusted to remember us, as well?

(*applause*)

Jesus' arms stretched on the beam, extended to release of sin, to receive all in love, to invite us to new life. In God's paradise we find in plenty, all forgiveness and healing, reconciliation and comfort, joy and abundant life. So sisters and brothers in Christ, God's saving and transforming love is yours. It is un-

conditional. It is unconditional. It is unconditional. It is unlimited. It is unlimited. And require no return in divine mystery. Ask him to remember you. Ask him to remember you. He will. Ask him. Jesus, remember me, when you come into your kingdom. Jesus, remember me, when you come into your kingdom.

(*applause*)

(*music*)

#### *Deceased Bishops Memorialized*

**BISHOP GREGORY VAUGHN PALMER:** Those whom we have loved are with us forever. They are physically dead, but because of their works, they are still speaking. And so we remember and honor them this day. We remember and honor the bishops who faithfully served this church and who now join the cloud of witnesses giving praise to God.

**FLOOR RESPONSE:** Our hope knows no ending, for their life in Christ is everlasting.

**BISHOP PALMER:** L. Scott Allen; Paul W. Milhouse; Earl G. Hunt Jr.; J. Alfred Ndoricimpa; Edward L. Tullis; Leroy C. Hodapp; Rhymes H. Moncure Jr.; Done Peter Debale; Thomas S. Bangura; Carl J. Sanders; Christopher M. Jokomo; David J. Lawson; Benjamin R. Oliphint; Kefas K. Mavula.

We remember and honor those who have served the General Conference as delegates and now join the cloud of witnesses giving praise to God.

**FLOOR RESPONSE:** Our hope knows no ending, for their life in Christ is everlasting.

**BISHOP PALMER:** Let us recall these colleagues in our hearts as the bells chime.

(*pause*)

And now we remember and honor any who you wish to name in this moment. Please feel free to lift up their names simultaneously of these

saints you know who now have joined the cloud of witnesses giving praise to God.

(*pause*)

**MCFEE:** Our hope knows no ending, for their life in Christ is everlasting.

**MCFEE AND BISHOP PALMER:** Our hope knows no ending, for their life in Christ is everlasting.

**ALL:** Our hope knows no ending, for their life in Christ is everlasting.

(*music*)

**MCFEE:** And all God's people said...

**FLOOR RESPONSE:** Amen.

**MCFEE:** Friends, many of you have joined us around the center table at lunchtime for Communion in the last few days. Today we invite you to another ritual act, a ritual act of foot washing; a ritual act of foot washing in whatever way is comfortable for you—shoes on, shoes off, or simply coming and being present and praying with us this noon. And to hear the words of Jesus that reminded the disciples that no one is greater than another and that no messenger is greater than the one who sent them. To this act, which intersects holiness and hospitality, I invite you to stand for our benediction and for the bishops who have the candles to raise those high.

**BISHOP HEE-SOO JUNG:**

(*prayer*)

(*music*)

**BISHOP PALMER:** You may have your seats or be in fellowship, as the case may be.

(*music*)

**BISHOP J. LAWRENCE McCLESKEY:** All right, if you will take your seats, we're ready to begin our plenary agenda for the morning. If you'll take your seats, please;

we're ready to begin. We're going to begin in just a moment with a word of prayer. Will you bow your heads and let us pray together?

*(prayer)*

Call us to order now for the business of the day. I am grateful to have assisting me this morning two of my Episcopal colleagues, Bishop Charlene Kammerer of the Virginia Annual Conference and Bishop—

*(applause)*

Bishop Joe Pennel, formerly of the Virginia Annual Conference, now retired. I am grateful to them for their assistance. Let me call on Gere Reist for the most recent basketball report.

FITZGERALD (GERE) REIST: It seems that Bishop Bickerton wants to keep his basketball. Western Pennsylvania has bid \$15,000. If everybody pays what they've bid, so far we made it to \$48,750, which to my way of thinking is not a round number and somebody's got to come up with a good bid to top Western Penn. and get us a good round number total.

BISHOP MCCLESKEY: Thank you very much. We'll keep that good work going with the full expectation that all pledges will be honored. Thank you.

Now we have a number of important reports that will assist us in matters of our process. I call first on Rosa Washington-Olson for the report of the Committee on Courtesies and Privileges.

*Louise Short, Presented at Age 102*

ROSA WASHINGTON-OLSON (California-Nevada): Bishop, we are so honored this morning to make a presentation to all of you, but I would like for you to hold your applause until I finish. We have with us this morning Mrs. Louise Short, the wife of the late Bishop Roy Short. Now this woman is a woman after my own heart. She is feisty. She was

sitting up there in the bleachers. I went up to get her and she said she had walked down the steps, and one step is about this far from the other, and a gentleman up there was going to help her and she said, "Gee, this is a pretty steep step, but I'll get down." And she came down on her own; and the reason this is such a wonderful feat—she is 102-years old—

*(applause)*

She's been coming to General Conference since 1938. I was only one year old. And she reached over to me and touched me, and she said, "Wouldn't my husband be surprised to know that I'm here?"

*(laughter)*

So, I present her to you. She has a few words, then she's leaving for home. But you know what's so wonderful? She's *(unintelligible)* some of the days here. She has spent her entire day sitting here listening to us.

*(applause)*

*Louise Short Speaks*

LOUISE SHORT: Indeed, Roy would be surprised to see me here; but it's because of him that I am here. He took me with him to so...to all the meetings to give me a deep idea of the depth of Methodism. And so I do so appreciate it that I am totally interested in all that you do. I am deeply honored to be presented to the General Conference. I live at McKendree Retirement Home at Nashville, Tennessee. I'm a show and tell. In the advertisement that they don't let you die.

*(laughter)*

Some others are as old as I am, but not on their feet. I am old, but I am not dead.

*(laughter and applause)*

I have many interests, and the Methodist Church provides me with

my words. I'm interested in all that they offer, and for UMCOR and for the social concerns and for evangelism and the many things that the Methodist Church provides us to work in. Just now I am saddened by so many deaths of youths, especially from driving while drunk. I am a member of MADD—Mothers Against Drunk Driving. I do not hear much from Methodism about liquor. Our Methodists were noted for their temperance interests once, their concerns. I found out recently that one of my good friends at our home is the daughter of Dr. Ernest Cherrington, the last Chairman of the Board of Temperance of the Methodist Temperance Board. The Cherringtons lived on the third floor of the Methodist building, served by the Board of Temperance. That was built, I think, by the Board of Temperance—I'm trying to read. I can...that's where they lived, on the third floor of that, but they were...he was from the Ohio Conference. I can still hear Dr. Cherrington thunder when they put the temperance under Social Concerns. He thundered, "This is the last of temperance." Emphasis. Does that give you an opportunity? Christ is among us in fresh ways when we gather together listening to God and to each other. Thank you.

*(applause)*

BISHOP MCCLESKEY: Thank you, Mrs. Short. You've blessed us and graced us with your presence. Now we are going to move to the order of the day.

WASHINGTON-OLSON: Bishop, I have two more things.

BISHOP MCCLESKEY: Oh, I'm sorry. I apologize. Please proceed.

WASHINGTON-OLSON: That's OK. The only thing, Bishop; I'm going to outlive her.

*(laughter)*

Our bishop that spoke with us this morning spoke with us about remembrance, and our next two items

are concern and remembrance. Mrs. Harriet Olson, a deputy general secretary from the Women's Division of GBGM, was here with us this week, and she had to leave because her father, at the age—Charles Olson, 81—passed away and his service is today, and they asked that we remember her and the entire family in our prayers and, Bishop, at the end I will ask you to lift that up in prayer. And today, also, we have been asked graciously to remember the significance of today. Today is the observance of National Holocaust Day. It's a day when we all here at General Conference—and our stance on this atrocity can be found in our *Book of Resolutions* on p. 213—and in solidarity with our Jewish community, may we all continue to pray that this or anything of this magnitude may never happen again. Bishop, would you lift this day of remembrance and Mrs. Olson and her family in prayer? Thank you.

BISHOP MCCLESKEY: Thank you. And we will do that at the conclusion. We have another person that we will include in that prayer. Bishop Dick Wills is away from us today conducting the funeral of one of his district superintendents, and we will remember that family as well. Now we're going to proceed to the recognition of the retiring and incoming Judicial Council members. I had thought originally I'd go ahead with some reports and do that, but these folks, some of them have been working hard all week and some are going to have to work hard, and they're standing up back here with no chairs and I don't wanna wear 'em out, so let me recognize Dr. James Holsinger, the president of the Judicial Council, who will lead us in this recognition.

*Judicial Council Presented*

JAMES HOLSINGER: Bishop McCleskey, delegates to the General Conference, it's a great pleasure for the Judicial Council to stand before the conference and to recognize our retiring members, newly elected

members, and our continuing members who have served so ably during the past quadrennium. Please, first, I would like for you to show your appreciation to the hard work of our retiring members: Rudolfo Beltran, Mary Daffin, Keith Boyette, and myself.

*(applause)*

Only those individuals who have served on the Judicial Council of The United Methodist Church understand exactly how much work is entailed. It is a huge amount of work and it continues to grow each year, as many of you all are aware. We also were very fortunate this year because of some difficulties in the arrangements for some of our individuals, including of the Rev. Paul Kyungo Shamwangu, who was unable to attend most of our meetings and who is also retiring at this time and was unable to be here today, but we also had Rev. Rex Bevins and Dr. Solomon Christian fill in very ably at various times as alternate members, the first alternate members of the council, and we appreciate their hard work as well. Now I'd like to recognize our continuing members: The Rev. Dennis Blackwell—Dennis, Beth Capen, Judge Jon Gray, and the Rev. Susan Henry-Crowe. They will continue to work and do our job for the next four years and I know you'll want to thank them for what they've done and what they will do.

*(applause)*

Now, it is indeed my pleasure to present to you for your welcome our newly elected members: Angela Brown—Angela,

*(applause)*

the Rev. Belton Joyner,

*(applause)*

Justice Ruben Reyes,

*(applause)*

the Rev. Kathi Austin-Mahle—Kathi,

*(applause)*

and Dr. William Lawrence

*(applause)*

—the newly elected members of the Judicial Council of The United Methodist Church.

*(applause)*

*Newly Elected Judicial Council Presented*

Now as a symbol of the continuity that occurs within the Judicial Council, I would like to present each of our new members with their Judicial Council pin.

*(pause)*

We are indeed proud then to also announce to you today the election of the officers for the 2008-2012 quadrennium and for the Judicial Council for the next four years. The president of the Judicial Council for the next quadrennium is the Rev. Susan Henry-Crowe—Susan.

*(applause)*

The vice president of the council for the next four years is Judge Jon Gray—Jon.

*(applause)*

And the secretary for the council, and may God have mercy on his soul, the Rev. Belton Joyner—Belton.

*(applause)*

The only person on this platform that knows what Belton is in for is Keith Boyette, and indeed, it is a tough and hard job for the secretary of this council. It's a lot of work. But I am proud of all of them. It's been a great eight years for those of us that have served for the past eight years. For those that have served

four years, I hope it's been as great a year, four years for them. But now, as we come to this time, I would like to ask you to pray with me as we lift up our members of the 2008-2012 Judicial Council before God's throne of grace, so please pray with me.

(prayer)

Thank you all. Thank you Conference, thank you Bishop, for this time of being able to present the council.

BISHOP MCCLESKEY: Thank you, Dr. Holsinger, and thanks to all of you. We're aware of the important work you do on behalf of the church and the huge commitment of time and energy that are involved, and we express our appreciation. Now, we'll move to the report of the Committee on Agenda and Calendar, Youngsook C. Kang.

(pause)

BISHOP MCCLESKEY: Excuse me. David Wilson will be reporting, he is the vice-chair.

DAVID M. WILSON (Oklahoma Indian Missionary): Thank you, Bishop. Good morning, bishops, delegates, and friends. This morning's calendar will begin—has begun already—with the recognition of retiring Judicial Council members, and we were introduced to the new Judicial Council members that we elected earlier this week. Shortly after the reports we will begin with the calendar items and continue with the conference business. At 12:10 p.m. we will celebrate the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the General Board of Pension and Health Benefits. Reminder: the service of Holy Communion will be held around the table in the center at 12:40. Following the lunch break we will hear from Mr. William H. Gates Sr., the cochair of The Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation. We will then continue with calendar items and conference business throughout the afternoon. We will have more calendar items and conference business in the late afternoon, after our break, and also

following the dinner break, until tonight's recess. On behalf of the Agenda Committee, we want to express our appreciation for your hard work as we move on with our important work. May God continue to lead us all throughout this day. Bishop, I move the adoption of this agenda.

BISHOP MCCLESKEY: All right, it comes from the committee and it's before us. We can do this by hand. If you would approve this agenda, would you lift your hand? Opposed, the same sign. And it is approved. Thank you very much. We'll hear now from our COSROW monitors, Susan Smalley and Dennis Oglesby.

#### *COSROW/GCRR Report*

SUSAN SMALLEY AND DENNIS OGLESBY: Good morning General Conference.

OGLESBY: This is Susan Smalley.

SMALLEY: This is Dennis Oglesby.

OGLESBY: We're here today to provide the latest snapshot of gender and racial inclusiveness during our plenary sessions. The church is charting a new journey of hope, a journey to transform the world for Jesus Christ. We believe that we are called to do this together, not leaving anyone behind.

SMALLEY: Yesterday morning in the video *Truth and Wholeness* I was confronted with powerful reminders of the privileges I enjoy as a White woman living in the United States. While I didn't create my White privilege, I certainly was born into it and I understand that I, like the church I love, can never be whole until the system of institutional racism and White privilege is dismantled. That's why I continue to be committed to the ministry of monitoring. Speaking of monitoring, Dennis, how did we do yesterday?

OGLESBY: Susan, I'm glad you asked. We experienced some highs and some lows. We began the morning with females participating 34 percent of the time, while males par-

ticipated 66 percent of the time. During the afternoon, female participation decreased to 24 percent, with males' participation rising to 76 percent of the time. Clergy continue to dominate the deliberations, with a participation rate of 72 percent. Remember, this General Conference is 62 percent male and 40 percent female. Few youth and young adult delegates participated in the morning session, but in the afternoon their participation rate rose to 10 percent.

SMALLEY: People of color made up 17 percent of the participants in the morning, and 20 percent in the afternoon. Central conferences were 24 percent of the participants in the morning and 17 percent in the afternoon. Nineteen percent of our delegates are U.S. racial-ethnic persons, and central conference delegates make up 24 percent.

OGLESBY: Susan, on yesterday we started with powerful worship as Bishop Violet Fisher called us to dismantle racism by taking the more challenging route to achieve gender and racial inclusiveness. We are called as a General Conference not only to share the gospel, but to be the gospel. It was great. Still, the numbers we share reflect that we still have a ways to go.

SMALLEY: But, Dennis, we're still on the journey.

OGLESBY: Susan, you're right, it is a journey of hope. Thank you.

(applause)

BISHOP MCCLESKEY: Thank you very much. Let me call again on David Wilson and Susan Brumbaugh for action on consent calendar items.

Susan Brumbaugh: You know, I never thought I'd see the day when six hours of sleep felt like so much.

(laughter)

I invite you to turn in your DCA to p. 2347, where you will find Consent Calendar A-05. Four calendar items have been removed from Consent Calendar A05 and appear on the

screen. Starting on p. 2349, Calendar Item 1225 has been corrected and it is reprinted in Consent Calendar D-06. On the same page, Calendar Item 1226 has been removed for consideration at a later time. On the next page, p. 2350, Calendar Item 1229 has been removed for consideration at a later time. And, finally, in this calendar, on *DCA* p. 2353, Calendar Item 1238 has been removed because it was ruled unconstitutional under yesterday's Judicial Council decision. If you vote yes on Consent Calendar A-05 you will be voting to adopt the calendar items contained therein. All of the items on Consent Calendar A-05 are correct as printed, with the exception of the items that have been removed.

WILSON: Bishop, I move approval of the actions on Consent Calendar A-05, except for those four items that were removed.

BISHOP MCCLESKEY: All right, that's before you. I think it's clear. We need to activate your keypads for this vote. You may do that by touching any key, and your keypad is activated when the screen shows "ready." Are there any difficulties with any keypads? If so, would you lift your hand and someone will assist you. All right, here's one. Can we get some help with that? If you'll stand, that would be more helpful. Thank you. Any others, just stand if you have a problem.

*(pause)*

I think I see one in the back; am I correct? Any others?

*(pause)*

I think I see one standing. Are we ready? No, not ready. Just remain standing in place and the persons who are assisting us will be able to find you, I think. We're trying to get a little more light out there. Y'all wouldn't object, would you? It's coming.

*(pause)*

All right, are there still anyone...is there still anyone with a keypad that's not functioning? All right, I think we're ready. The recommendation is for approval of the Consent Calendar A-05 with the exception of those items which were removed. If you would approve of this consent calendar, press "1" for yes. If you are opposed, press "2" for no. Please vote when the numbers appear on the screen. *[Yes, 832; No, 21]*

BISHOP MCCLESKEY: All right, thank you. By a vote of 832 for, 21 against, you have approved Consent Calendar A05.

BRUMBAUGH: Now we will turn to p. 2354, to consider Consent Calendar B05. Before we proceed with the vote, let me bring your attention to Calendar Item 732 that begins on p. 2354 and runs all the way through p. 2356. Every four years, it seems as if there's one item we just can't seem to fit to our process. This year, it was Calendar Item 732. Because of an odd character in the text, the full text was twice printed incorrectly. Calendar Item 732 appears incorrectly in Consent Calendar B04 that you had voted to approve yesterday, and the corrected version appears in today's Consent Calendar B05. I just want to clarify that for you. If you vote yes on Consent Calendar B05, you will be voting to adopt the calendar items contained therein. No items have been removed, and it is correct as printed.

WILSON: Bishop, I move that we accept the actions on Consent Calendar B05.

BISHOP MCCLESKEY: Thank you. It's properly before you. If you would approve of Consent Calendar B05, press "1" for yes. If you do not approve, press "2" for no. Please vote when the numbers appear on the screen. *[Yes, 825; No, 29]* And by a vote of 825 to 29, you have approved Consent Calendar B05.

BRUMBAUGH: Now please turn to p. 2359 where you will find Consent Calendar C05. From Consent Calendar C05 three calendar items

have been removed and appear on the screen. On p. 2360, Calendar Item 1278 has been removed for consideration at a later time. On the same page, Calendar Item 1289 has been removed for consideration at a later time. And, finally, on the next page, p. 2361, Calendar Item 1298 has been removed for consideration at a later time. If you vote yes to Consent Calendar C05 you will be voting to reject the calendar items it contains. All of the items on Consent Calendar C05 are correct as printed with the exception of the items that have been removed.

WILSON: Bishop, I move approval of all the actions on Consent Calendar C05, except for those three items that were removed.

BISHOP MCCLESKEY: Thank you. It is before you. If you would approve of Consent Calendar C05 with the changes that were announced, you would vote "1" for yes. If you do not approve, you would vote "2" for no. Please vote when the numbers appear. *[Yes, 826; No, 38]* By a vote of 826 to 38, you have approved Consent Calendar C05.

BRUMBAUGH: And, finally, on p. 2365, p. 2—wait, wait, wait—2363 you will find Consent Calendar D05. The item contained in this consent calendar was not removed. And if you vote yes on Consent Calendar D05 you will be voting to refer this calendar item. Consent Calendar D05 is correct as printed.

WILSON: Bishop, I move approval of the action on Consent Calendar D05.

BISHOP MCCLESKEY: Thank you. It is before you. If you would approve of this item, this consent calendar, please vote "1" for yes. If you do not approve, vote "2" for no. Vote when the numbers appear. *[Yes, 820; No, 25]* By a vote of 820 to 25, you have approved Consent Calendar D05, which in effect, in this instance, is a referral.

WILSON: Bishop, a last item is we will now hear from our Legisla-

tive Committee coordinator, John Brawn.

JOHN BRAWN: John Brawn, Legislative Activity Coordinator and honorary Youth Director to the General Conference. Good morning. I know that I don't have to remind you that this conference is soon coming to a close. Our time together ends tomorrow, and most of you will probably be worshipping in your home churches this Sunday. I don't know about you, but I occasionally need to take a deep breath, think for a minute about what's already happened, and then focus my thoughts on what's coming up. Will you take a deep breath with me and join me for a minute in looking back at the last seven and a half days?

Our time toge—oh, excuse me. As you look back, how does this General Conference look to you? Is it ancient history? Have you celebrated? Have you watched the strategists at work?

(laughter)

Have you felt God's love? Was your committee in that 200 series of rooms that first night?

(laughter)

Since then, have you wished you brought a warmer wrap?

(laughter)

Are you still waiting for your turn at the mic.?

(laughter)

Have you met a new friend who lives very far away? And can you explain to a fifth-grader the difference between a petition and a calendar item?

(laughter)

In my support role I have a somewhat different vantage point. I mostly look at red folders; red bars on charts; red eyes on friends;

(laughter)

the covers on *DCAs* and *Disciplines* and *Books of Resolutions* that are sort of red. As I think about these things, I like to focus at the light at the end of the tunnel, even if it doesn't always seem to be getting any closer. At least it isn't red.

(laughter)

There have been many mileposts along the way. Are these numbers flashing now familiar to you? Sometimes when you least expect it you find a reason to celebrate, and I can finally say, all legislative committees have finished their work.

(applause)

You didn't duck your responsibilities. While these charts marched through the days, let's start looking forward to the work ahead. I know the number of calendar items remaining seems to change without rhyme or reason. I considered trying to create a limerick to describe it, but instead I'll just give you the reason. While you worked your way through calendar items yesterday, one committee was finishing their last petitions, and these were added to the pile through the day. Other helpful people removed items from the consent calendar and added those to your list.

(laughter)

In a failed effort to balance out that increase, the Judicial Council took a couple back off the pile by declaring them unconstitutional.

(laughter)

And, finally, my fellow back-office friends uncovered a small number of errors, corrected them, and lessened your workload by two items. So we now have 117 calendar items to complete in the next 16 hours of plenary time. That works out to eight minutes and 13 seconds per calendar item.

Your committee leaders have worked heroically to prioritize the work for you. My advice is to spend the time you need, especially if you perceive that hearts are open and minds are undecided. If you do not find that to be the case, then perhaps I can pass along some advice I heard just yesterday from a local resident. I really wish I could do justice to his accent, but he told me that "kicking a dead horse harder don't make it run any faster."

(laughter and applause)

May the Lord who is our shepherd guide us all as we wind our way between the legislative lost sheep and the dead horses today and tomorrow. Thank you.

(applause)

BISHOP MCCLESKEY: Thank you, John. We'll now turn to Matthew Laferty, chair of the Conference's Legislative Committee, and he will guide us through their work.

MATTHEW A. LAFERTY (East Ohio): Good morning, General Conference. I have the pleasure this morning, along with my compatriots sitting behind me, to present to you 27 constitutional amendments for your consideration. Before we get started, I have been asked several times in the hallway a question; and I would ask LaVon Wilson if you could come up here and stand beside me. The question I've been getting most often in the hallway is not about my committee work. It's been about how tall are you? They say, "Wow! I didn't realize you're that tall." And so while we're all here together, I wanna tell you that I'm 6'7", and I don't play basketball.

(laughter)

*Worldwide Nature of UMC*

This morning, if you could turn to p. 2175. That's p. 2175 of the *DCA*. It's Calendar Item No. 741. This item refers to Petition No. 80808,

which can be found in the advanced edition of the *DCA*, p. 437. Bishop, the committee recommends to adopt Calendar Item 741. In Monday's plenary session, the General Conference established a task force to continue the study of the worldwide nature of the church. The Connec-tional Table, the Council of Bishops, and the Central Conference College of Bishops have endorsed these amendments because they have seen and heard the need and urgency for these constitutional amendments. The conference's Legislative Com-mittee overwhelmingly voted to rec-ommend adoption of all 23 constitutional amendments relating to the worldwide nature of the church without any amendments. These constitutional amendments are tangible—a tangible commit-ment to more than talk. They're a commitment to opening up the *Book of Discipline* to change and pledging ourselves to a new way of relating.

The proposed legislation does not do any of the following: It does not change the number, purpose, or function of jurisdictional confer-ences. It does not change the way bishops are elected or assigned. It does not change the purpose, num-ber, or scope of any general agency. It does not change the size or power of the General Conference. It does not change the way Social Principles are decided upon or amended. And it does not change the way that money is apportioned or allocated.

The 23 petitions amend the con-stitution in a way that would allow for a creation of a regional confer-ence for the United States *if* in 2012 the Task Force on the Worldwide Nature of the Church came back with recommendations as such. But this legislation does not create a U.S. regional conference at this time. It only makes it possible for General Conference to do so at a later time if it so chooses.

Additionally and specifically to the first 19 petitions we will present to you this morning, the word *cen-tral* will be changed to *regional*. We

know the word *central* was first used in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century to facilitate missionary work outside the United States. Yet the meaning of the term is no longer clear to most persons. Further, there are negative connota-tions with the former central juris-diction, which existed for purposes of segregation. We must free our-selves from racist vestiges of our past, and this can be achieved in part by changing the name of central conferences to regional conferences.

The Central Con—the Central Conference College of Bishops agreed as did the Council of Bishops that *regional* is a better word be-cause the word *regional* expresses the idea that all annual conferences in a particular region engage in com-mon mission together to sa—to serve God in that region. The word *region* is also easily translatable into other languages. Therefore, the com-mittee recommends adoption of Cal-endar Item 741.

BISHOP MCCLESKEY: All right. Thank you. It's before us. I see a yellow card back here. Come to mic. 5, please.

SUE HAUPERT-JOHNSON (Florida): Bishop, I move that this matter and the other 22 petitions re-lated to constitutional amendments to the worldwide nature of The United Methodist Church be re-ferred to the Worldwide United Methodist Study Committee. And I'll speak to that if I have a second. I can list the items for you if you need me to.

BISHOP MCCLESKEY: Is there a second? All right. Would you, please, for the record list all 22 items so that we know what's before us; and then you may speak to it.

HAUPERT-JOHNSON: Certainly. Would you prefer calendar item or committee item?

BISHOP MCCLESKEY: Calen-dar.

HAUPERT-JOHNSON: OK. The following calendar items are the ones I move to be referred: 741, 743, 744, 745, 746, 747, 748, 749, 750,

751, 752, 753, 754, 755, 756, 757, 758, 742, 759, 760, 1199, 1200, and 1201.

BISHOP MCCLESKEY: All right. Thank you. You may speak to it.

HAUPERT-JOHNSON: Bishop, it seems to me to be ill-advised, con-sidering the gravity of constitutional amendments, to start now to amend the constitution when we've com-missioned the committee to study this matter and to come back to the General Conference in 2012 to ad-dress these issues. I think that it only makes sense for them to do their work, to deliberate, and to come back to us with their recommended constitutional amendments. I think there needs to be more conversation. We have much to learn from the cen-tral conferences.

My other concern is that to amend our constitution, we have to go back to all of our annual conferences and educate them about this, for us, late-breaking information. And I'm not sure we have the clarity to do that, so I'd also like to have the Study Commission come back with consti-tutional amendments *and* for clear teaching tools to help educate our annual conferences as to their rec-ommendations. Thank you.

BISHOP MCCLESKEY: All right. Thank you. Is there someone who wishes to speak in oppo—I see a yellow card here. Is it a question? All right. Come to mic. 2, will be fine, please. Right here.

GREGORY MCGARVEY (South Indiana): I have a question. I have a real concern. In the midst of all of these, the ones that would relate to the central conferences, is there any way to separate that out, Bishop? That's my question. I do not want to send our brothers and sisters back to the central conferences without the ability to deal with those specifi-cally, to change those. Can we change those without the others?

BISHOP MCCLESKEY: Can the maker of the motion help us with that? With that question?

SUE HAUPERT-JOHNSON (Florida): I am sorry, I was writing item numbers on this and I didn't hear the question.

BISHOP MCCLESKEY: The question is which of these 22 items relate to the central conferences as they currently are structured, exist.

HAUPERT-JOHNSON: I would like to ask the committee to help answer that question. I can't answer that question.

LAFERTY: Well, it frankly depends on what the gentleman from Indiana was suggesting. There are 17 amendments that simply change the name of central conferences to regional conferences. There are two additional petitions that the name as well as delete language that was inserted to give authority to the General Conference to determine boundaries of central conferences in 1968 at the Uniting Conference. Additionally, there are four constitutional amendments that we are presenting this morning that deal with a name change and also deletion of other language. So there are possible ways that the house could divide these if they so chose.

BISHOP MCCLESKEY: All right. Thank you. I see a red card here in section A. Would you come to mic. 2, please. This will be a statement against the motion to refer.

HARALD RUECKERT (Germany South): I would like to speak against this proposal. As I understand, the last General Conference asked the Connectional Table, together with the Council of Bishops, to bring forward some proposals how to deal with this question of the global nurture, nature of the Church. What they bring to us is a very, very small change to enable us to get further on on this question. If we table that, as I contend that referral to those committees would be, it would take us another four years to make further steps. So I really ask you to vote against this proposal and to adopt all the amendments and petitions that come from council so that

we can go further and really, honestly be a worldwide church of The United Methodist Church.

BISHOP MCCLESKEY: Thank you. We've had one statement in favor of the motion to refer; one against. I'll take in favor. I see a green card in the middle back here in section C. Yeah, would you go to mic. 9, please?

RUDOLPH J. MERAB (Liberia): Bishop, I would like to go along with the referral, because I believe that some of the rationales that we're hearing from the—from the fact that there is some connotation of racism from the issue of central conferences. I believe change of name does not change the fact of whether racism or no racism. I think it comes from the mind. And I think if the mind-set is right, we continue with what we're doing. Changing the name from central conference to regional conference really doesn't change anything in my perspective. The idea is trying to get the Church in such a way that there is a proportional representation all across the Church, so that the voice of everybody, as for the membership, will be heard on the floor. So I go along with referral since we have a team that should be studying. Let that team do the study without having restriction and come back in 2012 and give us a actual picture of where we are.

BISHOP MCCLESKEY: Thank you very much. Now I am looking for a statement in opposition. I go to section D to the outside. I see a red card there. Would you come to mic. 10, please?

ARTHUR D. JONES (North Texas): Bishop, I rise to speak against amendment, or the motion of referral, for two specific reasons. Number one, we have already had a task force and this is their recommendation. The College of Bishops from the central conferences voted unanimously in favor of all of these amendments. The second thing that I would like to mention is that this does not actually change anything

that we are doing right now. It enables us for years from now to live into a worldwide future and it is a specific way that we can show that we are interested in living differently. It is a way that we can show our brothers and sisters outside the United States that we are interested in how we can move together into a different future. This does not change anything but allows that to happen, and so I would urge that we reject this motion for refer, and that we vote in favor of all 23 constitutional amendments. Thank you.

BISHOP MCCLESKEY: All right, thank you. We have had two statements for and two in opposition. Is there someone else that wishes to speak in favor of referral? All right, I see, I see a card back here in section D. Would you come please to, I think, mic. 11 may be the closest.

JOE W. KILPATRICK (North Georgia): I speak in favor of the referral. I ask us to vote yes on the referral. Everybody says it doesn't do anything. This doesn't do anything, this doesn't do anything. Well, if it doesn't do anything, we don't need it.

*(laughter)*

My mama and daddy taught me to—not to buy a pig in a poke, and I think we do need a report of the study committee and to see all that is proposed. I made a trip to Africa not too long ago and quite a number of laity and the people that I talked to, when they looked at this, were not very much enthusiastic about it, so I appreciate the endorsements that have been gathered, but I don't believe this is the direction we need to go at this time. Thank you.

BISHOP MCCLESKEY: Thank you. Now we can take a statement against referral. All right, I see a red—red cards back here in section B; would you, or section C, I'm sorry. Would you move to mic. 11, please?

CAROLYN HARDIN ENGLEHARDT (New York): How about 8?

BISHOP MCCLESKEY: Eight's fine.

ENGLEHARDT: I encourage you to vote against referral because, indeed, it will do something, but it will do something to us in the United States: It will help us to rethink our place in this worldwide church. The discussions that will ensue in our annual conferences as we deal with the constitutional amendments will help us look at our place with our brothers and sisters around the world. I encourage us to enter into that conversation that will be enabled by supporting this action to pass these amendments.

BISHOP MCCLESKEY: All right, thank you. We have had three for and three against. Back in section C, come to—in the middle of the section come to—it's a—this must be a parliamentary question or an inquiry. Is it?

DALE WEATHERSPOON (California-Nevada): I rise to ask for a point of personal privilege before we take our first vote today.

BISHOP MCCLESKEY: Do you have a parliamentary question, related to this matter?

WEATHERSPOON: I do not have a parliamentary question; I'm asking for a point of privilege that is around pastoral care.

BISHOP MCCLESKEY: If you would hold that sir, we will come back to that personal privilege when we have completed the dealing with this matter.

WEATHERSPOON: Bishop, I'm willing to hold that but I would deeply, sincerely request that I would make my plea before we take the first vote of the day.

BISHOP MCCLESKEY: No, you can not do that, I'm sorry. I'll be glad to give you the opportunity later, but this must be only a parliamentary inquiry related to the matter that is before us. Is this a parliamentary inquiry, back in the corner? Back here, come to mic. 12. Or

9, whichever's closest to you. Let's try 9.

CAROL K. LOEB (Southwest Texas): Hello? Is it in order to put an amendment on one of these, to be referred? I would also like to have the information on the amendment referred.

BISHOP MCCLESKEY: No. That is not in order; we are ready now to vote on the referral of all of these matters. I think we're ready. The motion is to refer the 22 items that were listed—

LAFERTY: Bishop, if the committee could respond.

BISHOP MCCLESKEY: And we do want to give the committee an opportunity to respond before we vote. Yes, Matthew.

MATTHEW A. LAFERTY: I would like to inform the General Conference that we did have this discussion in our Legislative Committee to refer these items. And the committee overwhelmingly rejected that motion. In fact, these amendments do something; they help us change our name and they create a structure to help us live into worldwide nature of the Church. Seventeen of these amendments are simply name changes that have come from the Connectional Table, the Council of Bishops, the Central Conference College of Bishops, and the Task Force in the Worldwide Nature of the Church. I understand that there may be some anxiety around these constitutional amendments; change never comes easy. Living into a worldwide church may be challenging especially for those of us in a dominant position. But maintaining the status quo will not equip us to live into a worldwide church, into a church with a future with hope. These constitutional amendments give the gift of promise that we are willing to change. Many in our central conferences want a commitment from us, the church, especially those of us in the U.S. section of the Church that we are willing to truly be a worldwide church. So, I would ask that we re-

ject these—that we reject this motion. Even though I may be young, my understanding of Christianity is that we do what we say. We now have an opportunity to show what we say with our words, that we truly believe that in our hearts. And so I would ask for us to reject this motion to refer.

BISHOP MCCLESKEY: All right, thank you. We're ready to take the vote. If you would approve the motion to refer press "1" for yes; if you do not approve of it, press "2" for no. Please vote when the numbers appear.

(pause)

*Vote to Refer Worldwide Nature Disapproved*

And by vote of 480 no to 421 yes, you have not approved of the motion to refer. [Yes, 421; No, 480] Now, Matthew, I'm going to ask if you will hold the rest of your reports until a little later.

LAFERTY: Certainly, Bishop. Yes.

*Plenary Recessed for Witness of Support*

BISHOP MCCLESKEY: Please, and were going to proceed to another item. I want to invite you to hear from me a statement which will lead us into that matter.

In recent hours, this body has engaged in holy conferencing regarding issues on which there is a diversity of perspectives. There are members of our United Methodist family present who have not been active participants in our process and who wish to share a witness. Rule 3.3 of your Rules of Order states: "The presiding officer shall have the right to recess a session of the body at any time at the presiding officers' discretion and to reconvene at such time as the presiding officer shall announce" in conversation involving representatives of the Commission on the General Conference, the Council of Bishops, and persons

present who wish to make a witness. It appears to be in the best interest of our process of holy conferencing to provide a means for such a witness. Therefore, I intend to recess this plenary session to allow for this witness. In a few moments the witnesses will enter the hall by the center aisle and when I announce it, the body will be in recess for 15 minutes, for the purpose of receiving this witness. You are invited to receive it in a gracious spirit of Christian hospitality and holy conferencing. At the conclusion of 15 minutes, I will call the body to order for the resumption of the morning agenda. Before we begin the recess, I will ask that Bishop Gregory Palmer, president of the Council of Bishops, come and share a statement with us and I trust that you will grant him your permission to do so. Bishop Palmer?

**BISHOP GREGORY PALMER:** Thank you delegates and Bishop McCleskey and friends. In many ways this has been an extraordinary General Conference. Among other things we have been blessed by powerful worship, keen missional focus, and holy conferencing, and we have bound ourselves together in covenant to do no harm, do good, and to stay in love with God. As we have worked our way through the legislative material, some decisions have been more wrenching than others to all the members of this body and the whole church, including your bishops. As your bishops, we want you to know that we have been in deep conversation, holy conferencing, and sensitive listening to you and to one another. This has led us to reaffirm our covenant to do the following four things: To love, serve, and lead all United Methodists; to continue to prayerfully remain in robust conversation with one another, and to lead the Church in doing the same, especially about difficult matters; to preach the Gospel of Jesus Christ and to teach and live the three simple rules; and finally, to lead the Church in making disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the

world. This covenant informs our role as your chief shepherds. During this time of witness, you will see bishops serving the body in a variety of ways. All of us will be in prayer, some bishops will remain in their places, and some will be in other parts of the auditorium. Some bishops will demonstratively live out our pastoral role among this body. Some will give expression to the presidential role that the Church has asked us to fulfill. But all of us will be laboring with all of you to do no harm, to do good, and to stay in love with God. Amen.

**BISHOP MCCLESKEY:** We are now in a 15-minute recess from our plenary agenda for the purpose of receiving this witness.

*(music and stand-in morning break)*

**BISHOP MCCLESKEY:** Thank you. We will now be in a further ten-minute break for you to take that time.

**BISHOP MCCLESKEY:** If you will come take your seats now, we're going to come back to order so that we can resume the business of this plenary session. Thank you, Mark, for that marvelous piece of music.

*(pause)*

All right, we're going to start in two minutes. I'll give you time to get to your seats and we're going to start in two minutes.

*(pause)*

All right, if you'll move quietly, please, to your places, we still have a lot of work to do. And we are going to pick up where we left off. I'm going to ask Matthew to remind us of where we are; essentially after the motion to refer did not prevail we are back to the calendar item that we began with. Matthew, would you—I'll call us to order—and would you lead us just to remind us initially of where we are and then we'll move into the debate on this issue.

### *Resumption of Worldwide Nature Discussion*

**LAFERTY:** I would like to remind you that we are on p. 200—sorry 2175 of the *DCA*. That's p. 2175. It's Calendar Item 741, Petition No. 80808, which can be found on the *Advance* edition of the *Daily Christian Advocate* on p. 437.

**BISHOP MCCLESKEY:** All right, thank you. Calendar Item 741 we're ready to—all right, just a minute. I'll come back here in just a second. We're ready now to hear you debate this issue, but I see back here in section C a yellow card. A question. Come to whichever one of those is closest—it looks like 9.

**KENNETH W. CHALKER** (East Ohio): Thank you, Bishop. Just a question, Bishop, you made a moving statement that we all heard and appreciated very much. I've been informed by a number of calls that I have received from people in Ohio who have been watching the live streaming of our proceedings here that, soon as the marvelous time that we all shared together began after your statement which was over televisions. Immediately after you finished, the live streaming was cut off, and people could not see what was going on, and have wanted to know what was happening, and I think it was an important moment in the life of my—our church. And my request is, or question is, was it in fact cut off from the television streaming, and why?

*(pause)*

**BISHOP MCCLESKEY:** Thank you for the question and I am advised that that is the—I didn't know this ahead of time—I am advised that that is the practice when we are in recess and we were in a recess. And that, as I understand, is the explanation for that, thank you. It was not intentional. Please understand that. It was not an intentional cutting off of that at all; I was not aware that that had occurred.

All right, I see a yellow card back here in section D. Come to—that's, yes—that's right. Five is fine if you can get to that. Thank you.

WEE-LI TAN (New England): Bishop, Would it be out of order to put all 17 calendar items that specifically deal with the name change from central conference to the regional conference—maybe to be correctly, the possibility of changing that—and then we vote on that all together.

BISHOP MCCLESKEY: Thank you for that question. I've actually raised the same question myself during the break and was advised by the chair of the committee that since these are constitutional amendments, we must vote on each of them individually. Thank you.

TAN: Can I suspend the rules?

BISHOP MCCLESKEY: We cannot. The constitution is not effect; the suspension of the rules does not suspend the constitution. The only way the constitution can be changed is through the process that requires us to vote and then all changes to that would have to go before the annual conferences. Now, let me make sure I am correct on that. I'll confer with my colleagues. I believe I am, but let me confer.

TAN: Bishop it's Paragraph 59 of the constitution...

BISHOP MCCLESKEY: We cannot suspend the rules to deal with constitutional matters; we have to vote on them one at a time. Thank you though for raising the question. I see a question right here in the front at mic. 2.

DEVIN W. MAUNEY (Desert Southwest): Bishop it's my understanding that while we do need to vote on every single one individually, we don't have to leave the rules the same to allow debate on every one. So could I move to suspend the rules to have only one session of debate and then have all the votes successively on those 17 named petitions?

(*applause*)

BISHOP MCCLESKEY: I believe that is in order. Thank you. That would help us.

MAUNEY: It is so moved.

BISHOP MCCLESKEY: Is it seconded?

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKERS: Seconded.

BISHOP MCCLESKEY: I can't make the rule; you have to order it. That's the reason I ask. If you would suspend the rules for the purpose of having all the debate—and we'll need the to ask the chair to give us those 17 items, but all the debate on those items together then we'll have to vote on them individually. But you understand the motion? To suspend the rules for the purpose of having all the debate on these 17 items that deal with name changes in one segment of—I'm interpreting a bit—but three speeches for, three against, and ready to vote. I'm I—I got it? I got a thumbs-up. Very good. If you would support the suspension of the rules for that purpose, you would vote "1" for yes; if not, you vote "2" for no. It takes a two-thirds vote. Please vote when the numbers appear.

(*pause*)

All right. By a vote of 679 to 45 you've suspended the rules for the purpose. Let me ask the committee chair, if he will, to give us the 17 calendar items that will be covered by this debate; please, Matthew.

LAFERTY: All 17 items can be found on two pages of the *DCA*. They can be found on p. 2175 as well as p. 2176. Again, that's p. 2176. The 17 calendar items that deal strictly with a name change, are calendar items as follows: Calendar Item 741, Calendar Item 743, 744, 745, 746, 747, 748, 749, 750, 751, 752, 753, 754, 755, 756, 757, and 758.

BISHOP MCCLESKEY: All right. Thank you. Now by your action you have suspended the rules to

allow us to have all the debate on these matters together. Is there someone who wishes to speak? I see a yellow card over here. Please come to...looks like mic. 3 would be the closest.

JACK RYDER (Northern Illinois): I think I would like to appeal the ruling of the chair that these 17 cannot all be voted together. The constitution says that they must be...amendments to the Constitution shall be made upon a two-thirds majority of the General Conference present in voting. Does not say anything about any kind of block voting or consent calendar voting, so I would appeal that. And I don't believe that there's a rule that we would need to suspend to do that.

BISHOP MCCLESKEY: Thank you, sir. You are correct about the voting, and we will vote on each one individually. The suspension of the rules was not for the purpose of voting on them as a block, but debating them as a block. We will take the vote one by one when we come to that. Thank you very much. All right. Let's see; I see a green card.

RYDER: Whoa, Bishop.

BISHOP MCCLESKEY: All right.

RYDER: Excuse me, sir, my appeal was that the...that we could vote them all together in one vote. That's the—

BISHOP MCCLESKEY: Oh—you're appealing my ruling that we must vote on them individually?

RYDER: And, and I believe you cited the Constitution, and I don't see it in the Constitution that says we have to vote on them in other than a block.

BISHOP MCCLESKEY: Well, thank you. I misunderstood. I apologize. Let me confer with my colleagues.

(*pause*)

Jack, could you come back to the mic., please? Thank you. In raising

the question do you have reference to a particular part of the Constitution that would help us?

RYDER: Paragraph 59, p. 38.

BISHOP MCCLESKEY: Thank you. Let us look at that.

(*applause*)

Thank you. Thank you. I think we've found a way to work through this, and I'm grateful. Let me try it. Stay there, and see if this will be acceptable. The vote on each individual constitutional amendment must be recorded and reported to the annual conferences. If it appears that...if you are...if it is acceptable to the body to have the same number of votes reported for each item but reported individually, then we could, I believe, go ahead and vote on them as a block, and then we would have to...now I'm willing to put that to the house. I think it would be better for the house to make that ruling than me. Would...if you're willing to...

RYDER: If you need a motion, I can do that, but I don't think you do.

BISHOP MCCLESKEY: Right. Well, let me just put this to the house. Let's try it that way. If you vote to have one vote on all 17 of these items they will be recorded individually and reported individually to the annual conferences for their actions a year from now and you would simply record, in that case, the exact same vote for each of the items. Now, let's try it this way. If you would support that, lift your hand. Any opposed, the same sign. I think we'll do it that way. Thank you very much. Now we'll move to the debate and see if we have any...I see a green card here. Yes, sir. Come, please, to mic. 1.

JONATHAN ULANDAY (East Mindanao Philippines): Bishop, I speak in favor of the petition. I appeal to the General Conference to approve this petition. Though it seems to appear that this is a simple change of name, it means a lot to the Philippine Central Conference. We

believe that up to now The United Methodist Church is still dominated by the American church. Changing the name into a regional and doing away with the name "Central" would accurately put all us members of the body of Christ called United Methodist Church in equal platform. Terms that clearly indicate segregation, like calling "Central Conference" to the bodies outside the United States, clearly indicates the (*unintelligible*) of segregation, so I stand before and appeal to approve this petition. Thank you.

BISHOP MCCLESKEY: Thank you very much. I see a yellow card right behind this gentleman at mic. 1, please.

KIM REISMAN (North Indiana): Thank you, Bishop. I just have a question. I've been making a lot of notes, probably too many, which have confused me now. And when you listed the, the numbers, you did not include 741?

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKERS: They did.

BISHOP MCCLESKEY: Yes, yes, we did.

REISMAN: 750—did I miss it?

BISHOP MCCLESKEY: We did include it.

REISMAN: And 59 and 60? So I missed it. That's what I'm asking.

BISHOP MCCLESKEY: 59 and 60 were not included. Am I correct? Let's ask—

REISMAN: Is that correct?

BISHOP MCCLESKEY: —the chair. Let's ask the chair to clarify that for us. Thank you.

LAFERTY: Several of the items...calendar items...our committee initially began looking at the petitions as they were submitted, and as the committee had significant debate we decided that the name change was appropriate, so we moved forward with just the name changes. When we did that, then they were entered into the CALMS system, which is the system that we used to generate the petitions, which

automatically assigned them a calendar no. in the order in which they were submitted into the computer. Item No. 4...I'm sorry, Item No. 742 is not a name change; it has a...it's a different kind of change. That's why it was not included. 759 and 760 are more than just a name change and...let me see...700...I'm sorry.

REISMAN: That's fine. That goes through the three that I was interested in, and you answered my question. Thank you very much.

BISHOP MCCLESKEY: Thank you very much. Now is there someone who wishes to speak in opposition? I see a red card back here in section C. Come to mic. 9, please.

RUDOLPH J. MERAB (Liberia): Bishop, again, Bishop, I would like to say that in the body there are many members and they got different names. In the body we are all different; yet we are one body. The situation of trying to seem as if we are given a name we become equal, for me doesn't suffice. And therefore I would ask everybody to please reject issue of all of us having a regional name when we already have a context in which we deal with each other, which is the Connectional Table. Thank you.

BISHOP MCCLESKEY: All right, thank you. We've had...all right, I see a green card right down here in section B. Would you come to mic. 2, please?

KARL BAUMGARDNER (Northwest Texas): This reminds me of my home church in Amarillo. We merged with a smaller church across town and under our...until we got a new pastor we referred to our church, the original plant, as the main campus and the smaller church as the west campus. We got a new pastor and we started referring to the main church, or the original church, as the east campus and the smaller church as the west campus. Those of us who were in the original church building never thought about how that would affect those that were in the smaller church. But once we made that change, it energized even

more those in the smaller church because we referred to ourselves on an equal plane with those in the smaller church.

**BISHOP MCCLESKEY:** All right, thank you very much. Is there someone who wishes to speak in opposition? I see a, some yellow cards back at the back near the center aisle. Come to mic. 11, please.

**JOE M. WHITTEMORE** (North Georgia): I have a question, Bishop. It's been reported here and in several other places that these changes have been recommended unanimously by the Council of Bishops and the Connectional Table. Can you confirm that to be the case for the Council of Bishops? I'm a member of the Connectional Table and I know this is not correct as it applies to the CT.

**BISHOP MCCLESKEY:** The best answer that I can give at this point, Brother Whittemore, is that they have been recommended by the Council, but I don't have the vote here in front of me and so I cannot say whether they were unanimous or not. I'm sorry, but that's the best I can do. All right, I see some more yellow cards, back here, same place. Go to mic. 11, please.

**ROY P. SMITH** (Arkansas): I believe it was reported that it was the unanimous decision of the Central Conferences College of Bishops, not the Council of Bishops. Perhaps the secretary could respond to that.

(*pause*)

**BISHOP MCCLESKEY:** Is Bishop Streiff able to help us with this? I do not know the answer to the question. If you would Bishop Wanner to speak, I'll ask her to come and respond to that question. I'm sure you will do that. Thank you.

**BISHOP ROSEMARIE WENNER:** I'm the president of the central conferences college. We as central conferences bishops, we voted unanimously on this petitions.

**BISHOP MCCLESKEY:** Thank you very much. All right, we've had two speeches in favor, one against. I

see a red card right back here please in this first se— in section A. Would you come to mic. 2, please?

**OKOKO LUHATA** (East Congo): (*simultaneous translation*): I would like to speak against the petition because I think there is a little bit of confusion. If I understood correctly what the committee chair said, when we change the regional name we still don't change the content. And therefore it is not necessary because it does not change anything. When you say *regional* conference, for us French speakers it sounds as if there was an exclusion, as if you had to be part of the region to belong. Each regional conference deals with its own regional affairs. And I do not believe that this is the idea behind a regional conference. Excuse me, General Conference. So, we want to cut up. When we use the word *regional* it amounts to cutting up the Methodist Church. I think that we should have dealt with that at the annual conferences and we haven't dealt with that matter at annual conferences or at central conferences. That is why, Bishop, we should have asked the grassroots. We should have been consulted on this. Thank you.

**BISHOP MCCLESKEY:** Thank you very much. Now, we've had two speeches for and two against. I see a yellow card at mic. 2, please, and then I'll come over here

**DEVIN W. MAUNEY** (Desert Southwest): I just have a question of information that pertains to the last speech. It is my understanding that anything that we pass here that is a constitutional amendment will be referred back to the annual and central conferences for discussion and vote. Is that the case?

**BISHOP MCCLESKEY:** That is correct. The process is that any constitutional amendments that are approved by the General Conference will be acted upon by the annual conferences a year hence. Thank you. All right, I see green cards right over here. Come here to mic. 3, please.

**VIDAR STEN BJERKSETH** (Norway): I would ask you to vote in favor of this name change. The United Methodist Church is a connectional church. We are serving a church in 38 different countries and I believe that this name change will visualize in a better way the world nature of our church. The "Central Conference" name belonged to a time when the church outside of the United States was looked upon as missionary conferences. That's not the situation for most of the central conferences today. Regional conferences communicate in a better way the situational today. I'm talking about central conferences, so I ask you to vote in favor of the petition.

**BISHOP MCCLESKEY:** Thank you. Now we may receive one more statement and then opposition. I see one at the very back near the center aisle. Please would you go to mic. 11?

**K. EDWARD TOMLINSON** (North Georgia): It's my understanding that we have bundled these calendar items because they simply change the name. That is indeed not factual. If, for instance, you would look at Calendar Item 742, Petition—

**BISHOP MCCLESKEY:** 742 is not in the list, Brother Ed.

**TOMLINSON:** My mistake. I wonder if there are other unintended paragraphs in these that would cause us some real problems. My point here is that a study—a thorough study done of all the information that we need—would be a much better way to proceed than to change constitutional amendments without thorough knowledge.

**BISHOP MCCLESKEY:** All right. Thank you. Now you have exhausted the time for statements. I see a yellow card. Is it an inquiry? Parliamentary inquiry? Come to mic. 10, please.

**JOHN W. SETH** (Western Pennsylvania): I move to suspend the rules that we might vote on all that is before us.

BISHOP MCCLESKEY: We can take the time to do that vote if you wish but that, in fact, is where we are. We're ready to vote on all that is before us. Now let me give the chair of the committee an opportunity to speak before the vote.

LAFERTY: During the first three years of my undergraduate career at Ohio Wesleyan University, I had the opportunity to work as a research assistant for the Archives of Ohio United Methodism, the official archival repository of both the East and West Ohio Conferences. During that time I was fortunate to lead a project—an oral history project—on the former Lexington Conference of the former Central Jurisdiction. What I quickly discovered when talking to participants in our oral history project was there was, in fact, confusion between the name “Central Jurisdiction,” which is a part of our past, and “Central Conferences,” which are part of our present and future.

The changing of these words or this word is a word that will help us move to a better understanding of who we are. The word *Central*, in fact, is archaic, and for many of us it implies racism. I will acknowledge that by changing the word this will not end racism in the church, but will simply help us to move beyond using terms that invoke racism when we use them. In fact, a thorough study has been done. Over the last four years there has been a task force that has studied this question and has brought forth these 17 constitutional amendments after careful consideration and consultation. In fact, annual conferences will also have to grapple with this issue as these constitutional amendments go to our annual conferences for discussion and vote as well.

The changing of the word *central* to *regional* will help us as a church live into the reality of a worldwide church, and we encourage you to adopt these petitions.

BISHOP MCCLESKEY: Thank you very much; now you're ready to

vote. If you... The committee recommends adoption of all of these... I see a yellow card. Is this a parliamentary inquiry? Yes? Then come to mic. 9, please.

MERAB: If we vote on the items here and we carry to our central conferences, and our central conferences reject them, will it have any bearing on the General Conference, or we have already passed it?

BISHOP MCCLESKEY: Let me read the paragraph that responds to that question. It's paragraph 59, which deals with amendments to the constitution. I'll read the entire paragraph because I think it will be informative. “Amendments to the constitution shall be made upon a two-thirds majority of the General Conference present and voting,” so it will require two-thirds here, “and a two-thirds affirmative vote of the *aggregate* number of members of the several annual conferences present and voting.” So it would require two-thirds vote here, and then the action of this body would go not to the central conferences, nor to the jurisdictional conferences, but to the *annual* conferences; and a two-thirds aggregate vote, that is the total vote from across the entire church of all the annual conferences, is required for adoption. And that is the constitutional process. All right, thank you. I think we are ready to vote.

We've not used your keypads for a while and they may have taken a nap, so let's see if we can wake them up. Press any button and see if your screen says “ready.” If your screen does not say “ready,” you need to stand so the technicians can assist you with a different keypad. Now, we're in the process of voting, so I'm not going to take any more questions now, thank you.

#### *Amendments to Worldwide Nature Approved*

Are all our keypads awake? Appears that they are. All right; requires a two-thirds vote. If you will approve of these proposed amend-

ments, vote “1” for yes. If you do not approve of them, you will vote “2” for no. Please vote when the timer appears on the screen. [*Yes, 629; No, 248*]

(pause)

By a vote of 629 or 72 percent to 248 or 28 percent you have approved of these amendments—proposed amendments—and they will be forwarded then, as required, to the annual conferences. Now we are going to move to some other calendar items from this same legislative committee. Matthew, you've been guiding us well. Please continue.

LAFERTY: Bishop, it was my sense of the will of the house to try to bundle a couple of these together. There are two petitions that delete the same language and so, I'll give you those numbers and if it's... I would ask that the house consider bundling those together as well. They're calendar... they are on p. 2176; it's Calendar Item 759. The one that does the similar kind of thing is on p. 2268. It's Calendar Item 1200. I will note on Calendar Item 1200 there has been an editorial mistake. The word *by*, b-y, has been stricken. It should not be stricken.

BISHOP MCCLESKEY: All right. These are before us.

LAFERTY: Bishop, if I could just a moment... I can... as I turn... Calendar Item 1200 is found on p. 454 of the *Advance DCA*. It may be helpful for members to turn there.

BISHOP MCCLESKEY: Let me just raise one question, not having looked immediately at the details of all this. These are close enough that you don't think it will be clear to the house for us to deal with them together?

LAFERTY: I'm sorry, Bishop, I didn't realize—

BISHOP MCCLESKEY: You will be clear to the house what we are doing so we can deal with these, bundle them together as you say?

LAFERTY: Yes, I do.

BISHOP MCCLESKEY: All right, and I'm sure you will help us see that, thank you.

LAFERTY: What these petitions do is, in fact...hold on just one moment here; got to make sure I have the right petition. Actually, I'm sorry, Bishop; I'm incorrect on the one item. It's just Calendar Item 759...that is a name change and deleting information relating to the uniting conference...yes, it's just...I'm sorry, Bishop, we need to consider the one item. It's found on p. 2176. It's Calendar Item 759, found on p. 443 in the *Advance DCA*. It's Petition No. 80814. This is a name change and also language that we're deleting in reference...I'll tell you what the stricken language is. It's "The date and place of the first meeting succeeding the Uniting Conference shall be fixed by the bishops of the respective central conferences, or in such a manner as shall be determined by the General Conference." In essence, it is deleting reference to the Uniting Conference, which happened 40 years ago, and that language is no longer needed in the Constitution.

BISHOP MCCLESKEY: So we are considering only this one matter.

LAFERTY: Yes, we just need to consider this one item.

BISHOP MCCLESKEY: All right, it's before us. Is there discussion? I think you are ready to vote and we must do this by the keypads as well. If you will—

LAFERTY: Bishop, Bishop, this...

BISHOP MCCLESKEY: Yes.

LAFERTY: I just want to remind the house that the committee has voted and requests that you adopt this petition.

BISHOP MCCLESKEY: Thank you very much. The committee's recommended adoption. If you would support this petition, you would press "1" for yes; if not, you would press "2" for no. Please vote when the numbers appear on the screen.

(pause)

Thank you and by vote of 749 to 119, you have voted to approve this. [Yes, 749; No, 119]

LAFERTY: The next item, Bishop, is on p. 2268 in the *DCA*, Calendar Item 1200. It's Petition No. 80821; that's found on p. 454 in the *Advance Daily Christian Advocate*. The committee recommends adoption of this calendar item. This calendar item seeks to bring the church, not only into line with the name changes that we are proposing, deleting, deleting references to the Uniting Conference; it also seeks to stricken the language outside the United States. This, in fact, does not change the jurisdictional conference structure, which still exists in the United States of America, in paragraph 9 of our Constitution. And, in fact, in paragraph 540 it maintains the territory outside the United States is to be organized into a central conference. What this language does is help move us into a global worldwide church and would prepare us for any recommendation that would come from the task force in the next four years.

BISHOP MCCLESKEY: All right, thank you. It's before you. I see a red card back here. Would you come to mic. 9, please?

MIKE F. CHILDS (Mississippi): I rise to speak against this and all the future constitutional amendments that we are about to pass because we are moving from just changing names now into making real changes; and here is one significant thing that has not been mentioned. Once we make these changes, it will only take a majority vote, not a...not the kind of vote—what is it, two-thirds vote?—that we need now to make the change. And I am against changing the Constitution significantly until we know what those changes will mean, and we won't know that until the full study is done. So we are taking a leap into the dark here and I think we would be wise just to slow down and let the

Constitution stand as it is until we know exactly where this is going to take us. I, for one, believe that this conference would have been much, much poorer had we not had the international delegates here. And I have yet to have it explained to me how segregating the U.S. into a regional conference from the international delegates makes us worldwide. It seems to me it does the opposite. So I think that we need to stop this now.

BISHOP MCCLESKEY: All right, thank you. I see a yellow card down here. Would you come to mic. 2, please? Then I'll be looking for a green card in a moment.

DANIEL A. IVEY-SOTO (New Mexico): Bishop, I rise to make an amendment.

BISHOP MCCLESKEY: All right.

IVEY-SOTO: The amendment is to strike the strike-out, in other words, reinstate the language.

BISHOP MCCLESKEY: Are you at the *DCA* printing?

*Reinstate "Outside the United States of America"*

IVEY-SOTO: I am, sir, that is...thank you, that is p. 454 of the *Advance DCA*, paragraph 38, and I am in the first two lines of this petition, No. 80821.

BISHOP MCCLESKEY: Thank you.

IVEY-SOTO: The amendment is to reinstate the words "outside the United States of America." If I have a second, I would like to speak to it.

BISHOP MCCLESKEY: It is...is it seconded? It is. You may speak to it.

IVEY-SOTO: Bishop, we have already made the determination to remove language referring to the Uniting Conference as well as to change the terminology we use to "regional conferences." By adopting this amendment, what we would do is that we would conform this paragraph to the other changes we have

previously made. That is appropriate. By removing...by reinstating the language "outside the United States of America," we are also being faithful to the work that the study team is to do over this next quadrennium. We will allow the study team to do its work without us prejudging the result. That is also appropriate. Therefore, we should leave that language in the Constitution, "outside the United States," until we have a report back from the study team. We should also make the rest of the changes to conform to what we have already done. Please support this amendment. Thank you.

**BISHOP MCCLESKEY:** All right, thank you. Is there someone who wishes to speak in opposition to the amendment? I see a red card, right down here; yes, sir, on the front row; yes, please. Mic. 2.

**SAMUEL ALTUNIAN** (Bulgaria Provisional): I would make two points against this amendment. The first one is that the proposal, the amendments of the Constitution, are made by two very specific parties: the Council of Bishops and the Connectional Tables. I don't know if you trust your bishop, but I trust mine. So, they are elected bishops and they should be the visionaries of the church. So I trust that they know the direction. The second point is that actually the first four years of the study answered the question if a change should be made, and the four additional years that we gave with proposal worldwide nature 24, we initiated task group that should work out the details how exactly, the details in the American part of the regional conference will look like.

So, the question is already answered, and I think it's a good argument.

And the third one is, actually, do we really want a change? We asked the bishops and the Connectional Table that they will propose a change. And they made these proposals. And we asked them again, think once more about that. So, actually, we don't like the answer of the

bishops and the Connectional Table and we give them the ball back. I'm not sure this is the right way. If we don't like the, the answer of our bishop, probably should elect other bishops.

*(laughter)*

But I still trust the bishop of my church. So, I'm really against that amendment. And actually, outside the unit, the United States sounds to me like outside of Eden. So the world is not in and outside the United States. I hope we're all inside the kingdom of God so (*unintelligible*) the language, but not in our Constitution. Thank.

**BISHOP MCCLESKEY:** Thank you. I see a green card right back here in...next to the center aisle in, in section A. Would you come to mic. 5, please?

**CHARLES S G BOAYUE** (Detroit): I rise in support of the amendment for three major reasons. First, it is not adverse to what the bishops are recommending. We've already approved a concept of regional conferences, which will have effect inside and outside the United States. The issue in this amendment is the specificity and the particularity of studies that have been authorized by this General Conference for churches outside the United States and what might happen to them if we do not keep this phrase in. There's much work happening outside the United States that needs to be recognized. If you vote for this you are not expressing disrespect or disregard for the wisdom and the vision of the bishops. In my opinion, you are extending it. Sometimes we do work, and I think the strike that was recommended by the committee or the petitioner was based on the concept of establishing regional conferences. That concept is going to be a reality. I want the reality to also allow, and not provide any ambiguity for, studies that we have authorized specifically for outside the United States. So, I support this and urge my fellow delegates to support it.

**BISHOP MCCLESKEY:** Thank you. Now, I see a red card over here at mic. 3, please.

**A MARK CONARD** (Kansas West): Ordinarily I am in favor of delay, referral, study, and postponement.

*(laughter)*

I am a cautious person, reluctant to take steps forward, and I might find myself on an escalator that is not moving and wait for it to start.

*(laughter)*

I do not believe that we can wait for the U.S. church to catch up with the rest of the world. There, the motion that was made to change the petition was one that I at one time supported and thought would help us stair-step into this worldwide church. I believe we need to not stair-step, we need to take the step together in the U.S. and outside the U.S. to become a worldwide church with regional conferences into a future that God has for us. I would encourage the delegates to vote against the motion.

**BISHOP MCCLESKEY:** Thank you. We've had two speeches for and two against the proposed amendment. I'm looking for a green card. I see one back here at the back. Would you go, please, to mic. 10?

*Permissive Language in  
"Regional" Petition*

**HAL N. BRADY** (South Georgia): The first thing I'd like to say is I love the bishops and I support them in all their efforts. But I do want to say this. There'll be two issues before us in these constitutional changes. Change the name "central" to "regional"; we've done, that's passed, and that's good. The other issue is establishing a regional conference within the United States. In the Legislative Committee I sought to remind that committee that not everybody is ready to say "we *shall* establish a regional conference in

the United States” without specifically knowing exactly what that means; how we live into the future of the worldwide church. We certainly know where we’re going and we’ll support that, but we do not know what that actually means. We have approved a study that will go for the next four years. At this point I think it would be better for the study to inform the decision than the decision to be made now and then the study just follow up on the decision. So I want to support this particular amendment. Thank you very much.

BISHOP MCCLESKEY: Thank you. Now I see a red card at the very back and the center. Would you come to mic. 11, please? Point of information? All right, would you just hold at...the mic. 11...hold on a minute, the person who...requesting the point of information. Oh, we’re over here. All right. I’m sorry; I was looking in the wrong place. Mic. 3.

ELAINE J W STANOVSKY (Pacific Northwest): We’re permitted to correct misinformation that was given, and the petition *clearly* is permissive not...the language is not *shall*; it is *may*.

BISHOP MCCLESKEY: Thank you very much. Now, mic. 11.

FELICISIMO CAO (California-Nevada): I rise to speak not in favor of the amendment that is before us, and I would like to say, *strongly* not in favor of that amendment. I am a member of the conference’s Legislative Committee and I would honestly say that I have wrestled with this petition that is before us. For me, the...restoring the words in the United States is again for me a form of dominance. And if we are striking out these words, I see that you are helping the churches, particularly in the Philippines, to be empowered by decolonizing themselves and I am a part of that. And so, I strongly encourage you to oppose this amendment that is before us.

BISHOP MCCLESKEY: Thank you. Now we’ve had three speeches for and three against the proposed

amendment, which is a proposal to reinsert the words “outside the United States of America.” I see some yellow cards. Is this a parliamentary inquiry? Would you come to mic. 10, 12, please?

GREGORY D. STOVER (West Ohio): Thank you, Bishop. Is a motion to refer in order at this time?

BISHOP MCCLESKEY: Are you moving to refer the item of the amendment that’s proposed or the entire proposal? Could you be more specific?

STOVER: It would be a motion to refer the entire proposal, including the amendment.

BISHOP MCCLESKEY: I believe it is in order. Is it seconded?

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKERS: Second.

STOVER: Thank you, Bishop. I move that we refer this calendar item, along with the following calendar items, to the Committee to Study the Worldwide Nature of the Church. Those items would include: Calendar Items 742, 760, 1199, 1200, and 1201. And if I may, I would like to speak to it.

BISHOP MCCLESKEY: I’ll allow you to make that motion on the matter that is before us but not on the following one since it is not before us at the current time.

STOVER: Very well, I’ll speak to this referral, then.

BISHOP MCCLESKEY: 1200, is that correct? Calendar Item...all right, you may.

STOVER: Bishop and members of the conference, I’m very glad that we have made the name changes.

BISHOP MCCLESKEY: All right, excuse me, what is your point of order? Come to mic. 11, or whatever’s closest. Nine, 8; it’s hard to see those things.

TIMOTHY J. RISS (New York): Forgive me if I missed something. Didn’t we already vote on referring this?

BISHOP MCCLESKEY: We did not. Those were other items previ-

ously. You may go ahead. Back to mic. 12.

RISS: Bishop—

STOVER: Thank you.

LAFERTY: Bishop, Bishop. If my memory is correct, the first motion to refer was to refer all of the petitions, which include the ones that were named by the speaker to the study committee. We have already done a motion to refer, and therefore we have rejected that as a body and it should not be in order.

BISHOP MCCLESKEY: There was a motion to refer, it was not supported and so we have begun again. Go ahead, Greg.

STOVER: Thank you. While I am very glad for the name change that has been made to insert the word *regional* rather than *central*, and I am grateful for the way that that helps us push beyond the racism we have experienced, I believe that when we are dealing with this petition or this particular calendar item, we’re dealing with a different matter. We are beginning to deal with matters of the structure of the church, not simply naming. We have had an idea presented that the U.S. be dealt with as a regional conference, as with other regions of the world. Perhaps that is a good idea. But it is in germinal form at this time. Even the comm—instructions to the committee to which this study is to be referred do not mandate that the committee bring back a proposal that includes the United States as a particular region. It simply says that they may bring back that proposal. I believe that we need to build bridges. We need to build bridges to our central conferences, and some will say that we ought to build the bridge while we walk on it. However, when we build a bridge as we walk on it, we need to know where the bridge is going, and how it is to be built. We know we need a bridge, but we’re not sure yet where it needs to go. Let us refer this and other matters to the study commission where they can craft a proposal that helps us have

full understanding before we vote. Please vote to refer.

BISHOP MCCLESKEY: All right, thank you. I see a red card right back at mic. 6, please.

REBECCA L. FARNUM (West Michigan): I rise to speak against referral. Repeatedly, throughout this conference, we have had frustration in our inability to give bishops to the central conferences right away and having to wait four years. We have had a study; they've brought these suggestions to us. I want to be very clear that this petition is not going to force us to have a regional conference in the U.S. It makes it possible in the next General Conference if we want to do that, that we can. But it does not force us.

BISHOP MCCLESKEY: Thank you. Is there someone that wishes to speak in favor of referral? I've, I see a green card back in the middle of section D. Where'd it go? Yes, that's it. Move to the closest mic. please. The green card. That's not the card I was lookin' at. I'm sorry, I was looking at this gentleman who's moving to the mic.

RICHARD A. HUNTER (North Georgia): OK, he has a yellow card.

BISHOP MCCLESKEY: He's a yellow. Well, as we've said before, it's hard to tell yellow from green sometimes. Hang on, stay there and we'll come back to you. This is a question?

WILLIAM WESTBROOK JR. (Peninsula-Delaware): A question, Bishop. Question for the committee. In all that we have done so far, have we made any changes to Article 9 of the Constitution?

LAFERTY: Could you state the question again please?

WESTBROOK: Have we made—

LAFERTY: I'm sorry, I did hear it correctly. We have not made changes to Article 9.

WESTBROOK: OK, thank you.

LAFERTY: Which Article 9 states that there shall be jurisdictional conferences for the Church inside the United States of America.

BISHOP MCCLESKEY: We'll come back now to mic. 10.

HUNTER: Yes, Bishop, thank you. I also served on this Legislative Committee and we discussed at length the fact that there is a sense of anxiety but also many unanswered questions about what this constitutional amendment will do. The best thing we can do is to allow the task force to do their work, to complete the design, and bring that in 2012. Then we will vote on this constitutional amendment knowing where the bridge is going. I'm much more comfortable with that and encourage you to vote in that way.

BISHOP MCCLESKEY: Thank you. Now we have had two speeches in favor of referral, one against, and we've—I got an order of the day that we've passed the time for. I'm going to try to move us towards that if I can. I'm going to come to this red in the back, yes, that's it. Come to mic., well, it's a woman...the person in the white. Yes, at mic. 11.

STEPHANIE DECKARD (North Central New York): I would like to echo what Becko was saying. First of all, this says that there may be regional conferences. It does not restrict us. Second of all, none of us know what is gonna happen in the future. None of us know where this leads. Only God knows that. Third of all, there has already been a study. This is what they recommend to us. And fourth, I would like to remind the body of what the youth and young people said in the young adult address: that we are here for change and action. We do not wanna wait four years, and then another four after we change it for the annual conferences to vote on it. We should do it now. Thank you.

BISHOP MCCLESKEY: Thank you, Stephanie. I want to try something; we've had two for and two against; are you ready to vote?

FLOOR RESPONSE: Yes!

BISHOP MCCLESKEY: I thought you probably were.

(laughter)

We're going to vote on the referral. The motion is to refer.

LAFERTY: Bishop, if I'm correct I do have the last word.

BISHOP MCCLESKEY: I call on the chair of the committee.

*Final Committee Response to Task Force on Worldwide Ministry*

LAFERTY: Thank you. There is a knock at our United Methodist door. The Task Force on the Worldwide Ministry for The United Methodist Church has invited us to hear that knocking. It often appears that The United Methodist Church is structured as a U.S. church with overseas outposts. Over the last 40 years, we have studied, over the *last 40 years*, we have studied and slightly modified the church structure. Yet, our structure still remains U.S.-centric. The Connectional Table, the Council of Bishops, and the conference's Legislative Committee heard that request, the desire of the church, that we have a structure that must change to be worldwide. Living into a worldwide church may be challenging for us, but rejecting that will mean that we further fragment. There are not international and U.S. delegates at this General Conference. There are, however, delegates that represent many nations. I wanna say that this amendment, or this referral, that this proposal does not segregate us into different structures; that in keeping this language, does not create a U.S. regional conference; that this matter of the U.S. removing those words, for the study committee, does not prejudice their work. I would draw your attention to Paragraph 540, which mandates that central conferences should be outside the United States. We are not building bridges as we go. We are simply laying the foundation and the commitment to truly be a worldwide church. I ask that you reject this motion to refer.

BISHOP MCCLESKEY: Thank you, now we're going to proceed to the vote. If you are in favor of the motion to refer, you will vote "1" for yes; if you are opposed, you will vote "2" for no. Please vote when the timer appears.

*(pause)*

*[Yes, 365; No, 527]*

BISHOP MCCLESKEY: All right. By a vote of 365, yes, 527, no, you have voted *not* to refer this matter. Now, we're past the time for an order of the day, so we're going to suspend the dealing with the—this particular matter for the present and come back to it later. And I want to now call upon those who are going to lead us in the order of the day, which is a recognition of the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the General Board of Pension and Health Benefits.

*Pensions and Health Benefits Video*

BISHOP BENJAMIN CHAMNESS: Good morning. The 100-year history of the General Board of Pension and Health Benefits is a legacy of care and concern for the welfare of those who are called to serve, clergy and lay workers alike. It has been an honor for me to chair this agency's board of directors since 2004, and I know that I speak for all 39 board members and the at-large committee members, when I say that we serve with humility as stewards for the retirement security of this agency's 74,000 plan participants.

We have a vision for the next century that includes implementation of pension for the central conferences and a focus on the health of our clergy and lay workers. This agency serves the church by caring for all of us through its retirement and benefit programs. Please join me now in celebrating the centennial of this great agency of The United—I'm sorry—the General Board of Pension and Health Benefits, as we view a brief video.

*(video presentation)*

*(applause)*

BISHOP MCCLESKEY: Now, just a few announcements and then a prayer, and then we're going to adjourn for lunch shortly. I was asked earlier about the—why the witness that occurred this morning was not streamed on the Webcast, and the response I gave then has been confirmed that our practice is that we do not Webcast recesses, and that's why you see the conference logo during the breaks. However, I've been advised that the witness was recorded and that the video will be posted by United Methodist Communications on the General Conference Web site this afternoon, possibly by 2:30.

*(applause)*

Now let me turn to our secretary for announcements. All right, is an inquiry? Yes, over here. Go to mic. 4, please.

WM. RANDALL FRYE (Holston): It's sort of an announcement.

BISHOP MCCLESKEY: All right.

FRYE: Holston Conference is the home—and we're proud to be the home—of the University of Tennessee and the eight-time women's national champion basketball, Lady Volunteers.

*(applause)*

In honor of our head coach, Pat Summit, who's won more college games, more games than any college coach—she is also a member of the Seymour United Methodist Church—

*(applause)*

We bid \$20,000—

*(applause)*

—for Bishop Bickerton's basketball and for the children of Africa.

*(applause)*

BISHOP MCCLESKEY: All right!

*(applause)*

Thank you for that!

FRYE: But, but—

BISHOP MCCLESKEY: This basketball is—you're—more?

FRYE: Can I add one more thing—

BISHOP MCCLESKEY: Go ahead.

FRYE: —of which we're very proud. The youth of our conference have already raised over \$81,000 toward their goal of \$200,000 for Nothing But Nets. That represents one net per youth in our conference. Thank you.

BISHOP MCCLESKEY: Thank you!

*(applause)*

This basketball is quickly becoming the most valuable item in the house. I think we'd better put it in a safe somewhere.

*(laughter)*

We'll turn to our secretary for announcements.

REIST: Well, I just changed the order of the announcements. Competition abounds in the basketball world. We very proud Jayhawks, who began this challenge, are thrilled with how God has used the original humble Kansas challenge—or was it a blatant brag?—

*(laughter)*

to transform our competitive juices to profound compassion because we serve a God of abundance. We Jayhawks are providing basketballs to every group who bids more than \$1,000, which the bishops will sign. I don't know if that means they'll sign the balls or the bids, but—

*(laughter)*

—if you want no bishops to sign your ball,

*(laughter)*

you might have to pay \$500 more.

*(laughter)*

We are, of course, assuming all groups will pay up in order to get their very valuable basketball, which you may then use to raise funds in your own conference. Then you can send those balls to Africa with your mission trips because it's really about the kids. Go, Methodists and Jayhawks.

*(applause)*

I've been asked to announce to delegates, reserves, and other members of Western New York, Troy, Wyoming, and North Central conferences and their bishops that they're invited to gather for dinner tonight in Room 202AB of the convention center at 5:30 P.M., or whenever the dinner recess begins.

I've also been asked to announce to members of the Standing Committee on Central Conference Matters, please be prepared to have a short meeting for organizing our work for the quadrennium tomorrow, Friday, at the beginning of the lunch recess. Members of the Standing Committee will receive a written notice tomorrow morning about the place of the meeting. And I would add that any of the committees that are being elected tomorrow should plan similar meetings. Today's mid-day foot-washing will be at 12:40 P.M. in the center of the arena, Bishop Robert Hayes Jr. presiding. Noontime concerts in the food court will feature the Deaf Choir of Christ United Methodist Church, Baltimore, Maryland; Grace Notes Choir, First United Methodist Church, Plano, Texas. How do you guys say that? Plano? Thank you! You know, I'm a "fur-ner"; I'm from up North. I don't—OK.

All annual conferences have been given the DVD *Truth in Wholeness: Replacing White Privilege with God's Promise*. Annual conferences are invited to make copies available for all their local churches. A study guide is being created. Find it by June 1 at [www.gccuic.org](http://www.gccuic.org) and [www.gcorr.org](http://www.gcorr.org). A limited number of the 16-minute, full-length DVDs are available at Cokesbury for \$4.

And a reminder: At one o'clock today, in Ballroom B, the Women's Division will be showing a documentary about the women of Liberia. That concludes my announcements.

BISHOP MCCLESKEY: Thank you very much. I wanna thank you for the respectful and gracious way in which you have conducted the business of this conference this morning. As your presiding officer for the session, I'm appreciative of that. I want to thank my episcopal colleagues and friends, bishops Kammerer and Pennel, for their help to me through this session this morning.

At the beginning of the morning, we were informed of a death in Harriett Olsen's family. We remembered Bishop Wills, who is presiding over the funeral service of one of his superintendents. Through the morning, I've had other persons mentioned or send notes to me about others whom they know who are dealing with loss and grief today. I'm gonna ask that we conclude our morning session in this manner: a time of prayer in which I will invite anyone who would like to lift the name of someone whom you know who is dealing with the loss of a loved one, some grievous loss in his or her life. If you will simply lift their names, either audibly or in the personal recesses of your own hearts. And after a time of the lifting of those names, I will dismiss us with a prayer. Would you join me now as we pray together? I invite you to lift those names.

*(prayer)*

## Thursday Afternoon, May 1, 2008

UNIDENTIFIED MALE

SPEAKER: Now I know all of us aren't seated in our seats right now as the bishop asked us to be back at 2:30, but this will get us back in our seats as we are in orderly fashion—hello Europeans. I don't know if you sing this song in Europe, but it goes like this...

*(music)*

Now as you are taking your seats, on this side of the auditorium, I see many people in the seats in the bleachers; that's good. But you're going to stand up from your seats, and over here you're going to stand up also. This side's going to be "Hallelujah" and this side's going to be "Praise Ye the Lord," and you're going to stand up when you sing your part. So over here we stand and sing...

*(music)*

That's pretty good, now we're going to change sides, so this is like a big liturgical wave here. Here we go. You guys sing.

*(music)*

You're having too much fun, Bishop.

BISHOP ALFRED W. GWINN JR: The Lord be with you.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKERS: And also with you.

BISHOP GWINN: I invite the conference to please come to order now. We are now in order. And as we prepare to do our worshipful work for the afternoon, I've invited Bishop John Innis, our Bishop in Liberia, to come and offer a prayer of blessing upon us as we do the work.

BISHOP JOHN G. INNIS: The Lord be with you.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKERS: And also with you.

BISHOP INNIS: Let us pray.

*(prayer)*

Amen.

BISHOP GWINN: Thank you, Bishop Innis. We begin this afternoon with an order of the day that will provide us a wonderful blessing and I want to recognize Bishop Janice Huie now to present to you that blessing.

BISHOP JANICE RIGGLE  
HUIE: God is good.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKERS:  
All the time.

BISHOP HUIE: And all the time.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKERS:  
God is good.

BISHOP HUIE: I greet you in the name of our risen Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. My friends, the Holy Spirit works in strange and wonderful ways. We've talked a lot in this General Conference about doing no harm, doing good, staying in love with God. This afternoon we are going to focus on doing good. And I have the wonderful and incredible privilege of an introduction to you in just a moment.

But let me take you back to last Friday. I know that last Friday to some of you may seem like last year, but if you can remember back to last Friday after all that's happened, the worship and the wonderful celebration with President Johnson Sirleaf and all of these other great moments in this General Conference. Last Friday we celebrated the gift of \$5 million that the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation is giving to support The United Methodist Church through the United Nations Foundation to help us in our Global Health Initiative. That \$5 million is a little like planting seeds. We're going to use that money to grow millions and millions of dollars for the Global Health Initiative. That partnership that we now have with United Nations Foundations and the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation is a historic partnership. None of us on this

stage can think of any other relationship that The United Methodist Church has ever had with outside partners that brings this magnitude of partnership, depth, and breadth of partnership with The United Methodist Church. And our goal here is to do good. It is to do good to improve the health of children and families. Sitting on stage here are bishops of conferences who either already have received insecticide-treated bed nets to prevent malaria or who will be receiving insecticide-treated bed nets to prevent malaria in the near future. That's a sign—a beginning sign—of what's already going on in that partnership. All that's been made possible and will continue to grow as the months go by.

So this afternoon it's my privilege to introduce to you another of these great moments in this General Conference—to introduce to you Mr. Bill Gates Sr. Mr. Bill Gates Sr. guides the vision and strategic direction of the foundation that was begun by his son, Mr. Bill Gates, the founder of Microsoft. He is a model for all of us as one of those who could be sitting back and enjoying retirement and, I learned, his eight grandchildren. Instead, he's out here working hard to try to make the world a better place to live. Prior to joining the foundation, Mr. Gates practiced law for nearly 50 years in Seattle, Washington. He serves on the board of regents for the University of Washington; he is the author of a noted book on estate taxes; and he has been a volunteer for more than two dozen organizations in the northwest part of the United States. A core belief of the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation is that every life has equal value. Would you say that with me?

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKERS:  
Every life has equal value.

BISHOP HUIE: It sounds to me like maybe they've been influenced by our founder, John Wesley, and some of the good United Methodist folk of Seattle. Mr. Gates brings to

us another powerful reason for a future with hopes. Would you join me in giving a warm, warm welcome to Mr. Bill Gates Sr.

*(applause)*

*William Gates Sr. Address*

WILLIAM GATES SR.: Thank you. Thank you. You're very kind. You're very kind, and I just want to tell you what a—it really is a thrill for me and for the foundation that this moment—that we're commencing to celebrate and get started down the road on it—it's a completely marvelous program to be involved in, and I do thank you very much.

So there are 1,000 delegates here today. You share your devotion to God. You share your devotion to The United Methodist Church, but you differ in some important ways. For example, those of you who come from North America have probably never seen malaria; but many of you who come from Africa see malaria every day. On Sundays, when you offer prayers for the sick, you envision children shivering with this disease that turns a mosquito bite into a death sentence. That stark difference among you is a tragedy. The world has wiped malaria out on one continent and allowed it to keep claiming lives on another. But here today, you're deciding to turn that tragedy into a triumph. You've come together—1,000 delegates here in Fort Worth—representing 12 million United Methodists around the world, to say that you'll just no longer accept malaria—

*(applause)*

—to say that you are all brothers and sisters. And brothers and sisters don't sit back and watch each other die, not when there's a way to stop it. I'm here to thank you on behalf of the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation. We're very proud to be your partner in this wonderful campaign to end the world's worst killer of children. We believe this campaign

could not succeed without you. So I'm asking each one of you to make a personal commitment to help your church end malaria.

This disease is thousands of years old, and human beings have struggled against it for just that long; but at this very moment, the goal of wiping malaria off the face of the earth is more realistic than ever before. Now we have the science and technology to save more lives; and now we have the will to do it. You are proof of that. Almost 300 years ago, your founder, John Wesley, explained the moral implications of what is now fashionably called globalization. He said, "I look on all the world as my parish." Let's say it together, "I look on all the world as my parish." That's great. In that single sentence, he described the bonds of mutual responsibility that hold us all together. Nowadays, some people write long books trying to express the same simple idea, but for good reason.

That idea is the key ingredient for a peaceful world in which all people are treated as equally precious. When enough of us arrive at the conclusion that parish lines and national borders cannot wipe away our common humanity, then we will do what is necessary to end needless suffering. Then the human impulse that told us it is wrong for people in North America to die of malaria will tell us that it is wrong for people *anywhere* to die of malaria.

(applause)

This fight against malaria is going to take billions of dollars. Some of that money will pay for tools that already exist, like bed nets and insecticides that protect people from disease-carrying mosquitoes, and anti-malarial drugs that treat people who do get sick. Some of the money will find the research and development of new and better tools, like a vaccine. So when you make your donation, you will be saving lives. The fight against malaria is going to take more health clinics in more

countries. That's where people get the education and the medicines they need. Your church has been operating healthcare clinics in Africa for more than 150 years.

(applause)

So as you grow those efforts, *you* will be saving lives. The fight against malaria is going to take politicians, who may get a priority, because when governments get involved, things really start to happen.

Three years ago, President Bush committed the U.S. government to the fight when he announced the President's Malaria Initiative; and here's an example of what that initiative has already done. In Zanzibar, the number of infants with malaria has gone down from 90—has gone down 95 percent in just two years.

(applause)

So when you raise your voice and tell your political leaders that malaria is no longer acceptable, you will be saving lives.

More than anything, the fight against malaria is going to take a firm commitment to John Wesley's idea; because that idea is the source of the world's will to end malaria. You are 12 million people armed with the conviction that all the world is your parish, which makes you the most powerful weapon there is against disease.

(applause)

The truth is, I am newer at this worldview than you are. I've spent the last decade being converted. Since my son and his wife started their foundation, I learn every day just how small the world is. I can trace my own learning about malaria to a trip I took last year to Zambia. On the way over, I read through a long list of data suggesting that that country's health crisis was all-encompassing—malnutrition, poverty, rampant disease. One particularly discouraging problem was that

there're only 540 doctors to serve a population of 12 million. Imagine if section A and section B made up the entire medical corps responsible for care for the entire population of Dallas, Fort Worth, Houston, and San Antonio. That's a problem.

But Zambia has launched a very ambitious national campaign against malaria. Its goal is to cut malaria by 80 percent by 2015; and every person I talked to in Zambia displayed the seriousness of purpose that persuaded me they will, indeed, achieve that goal. I was particularly impressed by one young man who explained the extraordinarily complicated logistics that go into delivering bed nets to rural communities. These are the hardest-to-reach places in a hard-to-reach country, but they're doing it. The nets start out in Dar es Salaam or Durban. From there, they go by truck to a network of depots throughout Zambia. From there, they go by 23,000 bicycles to families who live far away from roads. That's 23,000 bicycles covering a land mass that's about the size of Italy and Sweden.

Last year, health workers in Zambia distributed 3 million bed nets; and in just two years, the percentage of Zambians with a bed net has gone from just 20 to almost 80. Other African countries are embarking on equally ambitious programs, and the money you raise is going to help them succeed.

I see so many signs of hope, so many reasons to be optimistic. Through the Nothing But Nets campaign, millions of people are sending a net to save a life in countries they've never heard of. Maybe your net was delivered by one of those bicycles in Zambia. And just to step aside from my text for one quick moment, let me say that it's come to my attention that there is a basketball of some value which has—

(applause)

—which has become an item of some interest at this convention and

I am so intrigued and inspired by that that I am here to say to you that when the bidding is done, we at the Gates Foundation will meet that highest bid.

*(applause)*

Stop. Now I'm very surprised at that reaction. I was told that the highest bid so far is a couple hundred dollars.

*(laughter)*

Thank you. I'm delighted to make that announcement. So let me go on.

French airline passengers now pay a small tax that buys anti-malarial drugs for Africa. One of the organizations that benefits is the church's health association of Zambia. The United Methodist Church is a long-standing member of that association, which provides health care for millions of Zambians. At a research facility in Mozambique, the government of Spain is helping to fund advance clinical trials of malaria vaccine candidate called RTSS. The results have been promising so far and it would be reasonable to say we've never been so close to a malaria vaccine.

And do you notice a pattern emerging—emerging here? France and Spain, Mozambique and Zambia. John Wesley's idea is gaining traction. So as you raise money to build up your own health care infrastructure in Africa and to support the Global Fund for AIDS, you're demonstrating how powerful partnership is in this fight. Just a decade ago, the Global Fund did not even exist and in short time it has become the most important source of malaria funding in the world.

As more and more people join this fight, you hear some of them making the case that global health is an economic issue or a national security issue, and that's fine with me. If we have to make that argument to get the public funds we need to fight disease, we surely should do it. But to me disease is not an economic

issue or a national security issue. It's a humanitarian issue.

*(applause)*

People are dying and we can save them. That ought to be enough.

*(applause)*

People suffering from malaria are human beings. They're not national security assets. They're not markets for our exports. They're not allies in the war against terrorism. They are human beings who have infinite worth in their own right without any reference to us.

*(applause)*

They have mothers who love them, and children who need them, and friends who cherish them, and we ought to help them.

*(applause)*

So you believe that, too. And that's why you've chosen to lead this campaign. And you are leaders among leaders. I know you will take this message back home and share it with friends in your congregation. And I know that your friends will share it with their friends, too. That's how The United Methodist Church will lead this campaign. Let me close by giving you a very small but warm example of what your leadership looks like. This is a story of a friend of mine back home in Seattle, a woman named Candy Marshall. This is a story she told me. She works at the foundation in our global health program and has a part in this malaria activity. She grew up on a farm in Nebraska and she attended the United Methodist church every week. When she was a girl, the church kept a birthday bank and every year the children deposited one penny for every year of their lives. Well, a few weeks ago her mother, who is aware of Candy's work, sent her a note. Turns out Candy's church still keeps that birthday bank. This year its gross receipts

were \$62. Candy's mom inspired that congregation about this cause. So the Williamsburg United Methodist Church in Nebraska sent \$62 to Africa this year.

*(applause)*

Candy's mother sent a little extra and the minister, knowing about Candy's work, has invited her to speak at that church next time she's home. That's what your leadership looks like. It starts with one penny. The pennies add up and they can buy nets or drugs, or fund research or refurbish hospitals. The real power of your united church is that it teaches children in Nebraska and the children in Zambia that they belong to the same parish. That, in a single sentence, is your gift and it will end malaria. Thank you.

*(applause)*

BISHOP HUIE: Bishop Nhwatiwa of Zimbabwe will respond.

BISHOP EBEN NHIWATIWA: Let me say, your honor, presiding bishop, the General Conference, all the bishops, Mr. Gates Sr., and your staff members, I am reminded of a disclaimer which John the Baptist made. We are familiar with this in the Scriptures where he said, "I am not worthy even to untie the shoes of this One who is going to follow me." I feel the same. I am not worthy to give a word of thanks, but I take the privilege.

*(laughter)*

I take the privilege. I take the privilege, saying on behalf of all the countries represented by the bishops here and those who might not be here, those who have received the nurse through the efforts, humanitarian efforts of your office, we say thank you. In an African way, we clap hands and *(unintelligible)*. Please join us.

*(applause)*

Thank you. I have personally participated in the distribution of these nets in the company of Bishop John Schol of Baltimore-Washington Area, in a small village there in Zimbabwe called Munyarari. That's where we first distributed those in Zimbabwe and they then spread all over the country. You may not have been to Munyarari. Munyarari may be very far away from where we are now, but your healing hand, by preventing the spread of malaria, has already reached to there.

(applause)

All corners of Zimbabwe—and this can be true with Mozambique and Nigeria; this can be true with Côte d'Ivoire and other countries—as children and adult is sleeping well, covered by the nets, we feel that compassionate hand. You may have heard, some of you, that we lost a daughter from malaria, but even in death there is always a window of expressing thanksgiving. You may want to know—some of you may not know—she had already received the nets with her family, so don't blame the church; don't blame God. We were not meant to eliminate death—we eliminated the causes to reduce the causes of death so that people can have prolonged life, but death is God's way of saying, finally, "Come home." As we have already said, the world, John Wesley said, is my parish. It is very exciting for me personally to see that we are already living and experiencing the theme, the future, with hope. That type of hope goes beyond all, which can supersede the hope of taking care of the life of tender children, to ensure the future of Africa, to ensure the future of all of us. Again, thank you very much indeed.

(applause)

BISHOP GWINN: Thank you, Bishop Nhiwatiwa, and thank you, especially Mr. Gates, for coming our way. We give you a heartfelt word of gratitude. We do want to rise up and

be what you believe us to be—the most powerful force in the world against this disease—and we do have the will, and malaria is no longer acceptable to us. And thank you for encouraging us on that journey.

(applause)

I hope from your distance you're able to see all of our brother bishops that are from Africa that are here on the stage now representing those places where our ministry is at work with our Nothing But Nets. We are grateful for their leadership as we move in that ministry as well.

*Resumption of Discussion of Cal.  
Item #1200*

Now I want to bring us back to where we were at the point of the break and I want to remind you of where we are in the process of what is before us. What is before us is Calendar Item No. 1200 and Matthew is going to help us in just a moment with that issue, but you have, just before break, defeated a referral and you therefore are back on an amendment to the recommendation coming from the committee. You have had three speeches for the amendment and you have had three speeches against the amendment and so the question now is properly before you and we're going to be ready to vote in just a moment. Now we want to be very careful. I want to be kind and recognize cards but we all know that it is important for us to move as expeditiously as we can to be careful of everyone's time. I will not recognize anything but a point of order or a parliamentary inquiry. Now, the card that's being held up near mic. 9, do you have a point of order? Yes.

BRYAN COLLIER (Mississippi): Bishop, it's just been a very long time. If you can re-read the amendment, so that we know what's before us, that would be very helpful.

BISHOP GWINN: Certainly, thank you Bryan. That's a fair re-

quest. Now the amendment that is before you reinstates the phrase *outside the United States of America*. The phrase referred to is on your p. 454 of the *Advanced DCA* and is a petition numbered 80821, 80821. The committee had amended the petition by adding back the word *be*. You have made an amendment to reinstate the phrase *outside the United States of America*. Now if you want to agree with the amendment and reinstate those words *outside the United States of America*, you will vote "1" on your keypad. If you do not want to reinstate those words, you will vote "2" for no. Now you'll need to wake up your keypad, we'll give you a moment, we're gonna give you a moment to wake up your keypad and make sure that it's alert. Yes, and while you're doing that, I'm going to turn to Matthew for a closing statement regarding this amendment and then I'll tell you when we're ready for you to cast your vote. Matthew?

LAFERTY: Like I stated earlier today, over the last 40 years we have studied and only slightly modified the church structure, and our church structure, still today, remains U.S. centric. I realize that there continues to be some anxiety around these constitutional amendments, but they are necessary as we live into a worldwide church. Continuing in the same way—maintaining the status quo—will not strengthen our church, but will weaken us. This amendment should be rejected. I would like to remind the body that paragraph 540 still maintains that central conferences shall be outside of the United States. I would ask the body to reject this amendment.

BISHOP GWINN: All right, the question is now before you. If you support the amendment, you will press "1" on your keypad; if you do not support the amendment, you will press "2"? Please vote when the clock appears on the screen. [*Yes, 293; No, 528*]

BISHOP GWINN: All right. You have not supported the amendment

by 528, not supporting, and 293, supporting. Now, what is before us is the recommendation from the committee to reinsert the word *be...by*.

Thank you. Now, we have had one speech against this. We do have a right to speak for it. Do you have anyone that desires to speak for? I'm sorry. OK. It's just a correction. So what is before us then is this recommendation of the committee—the material itself. OK. All right. The material itself, the petition as you find it on p. 454 is what is before us. All right. You seem to be ready to vote. Now, prepare to vote—

LAFERTY: Bishop?

BISHOP GWINN: —because the question is before us.

LAFERTY: Bishop?

BISHOP GWINN: Yes? All right.

LAFERTY: If I could give just a brief closing statement. I think we've talked exhaustively in this morning's session about the reasons this is necessary, and I want to remind the body that many of our agencies, our bodies, and the conference's Legislative Committee has overwhelmingly voted that you accept this amendment to our constitution as it helps us live into a worldwide church, a church with a future for hope. And we would urge you to adopt this constitutional amendment.

BISHOP GWINN: All right. Are you ready then? You're voting on the Calendar Item No. 1200. If you will approve the Calendar Item No. 1200, you will press "1." If you do not approve it, you will press "2." Please vote when the clock appears. Yes. Thank you. [*Yes, 590; No, 255*]

(*pause*)

All right. You have by more than two-thirds supported the Calendar Item No. 1200 for the constitutional amendment by 590 for, and 255 against. Now, Matthew, just one moment. I do want to recognize back here in B, about row 10. No, sir, in row 10. I'd like to recognize you,

ma'am, if I might. If you go to the nearest mic., perhaps 4? Mic. 4.

*Request for Judicial Council Declaration on ¶602 and ¶320.6*

BRENDA J. BILER (Virginia): Bishop, I rise to request a declaratory decision with respect to the meaning, application, and effect of paragraph 602, 2004 *Book of Discipline*, as it relates to the new paragraph 320.6, Consent Calendar A04, Item 866, Clarify the Status of Retired Local Pastors, p. 2237 *DCA*.

BISHOP GWINN: All right. Thank you. There's a second. All right. Now, what is before us is a request for a judicial decision regarding the information that she's just provided us. Do you need to ask questions? Are you ready? All right. You seem to be ready. OK, it's right, and we need 1/5 of the body in that regard. Yes, there is a question. Go to mic. no. 5, please. No, 2; I'm sorry.

HARALD RUECKERT (Germany South): Excuse me. I am not an English-speaking with my—it's not my native language. I've got no clue what this request is about. Can anybody explain it to me, please?

BISHOP GWINN: All right. Rev. Biler, we'll ask you, if you will, can you summarize basically the intent of that request?

BILER: Yes, Bishop. Yesterday on the consent calendar, when we approved Item 866, it said that retired local pastors can choose in retirement to be clergy or lay. Paragraph 602 of the *Discipline* defines the members of the annual conference clergy and lay, and this is to address any discrepancy between the two paragraphs.

BISHOP GWINN: All right. There could be an apparent conflict and she's asking that the body to look at the possibility of the Judicial Council making a decision for us. I believe you're ready. If you will approve this request to the Judicial Council, will you...let me just have you lift the hand. All right, hands

down. If you're opposed? And by far more than 1/5, you have approved making this request to the Judicial Council. Yes, I'm going to recognize the card right here in the front. Go to mic. 2, please.

*Challenge to "Accountability" Petition Process*

RON ENNS (Northwest Texas): Bishop, I have a question of procedure. Bishop, I serve as a judge of the highest trial court in my state. Previously in this conference a matter was brought before the body. I direct your attention to p. 2159 of your *DCA*, Item No. 500. I will refer to this as the "Monday printing." Now, mark that place; and I further direct your attention to p. 2265 of the *DCA*, Item No. 500. I'll refer to this as the "Tuesday printing." That's 2265, Item 500.

Bishop, the Majority Report found at the Tuesday print...that the Tuesday printing was properly filed with the chair of the committee; and, subsequently, the presenter of that report was advised that the Minority Report had been lost. Everyone did work together well in trying to resolve the problem, and on Tuesday, the same day that the Tuesday printing was given to delegates, this matter came to the floor of the conference. Only the Monday printing was presented and no reference to the page number of the Minority Report in the Tuesday printing was given to the body. The Majority Report was presented, and the matter was tabled by the conference.

I respectfully submit that this has resulted in a violation of Rules 27, subparagraph 2 and 3; Rule 31, subparagraph 3; Rule 35 and Rule 36, subparagraph 3 of our rules, as well as a violation of our covenant to participate in holy conference.

Bishop, this matter is vital to the financial integrity of our church, and further it is important that we support the decisions of the Audit and Review Committee of our general church. This conference needs to un-

derstand the truth concerning decisions of the district court of the District of Columbia that they will no doubt be reading about in the very near future in regard to the activities of one of our boards.

Bishop, I ask that after due consideration you find that the committee report Item No. 500 was not properly before the General Conference, that the motion to table was out of order, and that the Minority Report should be allowed to be presented to the body with the same regard as the Majority Report, all in accordance with the rules of this conference. Thank you.

BISHOP GWINN: All right. Thank you, Judge Enns, and I will take that under advisement. We will look for the transcript. We will perhaps want to speak with you personally about additional information. Then we'll speak with that Legislative Committee chair. I don't know if we can get all of this done during this afternoon's session. We will attempt to do so. If we cannot, then we'll certainly pass that along in order that we can give you a response in appropriate time.

Thank you very much. Now I'm going to turn back to you, Matthew, please, for our next item on the agenda.

LAFERTY: Our next two items are very similar to the amendment that we just adopted. They're found on p. 2176. It's Calendar Item 760. It's Petition No. 80812, and can be found in the *Advance* edition of the *DCA* on p. 442. Another item that is very similar to the amendment we just passed is found on p. 2175. It's Calendar Item 742. It's Petition No. 80809, and can be found on p. 437 of the *Advance DCA*.

BISHOP GWINN: All right. Now, Matthew, if we might, let's go back to where we are on Calendar Item 760, which refers to Petition No. 80812; and the committee recommends you adopt that petition. It is properly before you. All right, we do have a question or discussion here in section A, midway back.

Yes, you are getting up. Please go to mic. 6.

TIMOTHY J. ROGERS (South Carolina): Bishop, first a question. Are we getting ready to act on both of these together?

BISHOP GWINN: No.

ROGERS: All right. So we are on No. 5, which is located on 442 of the *ADCA*, is that correct?

BISHOP GWINN: 442 and the Petition No. is 80812.

ROGERS: Then I'd like to offer an amendment—

BISHOP GWINN: All right.

ROGERS: —of one word in the first line so that...to replace the word *shall* with the word *may*, so that it would read “there may be regional conferences for the work of the church.” And if I can get a second, I'd like to speak to that.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Second.

BISHOP GWINN: Is there a second?

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKERS: Second. Second.

BISHOP GWINN: I hear it. You may speak.

#### *Question of Permissive Language*

ROGERS: Thank you. I believe that the intent of all of these proposed constitutional amendments is that they would permit changes in our structure but not mandate them. At this point we are looking at a proposed paragraph in the constitution that would have a mandatory word *shall*, rather than a permissive word, which is *may*. I believe that the presenters have said and expect that this does not require a change to regional conferences everywhere, and I can understand that interpretation. But it is equally reasonable to read the word *shall* to mean *shall*, and it would, I believe, correct this possibility because, the truth is, sometimes you don't know what something means until the Judicial Council tells you what it means. I

believe that if we would replace this word, this one word, it would be clear about the intent of General Conference. Thank you.

BISHOP GWINN: All right, thank you. Now, is there a speech against the amendment? All right, I see none. You're ready to deal with this amendment. I'm going to turn to you Matthew for a comment you may want to make before we vote on this amendment.

LAFERTY: The committee, in fact, did discuss having the permissive language that has been proposed, but felt that permissive language of *may* is not appropriate—that it is the Constitution and that it should have *shall*. And so, we would urge you to reject this amendment.

BISHOP GWINN: All right. This amendment is properly before you. And now, if you...all right, is this a point of order? Question? All right, please go to the mic. that's most convenient. I can't see where it is. Mic. 8.

THOMAS W. EBLEN (Kentucky): The speaker just contradicted himself about *may* and *shall*. I want to clarify. The last amendment or constitutional change we made we all said *may* meant *may* and now we're saying *shall* might mean *may* and I'm questioning the interpretation of those last two. Could the speaker, or the representative committee clarify?

BISHOP GWINN: All right, there's been a request you clarify a statement, apparently, Matthew, in that closing word.

LAFERTY: As I had stated before, the committee had processed this amendment. We had significant discussion within our legislative committee about changing the language of *shall* to *may*. The committee did not feel that, in terms of that type of amendment, that *shall* should not be *may*, and so they wanted definitive language of *shall* and not *may*; and so, therefore, we urge you to reject the amendment.

BISHOP GWINN: All right. Do you have an additional question?

EBLEN: Bishop, is the debate already ended or any other that's totally the opposite of what was said from the committee about the last one? They wanted the *may* language in the last one, not *shall*.

BISHOP GWINN: OK, now, all right. That some are going to consider sort of debating, so we're ready for the question now, and I want you to look at the amendment. The amendment is to substitute the word *may* for the word *shall*. If you are in favor of the amendment, you will vote "1." If you are not in favor of the amendment, you will vote "2." Now please vote when the clock appears on the screen.

(pause)

All right. You have supported the amendment by 456 to 393, not supporting the amendment. [*Yes, 456; No, 393*] So, the amended petition now reads "there may be" and the appropriate following words. Now, let me help you know that when there are a number of cards together, it's very distracting, and it's nearly impossible to know which card to pick when you have eight or ten cards together, so be careful there. You may be wanting the floor, and we certainly want to grant that where you need it, but one person... All right, I want to recognize in section D about midway back please, if you'll go to mic. 10.

CHARLES D (DENNY) WHITE JR (Western North Carolina): Thank you, Bishop Gwinn. Bishop, it troubles me a bit that this conference appears to be acting upon amendments without careful attention to exactly where they appear in the constitution. The action just to change the "shall" in paragraph 28 really makes no sense if you look first at the setting of that paragraph which is in the part of the *Discipline* which establishes the regional conferences, and secondly, with the other paragraphs

in that section, all of which say "shall." So I simply appeal to the house to act upon the amendments before it with a careful awareness of how that particular part of the constitution functions in its place. Thank you.

BISHOP GWINN: All right. I'll just consider that a statement. I'm not sure whether that was for the amended petition that's before us or not, but the discussion is now open.

Let me go here—yes, mic. in section A. Yes, sir. If you'll go to mic. 3, please.

JORGEN THAARUP (Denmark): Before we took the decision before, I tried to get your attention because I feel it is very important for us to be really clear about what is the difference between "may" and "shall." As I hear the American delegates, they are afraid of that the "shall" shall mean that they need to build a regional central conference in the U.S., but we from the central conferences, I think we are afraid that the "may" will mean that we can delete the central conferences. So, I don't think it is clear yet what is the difference between "shall" and "may."

BISHOP GWINN: All right. Thank you for your statement. Do you have further discussion on the amended petition that's before us? And I believe in section D, toward the front, yes, sir. If you'll move to a mic. No. 7. Mic. 7, please.

WILLIAM WESTBROOK JR. (Peninsula-Delaware): I'd like to make a motion if it's in order. I'd like to move that we add back the language for the churches outside the United States, and I'll speak to that if I have a second.

BISHOP GWINN: Now, say again what you are requesting. Are you attempting to make a motion?

WESTBROOK: Yes.

BISHOP GWINN: It would be out of order with what's before us. Are you wanting to amend what is before us?

WESTBROOK: Yes.

BISHOP GWINN: OK. You want to seek an amendment?

WESTBROOK: An amendment.

BISHOP GWINN: OK. OK. Tell us how you would like—an amendment would be in order. Tell us how you want to amend it.

WESTBROOK: To add back the language "for the churches outside the United States."

BISHOP GWINN: OK. We're a little confused up here. We have a thought that you may have gone back to the petition we just voted on.

WESTBROOK: No, sir.

BISHOP GWINN: OK. I'm sorry. We'll try to catch up with you. You are looking at the Calendar Item No. 760, that's referred to on p. 442. Correct?

WESTBROOK: That is correct.

BISHOP GWINN: All right. Help us now know your amendment.

WESTBROOK: Do you want me to speak to it or repeat it?

BISHOP GWINN: If you will repeat it, we did not hear it. If you'll repeat it so we can know the amendment and then, if you get a second, you can speak to it.

WESTBROOK: The amendment is to add back the language "for the churches outside of the United States."

BISHOP GWINN: All right. The amendment is to add back the deleted words "outside of the United States of America." Is that your amendment?

WESTBROOK: That is correct.

BISHOP GWINN: Is there a second?

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Second.

BISHOP GWINN: I hear a second. You may speak to it.

WESTBROOK: Inasmuch as this body voted to reject Petitions 81536,

81537, 81538, 81539, and 81540 on the Consent Calendar C3, these petitions dealt with paragraphs 23 through 27, dealing with jurisdictional conferences,

and Paragraph 9, Article 2 clearly states that there shall be jurisdictional conferences in the United States. I feel, for clarity, that we need to address the organization of the church outside of the United States since those previous paragraphs deal with the church inside the United States. While I appreciate the effort of this committee to make it possible for regional conferences in the United States, I feel that the above paragraphs will not allow that to happen and, therefore, for clarity, I believe we need to retain the language of “for the churches outside of the United States.”

BISHOP GWINN: All right. Thank you. Now the amendment is before you and I see in the very back on section C, if I can recognize you. Yes, please, if you will go to mic. 12. This is a speech against the amendment.

TWILA M. GLENN (Iowa): Thank you, Bishop. I speak against this amendment for the same reason that we spoke this language when we dealt with this before lunch. I’m hopeful that the chair of the committee will be able to remind us again that this petition before us does not in any way change those paragraphs of the constitution which create the jurisdictional conferences. What this petition does is give us language that reminds us and tells us and facilitates for us the idea that we are one church. We are not a church inside the United States and outside the United States. We are not a main campus and a west campus and I thank my brother from Lubbock for that very powerful metaphor. We are one church with many campuses and that’s what this language is about. This language—please do not be misled—does not in any way change the organization of jurisdictional conferences in the United States.

BISHOP GWINN: All right. Thank you. Now, we’re looking for a speech for the amendment and I believe we have one. Yes sir, you’re

standing and you’re very visible and I believe you’re in C. If you’ll go to the mic., please.

(*pause*)

W C (BILL) SMALLWOOD JR. (Mississippi): I understand the meaning of Article 9 but is there anything in that that would preclude a regional conference being superimposed above the jurisdictional conferences? I think that’s the issue. Whether we’re gonna add another structure in the United States.

BISHOP GWINN: All right, thank you—a speech for. Now we’re looking for a speech against the amendment. All right, the first red card I saw is in section B. Yes sir, if you’ll go, I believe you’re near mic. 5.

WILLIAM (SCOTT) CAMPBELL (New England): Bishop, I want to speak against the amendment primarily because I am very concerned about the process. We have a group of amendments that have been put together with a kind of coherence that makes sense and we are considering them one after the other and now changing the sense and the flow of these amendments as they will appear in our constitution. We are undoing careful work that we ought not to be doing. I would speak against this amendment. I think the body was confused when we added “may” in a series of paragraphs that clearly say “shall,” even though they are permissive. I would encourage someone who voted in favor of the amendment that was just passed to move reconsideration so that we can have a coherent piece of legislation in front of us. Thank you.

BISHOP GWINN: All right. We’ve had two speeches for and two against. All right, fine, yes mic. 3 please.

ELAINE J. W. STANOVSKY (Pacific Northwest): Can I ask a question for clarification?

BISHOP GWINN: Certainly.

STANOVSKY: We’re on paragraph 28—the sentence that reads

“subsequently the General Conference shall have authority to change the number and boundaries of the central conferences”; does that mean that without General Conference action the number and boundaries of the central conferences would remain as they are now?

LAFERTY: That is correct; that’s what our interpretation would be.

STANOVSKY: Whether the language is “may” or “shall,” that’s the case?

LAFERTY: I can’t speak to the “may” or “shall” in terms of that language.

STANOVSKY: Well, I’ll be prepared to move reconsideration when we defeat this amendment.

BISHOP GWINN: All right. All right, all right, I’ll consider that a speech against. And we are looking now only for a speech for the—I want to know, do you have a question? Yes, sir, let me recognize you. If you’ll go to mic. 3, please.

AKASA J. UMEMBUTI (Central Congo): Jacques Umembuti from Central Congo

BISHOP GWINN: Will you say it one more time, please?

UMEMBUTI: Jacques Umembuti from Central Congo.

BISHOP GWINN: Thank you.

UMEMBUTI: Bishop, we have two different texts here, French and English. And the word “shall” or “may” is not in French so we are confused...

(*laughter*)

...completely confused.

BISHOP GWINN: All right, can the chair help us? You say there are two different?

LAFERTY: If I believe, if I’m correct in what the speaker just told us is that the French translation—

UMEMBUTI: Yes.

LAFERTY: —of the petition is—does not match—what the English translation, or the English edition says.

UMEMBUTI: Yeah, we have a word for *shall* in French and a word for *may* in French but in French tradition there is not, no *shall*, no *may*.

BISHOP GWINN: All right, help!

*(laughter and applause)*

All right. The committee—I don't know that the chair—can you respond to that in any way? Can an interpreter help?

LAFERTY: I'm not sure what you want me to say, Bishop.

*(laughter)*

*(pause)*

BISHOP GWINN: All right, now do we have a French translator who maybe can help us there a bit? Because we are recognizing that there are some flaws in the translation.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Hello, hello?

BISHOP GWINN: OK, the translator says the French is incorrect and we do deeply regret that, of course, but now the translators will surely be translating this error and the fact of what we are discussing so it can be understood by our other delegates who speak various languages. All right, now I am looking for a speech for—is there anyone who wants to speak for the amendment? All right, are you wanting to ask a question? Yes, sir, go to mic. no. 5, please.

CHARLES S G BOAYUE (Detroit): Bishop, I'm sensing that you are preparing to move us to a vote, without part of the General Conference able to understand what they are about to vote on, and I want to just encourage you to allow them to be a part of the decision.

BISHOP GWINN: Thank you, sir. What we're voting on—and it appears to me that we're ready.

*(pause)*

All right, before we take the action, we're asking the French translators to be sure and read what we're

doing to the benefit of those to whom they're translating. And so we'll be careful here now. What we're doing, we're dealing with an amendment that wants to add back the stricken words in Petition No.—I'm looking for our no.—the No. 80812. And the amendment adds back the words “outside the United States of America.” That's all we're dealing with right now. All right? OK, did it add those words? OK. What we have up here is something I did not hear. But I'm going to have the secretary—Gere will you read what the written amendment says?

REIST: The plenary motion amendment form that was reported to the stage reads: to add back the language “for the churches outside the United States of America.”

BISHOP GWINN: OK, so that's not actually adding back according to the petition that I'm looking at, it's actually substituting words, but it's been before us. Do you understand what's before you? The amendment is asking you to insert the words “for the churches outside the United States of America” in the area where the words “outside the United States of America” have been stricken in the petition that's before you on p. 442. All right, now we'll give the translators time to make sure they can translate that information. That is all that is before us at this point on the amendment. And I think you're ready to vote on the amendment. Ah, yes, thank you. Matthew?

LAFERTY: The house has already dealt with such an amendment and it has rejected the amendment. I would just like to remind the house that later in that paragraph that it vests with the General Conference the duties and rights to set the boundaries of central or regional conferences as well as paragraph 540, and so we would urge you to reject this amendment. Additionally, it does not create some super structure that will be imposed. We have decided to leave such an option to the task force which will study a

U.S. regional conference over the next four years. This amendment, this petition, does not try to do that and we would ask that you would reject the amendment.

BISHOP GWINN: All right, thank you. Now, I'm going to pause just for a moment in order that the translators will have time to not just translate literally what we've been saying but the additional information that provides for the interpretation. All right. I believe you're ready for the question. I, now, do you need a point of order? Of parliamentary procedure? No. OK, all right, is this a parliamentary procedure issue, a point of order? All right, let's try it over on mic. 8, please.

FREDERICK M. CAREW (Sierra Leone): Now I come from a commonwealth legal background. There are two issues: I'd like to make a general comment and perhaps move a motion. Now as far—there is a distinction between judicial conferences in the United States and central conferences outside the United States. Now, for instance, one of the main distinctions is that the central conference can . . .

BISHOP GWINN: Sir, excuse me. I really hate to interrupt you but you are out of order. All right. I'll recognize you at a later time on a similar petition.

CAREW: Well, it's on this point, my lord Bishop. I said I was claiming in the point of privilege.

BISHOP GWINN: The only thing that's in order right now is a point of order and you're not making a point of order.

*“Church Outside U.S.” Language Not Supported*

CAREW: I'm making it.

BISHOP GWINN: Thank you. Thank you. All right. Now, hopefully we've had time for the translations. You understand, they do say they're ready. You understand now the amendment that's before you? For “the churches outside the United States of America” to be inserted in

the petition. If you are in favor of that amendment, you will push “1” on your voting machine. If you’re not in favor of that amendment, push “2.” Please vote when the clock appears. [*Yes, 269; No, 588*]

(*pause*)

BISHOP GWINN: All right, you have not supported the amendment; 588 not supporting and 269 supporting the amendment. Now we’re back to the petition. All right. All right. Let me recognize you, sir, if I might right here in section A. I’m going to try to spread this around a bit. And I know you’ll understand that.

LEIF-GOTE BJORKLUND (Finland-Swedish Provisional): Obviously, it was the case that the French-speaking were out—were without translation when we took—when we voted.

BISHOP GWINN: Not according to the translators, they were not. All right. Now, you know what is before us. All right. May I recognize you please in mic.—or in section A? If you’ll go to mic. 5. Mic. 5, please.

MARGARET M. NOVAK (Yellowstone): Bishop, the folks in Financial Administration Legislative Committee will not be surprised to know that I was confused on the last vote. And I actually voted the opposite of what I meant to and therefore voted with the prevailing side, not on the amendment that we just voted on, but the previous one. Is it possible for me to move to reconsider?

BISHOP GWINN: Did you vote on the prevailing side? It is in order for you if you voted on the prevailing...

NOVAK: Yes, sir, I did.

BISHOP GWINN: All right. All right. And what—ma’am, would you stay at the microphone, please?

NOVAK: Sure.

BISHOP GWINN: What are you asking? Are you asking for reconsideration?

NOVAK: Yes, sir.

BISHOP GWINN: And what is it?

NOVAK: On the “shall/may” language, I accidentally voted for may.

BISHOP GWINN: Can you call our attention to the paragraph no.?

NOVAK: Yes, sir.

BISHOP GWINN: The calendar item no.?

NOVAK: 80812, Calendar Item 760.

BISHOP GWINN: All right. All right. We just wanted to make sure you do that properly. Now, is there a second?

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKERS: Second.

BISHOP GWINN: For reconsideration. It has been seconded. All right. Now, are you ready to vote on reconsideration of your former vote as related to the word *shall* and *may*? If you want to reconsider that amendment then you should press “1” on your voting machine. If you do not want to reconsider that amendment you would push “2” on your voting machine. Now, please vote when the clock appears. [*Yes, 402; No, 456*]

(*pause*)

BISHOP GWINN: All right. You have not voted in favor of reconsidering. Those who did not want to reconsider were 456. Those for reconsideration were 402. All right, now, we’re back on Calendar Item 760—as it has been amended. Yes, sir, let me recognize you here to go to mic. 2 from section B.

KARL BAUMGARDNER (Northwest Texas): Bishop, I would move to suspend the rules regarding the number of speeches for and against.

BISHOP GWINN: All right. You are in order to suspend the rules. It would take two-thirds majority. It’s not debatable. If you will suspend the rules for the purpose of the number of speeches to be given for and against any item, you would vote “1” on your machine. If you’re not in favor of suspending the rules you would vote “2” on the machine.

Please vote when the clock appears. [*Yes, 666; No, 186*]

(*pause*)

BISHOP GWINN: All right, you have supported suspending the rules: 666 for suspending and 186 for not suspending. So the rules are suspended. And now would you refer to the rule you’re looking at? Rule 7.2.

BAUMGARDNER: Thank you.

BISHOP GWINN: OK.

BAUMGARDNER: I would move that for the remainder of the conference, we were be limited to two speeches for, two against, and a limit of two minutes each.

BISHOP GWINN: All right. Now let’s handle those one at a time because the minutes we can handle by simple majority vote. But you’re wanting to limit the number of speeches to two.

BAUMGARDNER: Yes.

BISHOP GWINN: Maximum of two where—

BAUMGARDNER: Two, two.

BISHOP GWINN: —it is presently three?

BAUMGARDNER: Yes, two for each side.

BISHOP GWINN: All right. Now, for the remainder of the conference?

BAUMGARDNER: Yes.

BISHOP GWINN: All right. Are you ready to vote? All right. If you will suspend the rule at the point of two speeches for and against for the remainder of the conference, you will push “1” on your machine. If you are against that, you will push “2.” Please vote when the clock appears on the screen.

(*pause*)

[*Yes, 713; No, 139*]

BISHOP GWINN: You have agreed to have two speeches maximum for, and two against for the remainder of the conference on these items. And I want to recognize mic. 2 regarding time.

BAUMGARDNER: Yes, Bishop, I would also move that each speech, for and against, be limited to two minutes.

BISHOP GWINN: All right. To two minutes. And you're referring to the fact of Rule No. 9.4 and we can change it by majority vote.

BAUMGARDNER: I trust you on that citation.

BISHOP GWINN: Yes, thank you sir, I appreciate that. Now, this is not debatable. If you will limit the speeches to two minutes, please push "1" on your machine. If you do not want to limit the speeches to two minutes you would push "2." Please vote when the clock appears on the screen. [*Yes, 768; No, 93*]

(*pause*)

All right, you have overwhelmingly limited the speeches to two minutes: 768 for and 93 against. Now folks, let me tell you where we are. We're past the time for our Order of the Day. I think the will of the body is that we move through these, but we seem to be crawling through these and you'll need to think with one another about when we want to go ahead and speed that up a bit. But we're in the middle now of trying to deal with a petition that has been amended. I'm going to, though, pause at this point and recognize Bishop Sharon Brown Christopher for our moment of celebration that is delayed beyond—far beyond where it should have been. Bishop Christopher, we apologize for that but if you'll come now and let's take a bit of time to celebrate here in this conference.

BISHOP SHARON A. BROWN CHRISTOPHER: In my opening words to you it was a week ago. I spoke of transformation and reconciliation and hope. Today I want you to hear from a pastor who shares his own very private story of transformation and reconciliation and a very public message of hope with his listeners. Joe Camp's own struggles have been the secret of his success.

(*video presentation*)

(*applause*)

We thank God for Joe's candor and commitment teaching us to always believe in transformation and reconciliation and always to have hope. Thanks be to God.

(*applause*)

BISHOP GWINN: Thank you. Thank you. Now I wonder if the house would be willing to only take a stand-up break. Would you do that? Five minutes? Just take a stand-up break for five minutes and in five minutes I'm going to call us back to order. We're in a five-minute recess because we are sufficiently behind time and we'll begin in five minutes.

BISHOP GWINN: The house is now in order. The Lord be with you.

ALL: And also with you.

BISHOP GWINN: I've asked as we are reminded of the importance of doing worshipful work together, Bishop Sharon Rader, our Ecumenical Officer for the Council of Bishops, to come and offer a prayer for us at this mid-point in our journey together this afternoon.

Bishop Rader?

BISHOP SHARON ZIMMERMAN RADER: The Lord be with you.

ALL: And also with you.

BISHOP RADER: Let us pray.

(*prayer*)

BISHOP GWINN: Amen. Thank you, Bishop Rader. I'm turning to the secretary now to give us word of explanation regarding translation.

*Translation of ADCA Explained*

REIST: Friends, the translations of the ADCA were done by a firm that was hired for the translation process. The interpreters we are using on-site were not involved in that translation process. We knew that there was a problem with the

translation. In fact, we stopped publication of the *Handbook* in order to have the rules retranslated so that they could be printed properly. Unfortunately, had we stopped publication of the French and Portuguese translations of the other volumes, we would never have gotten them done in time to distribute anything to the central conferences requiring those translations. We went ahead with them with what we knew to be defective texts. When I met with the interpreters before the General Conference began, I specifically asked them to help the delegates by translating properly or interpreting properly those incorrect translations and to work from the English texts, not from the translated texts. It was, I admit, an imperfect solution to a difficult problem but I would not want anyone to think that our interpreters were involved in this translation process. They were not. It was not their failure. Thank you.

BISHOP GWINN: All right. Thank you, Gere. We are grateful for that word. May I just suggest that you be willing to assist those persons who may be sitting near you, beside you, in front of you, or behind you that may be having some translation problems and may I suggest to the translators that you encourage those that you are translating to, to feel free to turn to a neighbor and seek additional information on a piece of language or an amendment and, particularly, the order that we use. It is not pleasant at all, of course, for the presiding officer to call someone out of order. And sometimes, that is due to misunderstanding and if you could assist in that, we do holy conference and we care deeply about one another and yet it is the responsibility of the presiding officer to move us on and to let the body be able to act because you have things you do have to act on and so we can do this together. I think if we all help each other, we can improve that a bit.

Now what is before us is this constitutional issue regarding the peti-

tion that is on p. 442 of your *Advance DCA*. It has been amended. We have had one speech against it and now we are ready for a speech for it. Is there a speech for it? You would raise a green card? I do see a green card in section D, C, in the very back. I want to recognize section C in the very back.

TWILA M. GLENN (Iowa): Thank you, Bishop. At the risk of sounding like a broken record, I would encourage us to adopt this petition to allow us to use language, going into the next quadrennium, that reminds us that we are one church.

BISHOP GWINN: All right, thank you. Now, there's room for one speech against it and the first red card I saw—yes, ma'am, if you'll go to mic., I believe 9 may be closest for you.

GINGER JONES HOLLAND (Mississippi): Bishop, precisely because of the translation issues and others, I respectfully disagree with our presenter and the ideas of the commission. I believe that if we open the door to make the United States a regional conference we separate ourselves from the ideas of our brothers and sisters from the world. I believe that it will do the opposite of what could be presented here and for that reason, I would like to see the results of the study commission in four years and then have the option of changing these constitutional properties which would be easy to do at that time. We would have all the information we need. I believe our central conference brothers and sisters are confused. I believe this will separate, not bring us together. Can we not wait until we know for sure? The other thing I would ask is that someone that voted for the prior one, possibly ask for reconsideration, but please vote against this.

BISHOP GWINN: All right, thank you. That has been a speech against the petition, as has been amended. We have room for one more speech in favor of, should you

choose to do that. I am looking for a green card. This is a point of order and I do want to recognize your point of order if you will go to mic. 11, please.

RONALD BRETSCH (North Central New York): Bishop, it's a point of inquiry. If the—whom we have all come to know and love as Matthew—could the chair of the committee, if he could help us understand where we are. I understand that there's a third similar petition. It's not just the central conference folks, it is also some of us from the U.S. Secondly, I would caution my fellow Americans to be very careful in trying to translate. Our abilities in translation are not noted as being all that great around the world. Thank you.

BISHOP GWINN. Thank you, sir. Some may be better than none, but, now let's take a brief moment, Matthew, if you will to give them the big picture of what is remaining. They have an interest in what's similar.

LAFERTY: There is one other petition that is very similar to the one that we are working on now. Additionally, there are two other petitions relating to the worldwide nature of the church that we need to deal with. And so in terms of the worldwide nature of the church, there are three more. In terms of my report, there are seven more petitions before I'll sit down.

BISHOP GWINN: All right.

(laughter)

Now we are scheduled to convene Friday evening, so please keep that in mind. We, I think the house is ready. I do not see another speech for the...I do not see another speech for the petition as amended and I'm turning now to the Legislative Committee chair for a closing word.

LAFERTY: Yes, I would just encourage us to continue to adopt the petitions that have been submitted. You have already adopted one very similar to this one, and so I would ask you to adopt this one. I don't see

this as separating ourselves from each other. What it's doing is committing ourselves to creating a worldwide structure. As we have heard some of our brothers and sisters this morning, some in our central conferences continue to think about autonomy because they see our system as being U.S.-centric. And so, this helps us lay the foundation for becoming a worldwide church and so I would encourage you to adopt the petition.

BISHOP GWINN: All right, fine. Now if you are in favor of the petition as amended, you will press "1" on your voting machine. If you are opposed to the petition as amended, you will press "2" on your machine. Please vote when the clock appears on the screen.

(pause)

[Yes, 501; No, 312]

All right, it takes two-thirds' vote to support a constitutional amendment. You have not supported the constitutional amendment. You did vote 501 for the petition as amended and you voted 312 against, and so the petition is not adopted. All right, are we ready to go to the next one?

LAFERTY: Yes, Bishop. Our next petition is found of p. 2175, that's p. 2175 of the *Daily Christian Advocate*. It's Petition No. 742. I'm sorry, it's Calendar Item 742. It's Petition No. 80809, which can be found in the *Advance Edition of the DCA* on p. 437. The Committee recommends adoption of this item.

BISHOP GWINN: All right. The calendar item is now before you and the committee recommends adoption. Are you ready? I see a card here in section A. Yes sir, if you'll stand and go to your nearest mic—no. 5, mic. 5.

STEPHEN P. TAYLOR (South Carolina): Thank you, Bishop. Bishop, is it too late to make a motion to refer this? I was trying to get your attention before it was presented, but I would like to do that.

BISHOP GWINN: You're speaking now, Mr. Taylor? You're speaking of Calendar Item No. 742?

TAYLOR: Well I wanted to refer three items...

BISHOP GWINN: Yeah.

TAYLOR: And I was trying to get your attention.

BISHOP GWINN: Yes—no, you cannot now refer something we've already handled.

TAYLOR: It's not something we've already handled.

BISHOP GWINN: OK, all right. Well you go ahead.

*Motion to Refer Worldwide Nature, Calendar 742, 1199, 1201*

TAYLOR: All right. I move that we refer Calendar Items 742, 1199, and 1201. These are the three calendar items left in this group that Matt said we still had to work on. I'm aware we've pretty much spent—oh, that was my motion, I'd like to speak to it if I have a second.

BISHOP GWINN: All right, you do have a second.

TAYLOR: I'm aware we have spent nearly all day on these other items and we will spend hours on these three it looks like, tweaking them, changing them, and ending up with a mix far, perhaps, from where we originally started. I don't think that's the good way to do constitutional work. We have a study commission in place that can receive some direction from the items we have already passed and instead of giving inadequate time to some important issues that are still before us, let's send the rest of these on and express the mind of this conference for the future.

BISHOP GWINN: All right. Will you tell us once more where you are referring to?

TAYLOR: To this Study Committee on the Worldwide Nature of the Church.

BISHOP GWINN: All right. OK, the body understands this is a mo-

tion for referral of three calendar items: 742, 1199, and 1201. All right. Now you can debate this issue of referral, and there's been one speech for. I'm looking for a speech against. Yes, sir. I see the first card here in section A. Please go to mic. 3.

THAARUP: We are in the midst of dealing with a number of petitions, but all the petitions are one package. The Connectional Table, the Council of Bishops, the Legislative Committee have worked it through and the only reason why we are taking in, taking them one petition by one petition is because we need to do so. It is a paragraph in the constitution. But all this paragraph is one understanding, one idea, one package. It will work ridiculous to deal them up. We are very close to the ending of making decision. I will strongly recommend the conference to support the petitions so the package can be fulfilled. Thank you.

BISHOP GWINN: Thank you. This is a speech against referral. Now is there a speech for referral? Yes, I do see you, sir. If you'll stand in section B, right, and go to your nearest mic.—looks like mic. 4.

ROBERT LOCKABY (Holston): I'm a layperson and I'm an attorney. And I believe that many other lawyers in this audience like myself are very concerned with what we are going to wind up with at the end of today. My brother is correct; these petitions were submitted to us as a package. Unfortunately, I disagree with my brother because these petitions are different; some have different implications than the others and it has been appropriate for us to deal with them individually. In dealing with them individually, however, we are not going to wind up with a unified package based upon the votes that we have received and that we have cast. I therefore believe that we should refer the remaining items to the Study Committee so that the Study Committee can bring back to us a unified package that we can act upon for the best interest of the worldwide Church.

BISHOP GWINN: All right. Thank you.

LOCKABY: I encourage you to vote to refer.

BISHOP GWINN: Thank you sir, that's a speech for referral. Is there a speech against referral? The first card I saw is in section C. Yes, please, if you'll go to mic.—you're going to go to 11? OK, mic. 11.

STEPHANIE DECKARD (North Central New York): This petition has no new language from any of the other petitions we have already passed. I would strongly recommend not referring these. Let's finish this issue, not refer them back to the study so that we can vote on them in four years. Let's finish this petition; let's finish the package so that we can move on. Thank you.

BISHOP GWINN: Thank you. We've had two for and two against. I'm turning to you, Matthew, for a closing statement before our vote.

LAFERTY: OK, can you hear me? Of the three items that are being referred, one of them only has the same language that we've dealt with; the other two have different language that we haven't dealt with, so I wanted to make that clear before we do it. While I certainly sympathize that we are—we have spent a lot of time on this, and I understand as the only person who has been standing the entire time we've been dealing with that is that we are tired, but it is important for us to leave here having committed to a worldwide Church and that means completing our work on these constitutional amendments. And so I would ask for you not to refer these, and vote "no."

BISHOP GWINN: All right, now, you're voting on referral of Calendar Item 742, Calendar Item 1199, and Calendar Item 1201. If you are in favor of referring those three calendar items to the Study Committee, you would press "1" on your voting machine. If you're opposed to that referral, you would press "2." Please vote when the clock appears on the screen.

(pause)

[Yes, 388; No, 466] You did not refer them by a vote of 466, not preferring referral; 388, preferring. Now what is before us is Calendar Item 742. All right? Let me recognize, if I might, the middle card here. Yes, will you stand up, please? Yes, that's who I care to recognize. If you'll go to mic. 4, please.

*“Central” and “Regional” both in Constitution*

MARSHALL S. BAILEY (Virginia): I have a question. For the last petition that we voted on, 80812, where we did not vote to change the language from “central” to “regional,” where we've already voted to change it on all the other ones, what does it mean when we have two different languages in the constitution?

(laughter)

LAFERTY: Bishop, I think he asked you the question, not me!

(laughter)

BISHOP GWINN: Well, I think there's one word—*confusion*. No, I'm teasing. Go ahead, Matthew, and help him.

(laughter)

I, know this is a serious question. Is it—

LAFERTY: What I would say is that there are two different languages. Assuming that the amendments passed in the annual conferences, then there would be two different languages that we would use. Most of it would be assuming that we adopted the amendments that do just a name change. In most of the constitution it would appear as “regional”; but in the places where we've rejected, it would appear “central.” And so the next General Conference, that would have to be taken care of.

BISHOP GWINN: Yes.

BAILEY: So there would be no way that we could fix it?

BISHOP GWINN: Yes.

BAILEY: All right.

BISHOP GWINN: I think he's helped you with a good response there. Now, yes, let me recognize section D. Yes, if you'll go to mic. 10, please.

ARTHUR D. JONES (North Texas): I actually believe that we will not have a contradiction for the next four years because in all of the petitions on worldwide study that changed the name it does not go into effect until January 1, 2013. So we...on all the name changes, we would actually have another General Conference before contradictions appear.

LAFERTY: That would be correct. If you look at the...by the petitions, it says they don't go into effect until 2013. I was referring to...I was referring...I'm tired. I'm sorry. I was referring to those, if they weren't changed. Those changes would have to happen in 2012, if they're not made here. They would need to happen at 2012 so that when that language comes in line in 2013 it would all appear the same.

BISHOP GWINN: Now we want to be careful that we don't bog down here. That'd be very easy for us to do, and don't wanna do that. I do not want misinformation, though, in the house. Actually, on Constitutional amendments, those amendments go before all of the annual conferences. When the annual conferences have voted, then the Council of Bishops will ratify that vote and it becomes effective at the point of the ratification as announced by the Council of Bishops. So that's just information. Please don't stay on that topic, though, too long.

LAFERTY: Bishop, Bishop?

BISHOP GWINN: Yes.

LAFERTY: I do want to draw your attention to the petitions them-

selves that include language that say exactly when they go into effect.

BISHOP GWINN: OK.

LAFERTY: And I'm not sure how that impacts what you just said.

BISHOP GWINN: Thank you. All right. Now we're on 742, and someone maybe has a...we have the several yellow cards. Let me go right here, if I might, to section B, mic. 4. We're trying to get to the point where we can speak for or against. Yes, ma'am, go ahead. I'm sorry.

H. EDDIE FOX (Holston): Eddie Fox, Holston.

BISHOP GWINN: Yeah, I'm sorry, Eddie; I'll recognize you in a moment. But I recognize—

FOX: I thought I was at no. 4.

BISHOP GWINN: —the lady.

FOX: Sorry.

BISHOP GWINN: OK. Yes. Yes, she is the one that I've recognized. I will come back to you.

RHONDA VANDYKE COLBY (Virginia): I'd like to move to suspend the rules in order to facilitate our movement, but before doing I wanna make sure what I'm gonna try to do will be in order. So I would want to suspend the rules in order to suggest this: On calendar items coming from the committees with less than 10 percent dissent, we limit debate to one speech for, one against, one minute each for the remainder of the day.

BISHOP GWINN: All right. You can suspend the rules, of course, to try that; and so it's a nondebatable issue on suspension of the rules. And let me just see...test the house. If you would suspend the rules for the point that we'll talk about in a moment, which she said—10 percent allowing one speech and so forth—raise the hand. All right. Hands down. Those opposed, raise the hand. I think it's two-thirds, but I'm gonna let you use a machine because we don't want someone to feel we miscalled that. If you will suspend the rules for the purpose just explained, you'll press “1” on your

voting machine. If you do not care to suspend the rules, you'll press "2." Please vote when the clock appears on the screen. [*Yes, 588; No, 253*]

(*pause*)

All right, you have suspended the rules; and, now, let's hear a bit of what you want to attempt to do. The suspension of the rules was 588 for, 253 not in favor of suspending. Thank you.

COLBY: My motion, again, is on calendar items coming from the committees with less than 10 percent dissent. We limit debate to one speech for, one against, one minute each for the remainder of the day. My intent is to allow us to steward our time, reserving time for matters where we still need to hear new thoughts and also to honor the discerning work of our committees where there was a high degree—90 percent or more—of agreement on the committee. This allows us to honor their process.

BISHOP GWINN: All right. Thank you. You understand. Make sure we're getting interpretation. If there were less than 10 percent of the committees voting against, then there would be only one speech for and one against in order...and you intend this for the rest of the day?

COLBY: Yes, sir.

BISHOP GWINN: All right. Fine. Yes, I wanna recognize section 4, back in the very back. If you'll go, sir, to mic. no. 11.

STARK LIGON (Arkansas): This is the only time I will speak, guaranteed. Would the lady who had made the motion to suspend the rules accept a friendly amendment? May I offer the friendly...may I offer the amendment for her consideration?

BISHOP GWINN : Well, you tried; it belongs to the house now, but you tried.

LIGON: Madam, would you consider an amendment "if a petition is reported out of Legislative Committee with a 90 percent or better favor-

able vote, any amendment such a petition shall require a two-thirds vote on the floor"?

BISHOP GWINN: All right, I don't think that's close to her acceptance that. That's almost another motion, actually, sir, I think. Let's stay with where we are in regard to her motion. All right, is this a speech for or against? All right. I'm looking for a speech for or against this motion. All right, there's one against. All right, we've had one for. Yes sir, I wanna recognize you in section B. Yes, go to mic. 4.

ROBERT LOCKABY (Holston): Bishop, my concern about this limitation is that the way our consent calendar operates, most of the legislation that is gonna be effected by this limitation are constitutional amendments. And I believe that it is not in our best interest to limit debate in this way on matters of such importance, and I would urge us not to adopt this limitation on debate.

BISHOP GWINN: All right, fine. Are you ready for this? You seem to be ready. All right, now let's go. If you favor this motion to limit debate on the 10 percent idea of one for and one against, you'll push "1" on your voting machine. If you're not in favor of this motion, you would push "2." Please vote when the clock appears on the screen. [*Yes, 564; No, 306*]

(*pause*)

All right, for the rest of the day you have limited debate under those circumstances and we will make notation of that. Now we're back on Calendar Item 742. All right. May I recognize you please, sir? Yes, at mic. 4, please.

FOX: And at this time of the day I just want to be sure that I'm on the same page. We have taken two constitutional amendments, one passed that says that there may be central regional conferences and deleted the words "outside the United States." The second petition to change the constitutional amendment failed, not

just the name change, but it failed to pass because it got two-thirds majority vote. So one constitutional amendment passed; one has failed; so it's a mixed message at this moment, if I'm understanding. Is this correct? And then the follow-up question is: Is paragraph 540 and any legislation which would be implementing language regarding central conferences or regional conferences in other parts besides outside the United States?

BISHOP GWINN: You know, I don't know. I think I'm going to rule that as a speech against Item 742, all right?

FOX: Is it true that one passed and one failed?

BISHOP GWINN: It is true, yes. Yes, but you proceeded to speak much more than just asking that question. All right, now, let me recognize mic., this a person near mic. 5 in section A. Yes.

TIM MCCLENDON (South Carolina): Bishop Gwinn, as I understood...between you and the chair of the committee...the understanding of when constitutional amendments go into effect, although the language of the petition says 2013.

BISHOP GWINN: Well, that would that would hold if you passed that petition, if you passed it, yes.

MCCLENDON: If we passed that petition; but if we pass this by two-thirds, and then two-thirds of aggregate number of annual conferences and members pass it, it goes into effect at the time. That was your statement.

BISHOP GWINN: Normally, that's true, but I was not reading the petition that said 213. Yes, does that help?

MCCLENDON: It does. But if I may, I reluctantly rise. Although I support the worldwide unity of The United Methodist Church, I am concerned that the passage of this Calendar Item 742 would push our connectional polity apart and cause us to go down a slippery slope toward an Anglican communion type

of polity. And I don't wanna go there. So therefore, Bishop, pursuant to paragraph 2610, as I am confused about whether or not we would by doing this action cause a U.S. central conference to take place without the study. Pursuant to 2610 of the *2004 Book of Discipline*, I move that the 2008 General Conference request a declaratory decision from the Judicial Council with respect to the meaning, application, and effect of legislative Calendar Item 742 regarding the creation of a U.S. regional conference. My request is to ascertain if adoption of this calendar item does not, in fact, create a U.S. regional conference before the next General Conference if adopted by two-thirds of the General Conference and two-thirds affirmative vote of the aggregate number of members of the annual conferences.

*(pause)*

BISHOP GWINN: OK, thank you, Tim, if we might...we want to request of you...would you hold that to see whether this passes or fails? If it fails...

MCCLENDON: My understanding...excuse me, Bishop.

BISHOP GWINN: That's all right. If it fails would you still want to make that request?

MCCLENDON: Not really. Of course not, but I think that it would help us all in the midst of our confusion to be able to know whether or not we are voting to create a U.S. regional conference now. I mean, I've heard everyone's opinion about that and I respect those opinions, but we have a Judicial Council that can decide for us before we act inappropriately.

BISHOP GWINN: Yeah, what we're dealing with is a dilemma that we put the body in a complete hold on this and we haven't agreed to table or anything in that regard. So let me ask you to hold that until we have a bit more discussion there. Now, we have a green card and you're speaking in favor of Item 742

Calendar Item. Yes, will you come to mic. 2, please.

DEVIN W. MAUNEY (Desert Southwest): Now Bishop, this is my first General Conference to be a delegate and I'm not confused about these petitions. So, what I am confused about is how some of our most venerable leaders in the church are so confused. I think it's actually very clear what these petitions would do. They would give us the opportunity to listen to what the Study Committee over the next four years tells us and implement those results. I urge the passage of this petition because we have already passed a separate petition with language similar. Now some leaders in our church have been able to create confusion through amendment upon amendment and motion to refer upon motion to refer. But I would urge us to refrain from that and use the rules to help the majority of this conference rather than hinder the progress of this conference. Please vote in favor of this petition.

BISHOP GWINN: All right, thank you. I request maybe next time you speak with a bit more passion.

*(laughter)*

But you did it in love and we are very grateful for that. Now we have, according to my record, two speeches against and one for. We are looking for one more speech for Item 742. All right, now, I see—I always see yellow cards but I'm not looking at yellow cards right now. I wanting to see—is there a green card? OK. OK. All right, we do have a green card right here, if you—please, in section A—will move to mic. 2?

CHRISTINE FLICK (Germany South): Because of English is not my first language, I want to speak in German. Is that OK?

BISHOP GWINN: Yes, certainly. Translator will help here.

FLICK: Yes. (simultaneous translation) The Council of Bishops and

the Connectional Table gave us the vision of a worldwide Church. And we are basically agreed to it. What we now need to do and had to do were two packages of petitions. We passed one of the packets, meaning there was a name change from "central conferences" to "regional conferences." What we now need to do is to set up a structure so that the Council of Bishops and the Connectional Table can also work within the United States of America. What we need to do is to set up a framework for us to continue working in the next four years. And in part, we agreed, and in part, we checked and I really don't understand why we are wasting so much time on that. And therefore, I urge the conference to pass Calendar Item 742 together with the two following calendar items which in the final analysis are saying the same thing. Thank you.

BISHOP GWINN: Thank you. And now I'm turning to our chair of the Legislative Committee for a closing remark.

LAFERTY: As I told you earlier today, there has been a knock on our United Methodist door. Those in the central conferences, in some of our central conferences and those within the United States, have asked us to make a commitment to a truly worldwide Church. And while we have authorized a study committee to bring forth legislation in four years, the foundations for their report, whatever that might be, need to be laid at this general conference and therefore, it is important, it is imperative for us to adopt Calendar Item 742. I would urge the body to adopt.

BISHOP GWINN: All right, fine. Now, you'll prepare your machine. If you are in favor of Petition numbered—on your—in your preconference, or preconference book 437, Petition No. 80809, recommended by Calendar Item 742, the committee. You would press "1" if you are in favor; if you are opposed, you would press "2." Please vote when the clock appears on the screen.

(pause)

[Yes, 593; No, 295]

*Final Vote Adopts Language*

All right. You have adopted—you have not adopted—yes, you have adopted, I'm sorry. I am trying to think, you have adopted by two-thirds majority the Calendar Item 742 by 593 votes for, 295 votes against. Now, do you have another one that you think is very similar that we could handle quickly? What do you think? Let's see if we can set a record here with this body.

LAFERTY: The two remaining petitions relating to the worldwide nature of the Church are not similar to anything that we have adopted thus far.

(laughter)

BISHOP GWINN: All right. Let me take just a moment here to come back to judge ends. We have looked and we will provide you a transcript of the information that occurred regarding the tabling of the petition to which you referred. And it seems that they were in order and so I am going to rule that they were in order in tabling that particular motion and we'll provide you a transcript here that may be a bit more helpful and so forth as you look at that. Now we are at the order of the day and I think there is—yes, back in section D. If you will go to mic. D, 10 please, mic. 10, section D.

DON W. UNDERWOOD (North Texas): I have a request for a personal privilege.

BISHOP GWINN: All right, if you will state that, please.

UNDERWOOD: I think this will be helpful to the conference. I request that the Council of Bishops, under the powers designated to it in Paragraph 14 of the Constitution, and in consultation with GCF&A, take under consideration the possibility of calling a special session of General Conference, probably in the year 2011, to deal with the recom-

mendations of the Study Committee on the Worldwide Nature of the Church. I think that the lightning speed with which we have worked today is evidence enough of the fact that we will not be able to deal with that report in a regular session of General Conference. If I could clarify just very quickly, this is not a motion. I do not think that this conference at this time is ready to deal with the monetary issues and so forth that would be involved in actually having a special session. I am not asking the plenary to take action, but I do believe that it will be helpful to the plenary if it knows that there is this possibility for such a session and I ask the Council of Bishops to take it under consideration. Thank you, Bishop.

BISHOP GWINN: All right, thank you. We will pass that information along to the Council of Bishops to take your request into consideration. Folks, I know that you'll allow Bishop Palmer the chair of our—president, rather—of our Council of Bishops, to speak to you for a moment. We had a witness this afternoon and several bishops from different areas were willing to have some conversation and I know that you just would probably like an update on that. Would give you Bishop Palmer permission to speak on the floor? Thank you. Bishop Palmer?

*Christian Conferencing on  
LGBTQ Issues*

BISHOP PALMER: Thank you delegates and Bishop Gwinn. I have a prepared statement and so it will not take long. This morning at the end of the witness, our lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgendered brothers and sisters, parents and friends, we shared with you that a group of bishops would be joining our brothers and sisters for the purpose of ongoing Christian conferencing. Sixteen bishops joined our sisters and brothers of the LGBTQ community, their parents, friends, and that represented the gender, racial, regional, and the-

ological diversity presently found in the Council of Bishops. We believe that you would want to know the results of this Christian conferencing thus far.

We report that our bishops and our LGBTQ sisters and brothers, parents, and friends created a table for Christian conferencing and began a dialogue. In the dialogue, it was acknowledged that we, The United Methodist Church, stand in brokenness and great pain. Faithful people disagree and are experiencing grief and fear. In the dialogue, our bishops expressed a pastoral word of compassion and care for those at the table and for the whole church. Some of the bishops at the table are bishops who have presided or will be presiding at sessions of this General Conference. The bishops spoke to their commitment to presiding in a manner that is fair and just and that facilitates the participation of all in the life of the church. The minutes of the previous plenary sessions are being reviewed to determine what we can learn about leading processes that are fair and just. Further reflections on this will be shared tomorrow, with your permission. Furthermore, a commitment was made to continue the dialogue throughout the balance of this General Conference and beyond its adjournment. The bishops and those hoping for a fully inclusive community of faith will continue their dialogue tomorrow. It is expected that at that meeting they will outline how the conversation will continue beyond the closure of this General Conference. Let us continue to be in prayer for each other and for those who are at the table of Christian conferencing on our collective behalf. Thank you.

BISHOP GWINN: Thank you, Bishop Palmer, very much.

(applause)

Wonderful spirit in this conference for which we're all very grateful. Tim McClendon, I need you to go back please to mic. no. 5. I prom-

ised to recognize you after the vote on 742.

*Creation of Regional Conference  
Referred to Judicial Council*

TIM MCCLENDON (South Carolina): Thank you, Bishop Gwinn. I move that the 2008 General Conference request a declaratory decision from the Judicial Council with respect to the meaning, application, and effect of Legislative Calendar Item 742 regarding the creation of a U.S. regional conference. My request is to ascertain if the adoption of Calendar Item 742 creates a U.S. regional conference before the next General Conference if adopted by two-thirds of the General Conference present and voting—which we’ve already done—and two-thirds affirmative vote of the aggregate number of members of the annual conferences present and voting.

BISHOP GWINN: Thank you. Now, this is before us and if you will share in allowing that to go before the Judicial Council—we need at least one-fifth support—if you will send this request to the Judicial Council, will you lift a hand? Thank you, hands down. Those opposed? But—it has passed by one-fifth very easily. Now, we are at an Order of the Day and Harriet McCabe, as our chair, will come regarding presiding officers. Mrs. McCabe, report to us. Thank you.

HARRIET MCCABE (Northern Illinois): Thank you, Bishop Gwinn. Again, I’m pleased to report to you who will be our presiding officers tomorrow. In the morning we will be led by Bishop Thomas Bickerton. In the afternoon our leader will be Bishop Charlene Kammerer. And in the evening our bishop will be Bishop Bill Hutchinson. And Bishop Gwinn and friends, this will be our final report and I do want to express, on behalf of the Committee on Presiding Officers, our deep appreciation to every episcopal leader who has responded to our request and has led us so wonderfully.

BISHOP GWINN: Thank you, very much. Thank you, thank you, we’re grateful for this committee, are we not? Yes. Now, I’m preparing to turn to our secretary in a moment, but I wanted to take just a personal privilege and thank Bishop Joe Penel for backing me up today and assisting in a beautiful way. Bishop Penel’s been a primary mentor for me in our college as I’ve come into that college together. And also to thank Bishop Jack Tuell. Bishop Tuell and I are in a covenant group together, and Jack, you know that I’ve come to love you very much and deeply respect you and these two men have been a tremendous help to me today and all of you have been as well. And I must tell you that I have had before me the entire time this personal note from our North Carolina delegation reminding me of their love and their prayers for me in this time and I’m very grateful for that. And so your kindness and, it’s marvelous; it, I think, excites all of our hearts to see how we are working together in holy conferencing ways. And the Lord will be with you in this dinner hour, but we do need to hear from our secretary.

REIST: Thank you, I’ve got so many pieces of paper up here from annual conferences, it’s hard to know what order to put them in, but I do think that the Kansas Jayhawks (who are noting that at 2:25 P.M. we had a total of \$84,250 pledged) are willing and proud to admit that the miracle of *Nothing But Nets* has trumped even our three-point “nothing but net” shot with 2.7 seconds left. Thanks be to God!

*(laughter)*

But, in addition to that, Western Michigan Conference is going to purchase a basketball for \$1,000; the Florida Conference delegation is going to purchase a basketball for \$1,000; and we have some bids. Northern Illinois Annual Conference, home of the world’s greatest player of all time, Michael Jordan, bids \$25,000 for the battlefield—

basketball—I’m sorry. I said “battlefield” because, folks, that’s not going to win it. Central Texas bid \$32,000.

*(applause and cheers)*

And there’s a request from Bishop Bickerton that we extend the bidding until the close of this evening’s session. I think we’re on a run here with this. Now, I’d like to remind you that there are also—some of you may have Mother’s Day presents to buy or maybe some Father’s Day gifts that are coming up, or some other occasion to purchase things. If you have not yet discovered the Central Conference Marketplace, soon to be Regional Conference Marketplace, please come and see the malachite and other handcrafts that central conference delegates have brought from their countries. Your purchases help with many needy projects in the central conferences. The Central Conference Marketplace is behind the Cokesbury display and will end at 1:30 P.M. tomorrow. They’ll be packing up at 1:30 P.M. tomorrow and I don’t think our central conference delegates want to be burdened with taking things back in their luggage, so it would be a real act of kindness on the part of jurisdictional conference, annual conference delegates to clean out the shop. And lastly, the 11:11 band from First United Methodist Church, Fort Worth, will be performing from 5:30 to 6:15 at the food court stage in Hall B. That concludes my announcements.

BISHOP GWINN: Thank you and we are in dinner recess.

**Thursday Evening,  
May 1, 2008**

*(music)*

BISHOP SALLY DYCK: If you would begin to take your seats. We have miles to go before we sleep. Give ’em some traveling music, Mark.

*(music)*

If you would come to order, we're gonna to begin. 7:30. Would you please take your seats? My name is Sally Dyck and I am the resident—

*(applause)*

I am the Resident Bishop of Minnesota. When I went to Minnesota, one of my predecessors, Bishop Clymer, told me you know Minnesota is one of those conferences you can just get your arms around. And one of the things that's so daunting about really sitting in this seat is that we don't have the same kind of relationships and so we need to build those, even as we go. But tonight I trust that I will do my very best to get my arms around this General Conference so that we can do the work that we need to do and we can do it in the spirit that we have committed ourselves to do. So as we begin, let us be in a spirit of prayer. Please be in your seats and let us begin in a spirit of prayer. I also want to keep in mind Mary Weiss, who is one of our pages. She fell during the lunch break, was taken to the hospital, and broke her elbow. She is now back at the hotel but we want to keep her in mind as we begin our work. Let us pray.

*(prayer)*

Amen.

All right, we have, before we begin, we have an indication from our Agenda Committee to give us an idea about what's in front of us. We have gotten to a milestone actually, maybe a milestone that isn't quite home yet, but I believe—oh, it's the whole kit and caboodle. All right, so they are going to treat you.

JOHN BRAWN: Oh, I'm sorry, Bishop. We have hit a milestone and we would like to celebrate very briefly in song.

*(music and applause)*

If you are to consider all the items remaining, you have 6 minutes and 40 seconds on each one.

BISHOP DYCK: All right, they were not kidding. We have 99 items. I am going to call on David Wilson of the Agenda Committee to give us further update.

DAVID M. WILSON (Oklahoma Indian Mission): Thank you, Bishop. What a difficult act to follow this evening! I know that we are certainly a lot closer to the end of our work since we—since you first heard from me this morning. But I want to give you a brief report of what we have on the agenda for tomorrow, which is Friday, May 2, 2008. Our first order of the day will be the elections of various committees for the new quadrennium, and our second order of the day will be the much anticipated report of the General Council on Finance and Administration. After the GCFA report, we will continue with calendar items and conference business as time allows in the morning. And at 12:10 P.M. we will celebrate the 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Social Principles. And after lunch we will, of course, continue with more calendar items and conference business that afternoon. In the evening, we will have more calendar items and conference business as needed and we will worship together during our closing worship at the end of the evening. We will anticipate and look forward to adjournment sometime tomorrow night or perhaps the next morning, depending on our progress. Bishop, I move the adoption of this report.

BISHOP DYCK: All right, it's before you. Those who would adopt—any discussion? Those who would adopt this report, please raise your hand. Thank you, and those who wouldn't, raise your hand... And it is approved. *[Approved by hand vote]* Yes, right here, in section A, if you'd go to mic. 5.

YOUNGSOOK C. KANG (Rocky Mountain): Bishop, I like to move to suspend the Rule 318 for the purpose of placing calendar items taken off the consent calendar with less than 10 percent minority vote in legislative committees placed

back into consent calendars. If there is a second, I will speak to it.

BISHOP DYCK: Is there a sec—OK. Would you like to speak to it, yes?

KANG: Thank you. If rules are suspended, this will apply only to those removed by Rule 317; in other words, by the request of 20 delegates and I have two reasons. One, we just heard that we have 99 items to go. Of those 99 items, 20 will be affected by this action. And second, according to Rule 25, all unfinished business shall remain unfinished. In other words, if they are unfinished, they will die.

BISHOP DYCK: All right. Is there discussion...to suspend the rules? Takes two-thirds. Now let's activate your keypads. Those who would suspend the rules...I believe you just touch any key, all right? Then those who would suspend the rules, enter "1" for yes; "2" for no. The question is now before you and when the clock appears on the screen, you may vote.

*(pause)*

*[Yes, 517; No, 154]*

BISHOP DYCK: And, 77 percent, or 517 votes, which is more than two-thirds, and to suspend the rules. Twenty-three percent voted no with 154 votes. Would you like to make your second motion?

KANG: My second motion, then, is to place those calendar items that I mentioned, place it back into consent calendars.

BISHOP DYCK: And once you give the full motion place back the calendar items on the consent, they have less than—

KANG: Yes, yes, yes. Place back those calendar items taken off the consent calendars with less than 10 percent minority votes in legislative committees.

BISHOP DYCK: All right, is there a second? All right. And would you like to speak to it?

KANG: I think that I've already stated my reasons, so...

BISHOP DYCK: OK.

KANG: And, yeah, I—the main reason for this motion is to help us move along, since tonight and then tomorrow is the only time that is left.

BISHOP DYCK: Right. All right, back here.

*Off and On the Consent Calendar*

BRYAN D. COLLIER (Mississippi): I'd speak against the amendment, not because I don't agree that we need to move along, but there are several items that've been pulled off the consent calendar which should not be returned there without discussion, hence the effort of people to get them off so we have discussion. It, if—would you clarify something for me? If we do not act on them and they die, as my sister says, do we simply maintain the position we have had for the last four years since the last we met?

BISHOP DYCK: Yes. If it's a disciplinary paragraph or item, yes.

COLLIER: OK, then I want to speak ag—its not in order for me to make an amendment is it...? I just—is it in order for me to make a substitution amendment?

BISHOP DYCK: You can make an amendment.

COLLIER: OK. I would propose in order to move us along, we not take up those items until we have finished...I'm not sure how to divide those? Can someone help me? I would rather them lay there and die and us retain what we had, than for us to just simply categorically sweep them up and...

BISHOP DYCK: Is this an amend—is this a motion to amend or is this a speech against?

COLLIER: I would move that we take those items last in our agenda.

BISHOP DYCK: Is there a second? OK.

COLLIER: Thank you.

BISHOP DYCK: That's all right. All right. That's—they're telling me

up here that's what we would do anyway, so I don't think that amendment is necessary; that's part of what the rules of how the calendar-ing works.

COLLIER: So we would move them automatically to the end of the agenda anyway.

BISHOP DYCK: Right. Right.

COLLIER: Then I speak against the motion that has been made.

BISHOP DYCK: Right. There is a green card there in the C section? If you would go to mic, 8 maybe?

JULIUS C. TRIMBLE (East Ohio): Bishop, I'm in favor of the motion of putting those items back on the consent calendar. All of these issues have been discussed in legislative committees. There was overwhelming support to make a decision. If we bring those back for discussion, we're just making our task which is before us more difficult. All of us have been assigned to legislative committees. The committees have worked hard. It was shared with us in the beginning of the conference that the percentage of those items that would be turned over against an overwhelming decision of the Legislative Committee is very small, so I would be in favor of the decision to put those items back on the consent calendar and trust the work of the legislative committees.

BISHOP DYCK: Thank you. I'm going to I've one speech against to go and I'm gonna go over here in the back of section A. Yes? We're under the two speeches for, two speeches against, two minutes long ruling that we had one minute long.

UNIDENTIFIED MALE SPEAKER: Point of order! One. One. One.

BISHOP DYCK: Point of order? Where is it? Yes, state your point of order. Yes.

JUDITH A. STEVENS (New York): Bishop, I believe we suspended our rules and decided to have one speech for and one speech against and one minute.

BISHOP DYCK: Yeah, we had a couple of rules this morning, or this afternoon, and it was a two speeches for and two speeches against for one minute each for the remainder of the day; that's for the regular work. Then we also had committees with less than 10 percent descent; those speeches would be one speech for, one speech against for one minute. And if all goes well this evening, I think we have one of those. And so we're under the two, two, and one rule. OK. And you're my last speech against here. Six, mic. 6.

STEVEN CLUNN (Troy): Yes? OK. I apologize to the body; I am one of the people who helped to pull one of the consent calendar items that will be coming later. It was one from Higher Education and Ministry dealing with elders being asked to mandatorily become involved in racial and ethnic diversity training, anti-racism training, and at that I talked with someone in that committee and at that committee someone stood up and said "we do not need this because elders are required to do that in seminaries and in their annual conferences" and that is not true. It is not; it is offered in some seminaries—it is offered in some conferences, but it is not mandatory, so the things that are coming off of consent calendar—

BISHOP DYCK: If you would sum up, please.

CLUNN: —are items that others feel might have been presented incorrectly and I also believe are part of what we do is holy conferencing—listening to the voice of all. Thank you.

BISHOP DYCK: Thank you. Thank you. OK, we have two speeches for, two speeches against. These need to be questions or something and I see a person in a...maybe a brown top, if you would go to mic. 8 that, you're in section D if you would come to mic. 8.

JOHN F. HOWARD JR (Western North Carolina): I have a question. What are all those 20 items that are pulled off the consent calendar? Is

there any way we can get a list or something?

BISHOP DYCK: Does the body want me to read these? Oh, I couldn't really tell. Those who would have me read these, there's 20 of 'em. I'm not gonna read all the numbers but I would read the titles. Those that would have me do that, raise your hand. Thank you. And those who would not, raise your hand. And I'm not gonna read 'em. If you would like, well, we're about to vote. OK, back there in the white sweater in section 10 or section D. Mic. 11.

*Fate of Petitions Not Acted Upon*

SARAH E. STEELE (Arkansas): I have a question regarding the Resolutions that were adopted in 2000. If they were pulled off the consent calendar, what would happen to them if the—if they were not acted on in the plenary?

BISHOP DYCK: Give me a second.

STEELE: Yes ma'am.

(pause)

BISHOP DYCK: OK. If they are at their expiration date, then if we don't get to them they would expire. Yeah, they would go away.

STEELE: That's what I was afraid of. Thank you, ma'am.

BISHOP DYCK: Thank you. All right. Yeah, let me just...before we go to vote...and I think you're about ready to vote. They're going to go on the consent calendar. The motion is to place the calendar items back on the consent calendar. OK? All right. I think you're ready to vote, and so if you wish to place these calendar items back on the consent calendars, those that had less than 10 percent minimum votes, minority votes, if you would enter "1" for yes and "2" for no, the question is now before you, and when the clock appears on the screen you may vote. [Yes, 511; No, 250]

(pause)

And 511 or 67 percent. Yes, so they go back on the consent calendar and 33 percent or 250 votes no. All right, now. We will resume our calendar items and I'm going to call on Matthew Laferty to continue our process.

MATTHEW A. LAFERTY (East Ohio): Good evening. You know that you've been in a place for a long time when they start delivering your mail there. I've received several notes and I think I've been here a long time, so hopefully we can move through the next two calendar items very quickly and that will end then the constitutional amendments in relation to our work on the worldwide nature of the church. The next Calendar Item is found on *DCA* p. 2268. It's Calendar Item 1201. It relates to Petition 80815, which can be found on the *ADCA* p. 443. The committee recommends adoption.

BISHOP DYCK: The Calendar Item—

LAFERTY: Calendar Item 1201.

BISHOP DYCK: —is before you. The committee recommends that you adopt it. Is there any discussion?

LAFERTY: Bishop, if could just give a brief rationale.

BISHOP DYCK: Yes.

LAFERTY: This petition is before you and we recommend adoption because we felt it was important that we prevent any confusion about our lines of authority in case—in terms of—regional conferences as we move from central conferences to regional conference. The other issue is that one of the reasons we continued to study this issue for 40 years is that too often the reports that came back were on a worldwide structure. They were, frankly, too massive changes for us to swallow and so we thought this was a way for us to move incrementally toward a worldwide structure.

BISHOP DYCK: Is there any discussion? It's properly before you. Here in section A? If you want to go to mic. 2.

ROBERT SPARKMAN (North Alabama): These petitions are the first step, a permission to draw another line between the United States and central conferences. I believe that it's called a regional conference, but it is still drawing a line. There is another bureaucracy, another level of rules, levels of responsibilities to decide between. The same people who have been saying "open the door" are now saying "draw the line." We are saying, "Open the door to the global church."

BISHOP DYCK: Please sum up.

SPARKMAN: And stay very close so that we can benefit by the wind of the Holy Spirit blowing through the global church.

BISHOP DYCK: Thank you. And a speech for over here in section B. You want to go over to mic. 5.

WE HYUN CHANG (New England): Bishop, I would urge to support this because we have already voted, and so far what we have been hearing is all about the assumptions. Some of us already have made up our minds about this issue that we have referred to the Study Committee, so if we have a little faith in our process and leave our assumptions behind and be open to this idea...this is not deciding anything. We will have a chance to change the Constitution because—

BISHOP DYCK: Please sum up.

CHANG: —we gonna get this back a year before, am I correct? So let's give the process a time in our faith.

BISHOP DYCK: Thank you. I have a speech for and against. Question? Mic. 1, section B.

KIM REISMAN (North Indiana): I have a question about no. 6, "to appoint a judicial court to determine legal questions." Do you see where I'm reading on p. 443 in the *ADCA*?

BISHOP DYCK: Yes.

REISMAN: I'd like to know how that actually would relate, how that relates to the Judicial Council of the general church, and just a little bit of explanation about that, if I could.

BISHOP DYCK: Matt, can you resp—

*Judicial Council for  
Central Conferences*

LAFERTY: I was look here for...as you were speaking. I couldn't find it. I'm reading it here. You're asking about no. 6 where it says "to appoint a Judicial Court to determine legal questions arising on the rules, regulations, and such, revised, adopted, or a new sanctioned of the regional conferences." So you're asking about that language?

REISMAN: I'm asking about that language and how that council relates to our actual general Judicial Council of the larger church.

LAFERTY: It's my understanding that central conferences currently appoint a judicial council that deals with matters that arise out of that central conference. All this does is change the language. It's a name change from "central conference" to "regional conference." Because this amendment is not an acting—a regional conference for the United States—it does not create a new bureaucracy. That would not affect the U.S. section of the church at this time.

REISMAN: Thank you.

*Bureaucracy and Lines of Authority*

BISHOP DYCK: Thank you. Speech. Yes, back here, question? Section D. Come to mic....I don't know what's close to you, 8? I don't see it, but...oh, there it is.

MANDE MUTOMBO MULU-MIA NSHIMBA (North Katanga): Bishop, thank you for giving me the floor. I want you to help me with the confusion I have with the language which is used here about "central conference" to be changed into "regional conference." And I hear say that a there is no change of bureaucracy and other things. But, are the limits the same or there will be other limits? Central conference changing into regional conference—will it be

the same for the United States to change jurisdictional conferences also into regional conferences?

LAFERTY: The committee in fact grappled with the latter part of that issue in terms of would jurisdictional conferences become central or regional conferences. Those were...there were a group of several petitions brought forward by one person that asked for that, and those items have been rejected. We, as the committee, did feel that that went too far; we didn't want to mandate what the study committee—the outcome the study committee—should have, and so jurisdictional conferences are...were not...will not under this new language, at this time, become regional conferences.

BISHOP DYCK: Thank you. I see no other green or red cards. I think you're ready to vote. Do you want to make a final statement at all?

LAFERTY: Yeah, I would just briefly say that this does not create a new bureaucracy. It does make the name changes that we have already approved earlier. But, in fact, it also protects, or also prevents, confusion about lines of authority in terms of jurisdictions. I would like to remind the conference that this doesn't draw new lines; this doesn't cut us off from central conferences and regional conference for those of us in the United States. I would like to draw your attention to paragraph no. 9, which still says that there shall be jurisdictional conferences in the United States. So we would ask that you would adopt this amendment.

BISHOP DYCK: Thank you. Those who would vote yes, please enter "1" in your keypad; and those who would vote no for Calendar Item 1201, please vote "2."

*(pause)*

BISHOP DYCK: And it is approved. [*Yes, 544; No, 252*]

*Worldwide Nature #17*

LAFERTY: The last calendar item on the worldwide nature of the

church—it's not the last calendar item I'll present tonight but it's the last calendar item in relation to the worldwide nature of the church—can be found on p. 2268 of the *DCA*. It is Calendar Item 1199. It relates to Petition No. 80824, which can be found in the *Advance* edition of the *DCA* on p. 456. The committee recommends adoption of this calendar item for all the same reasons that I just recently said in relation to the last calendar item that we just approved.

BISHOP DYCK: All right. Calendar Item 1199 is before you. The committee recommends that you adopt it. Anything more you want to say?

LAFERTY: No, again it's just trying to prevent confusion about lines of authority in terms of jurisdictional conferences and Episcopal supervision. Again, we thought incremental change was the best approach, and so this is that incremental change. We would urge for you to adopt the item.

BISHOP DYCK: All right. I think back here in section D, the person on the left; I think you have a red sweater on. No? There, you're moving. Yes. That's red. Is that red? Mic. 7.

WILLIAM WESTBROOK JR. (Peninsula-Delaware): Can I ask the committee, is it even possible...under the current constitutional rules as amended, is it even possible to have a regional conference with jurisdictional conferences under it?

LAFERTY: So, let me make sure you're—that this is what you're asking. You're asking that the items that we had passed, would there be jurisdictional conferences and regional conferences? Is that correct?

WESTBROOK: No, I'm asking if it's possible to have a regional conference that has jurisdictional conferences under it.

LAFERTY: In the items that we have brought before you that currently does not exist, but as we look

forward into the future, again we wanted to prevent any confusion about anything that was brought forward and we thought this would be a great incremental change for us to move towards instead of a massive change.

BISHOP DYCK: All right. Question here, again in red. In section A. Somebody's going to accuse me of being favorable to red, huh? Go ahead.

PAUL D. HILLARD (North Alabama): Bishop, if I understand the answer to the previous question correctly, I think they were wanting to ascertain were there places where regional and jurisdictional would be together. And I see language in this petition that says "in regional conferences where there are jurisdictional conferences," which would seem to apply in America. Is that the correct answer to the question?

LAFERTY: Can you repeat the last part again please?

BISHOP DYCK: It's a little bit hard to hear. If you could step just a little closer to the mic.; I'm having a little trouble hearing you.

HILLARD: On p. 456.

BISHOP DYCK: That's better.

HILLARD: On the petition 80824, in the third line, beginning with the bold text, it says "in regional conferences where there are jurisdictional conferences"; that seems to imply what the previous questioner was asking.

LAFERTY: So, you're asking the same question that was just asked? Is that correct?

HILLARD: Yeah, well I thought you answered that you didn't know and maybe in the future...but it implies that right now, this petition—

LAFERTY: I believe I was pretty clear about what the committee's position was in that currently there does not...the Constitution and the *Discipline* does not allow for jurisdictional and central or regional conferences to exist. But as the committee looked forward, we wanted to make sure that there

weren't confusion about lines of authority. We wanted to protect College of Bishops and their authority in terms of in the future and so we thought it was appropriate to bring this incremental change to the body and urge their adoption of this item.

BISHOP DYCK: Thank you. All right, a speech for...here in section A. Come to mic. 2.

OLHA TYSHLOVETS (Ukraine-Moldava Provisional): I'm not wearing red so that will break the pattern. I would like to speak in favor of the petition. Number one, because we need to finish what we started and even though we've been really inconsistent, 'cause we've voted some things up and voted some things down, I really want us to finish it and not to create any more confusion; and we need to realize that the church cannot continue existing the way it is with the structure we have right now. It's not fair to make central conference delegates vote on the U.S.-related issues that would...they do not have a clear understanding of. So that's a good beginning of the change in the structure, so I would encourage everyone to vote in favor. Thank you.

BISHOP DYCK: Thank you. I sense that the body is ready to move on. Do you want to make a final statement?

LAFERTY: Yes, I would like just to reiterate that it's important that we, as a church, continue to make a commitment to moving into the worldwide—into a worldwide church. This helps facilitate that process. Again, it was an attempt to prevent any confusion in the future about lines of authority, and as a way to protect College of Bishops and their authority. Also this is again an incremental change; this was brought forward because we thought that in years past that many of these issues had been too massive for us and that the best approach was incrementally. And we urge your adoption of this calendar item.

BISHOP DYCK: All right. Count—all right. In section D, come to mic. 8.

DEBBIE K. WALLACE-PADGETT (Kentucky): I keep hearing the phrase "incremental change" and I'm wondering if there is a plan that is prepared that hasn't been presented to the whole General Conference.

LAFERTY: No, there hasn't. We have appointed a—

BISHOP DYCK: Please.

LAFERTY: —we have authorized a task force to study this over the next four years, which will bring a report back to 2, to 2012 General Conference. Certainly there have been ideas that members have been discussing, but I assure you there has been no conspiracy in terms of some hidden agenda that is being brought forward.

BISHOP DYCK: All right, thank you. I'm gonna move on to the vote then. I think if you're ready to vote on Calendar Item 1199, press "1" to adopt the calendar item and press "2" to reject it. Please vote when the timer appears.

(pause)

And it is adopted. [*Yes, 560; No, 275*]

LAFERTY: Thank you, Bishop. I would like to thank the conference for their diligent work on these petitions. I know it has not been easy, and I want to take a moment of personal privilege and just thank the members for their encouragement during breaks regardless of what your position has been I do—have received encouragement. It's not been an easy process and I would like to thank the members for their hard work. The next item of our report—and now for something totally different—is—

BISHOP DYCK: *Really?*

(laughter)

*Flexibility in Scheduling  
General Conference*

LAFERTY: —we're moving on to something totally different. It can be

found on *DCA* p. 2268, that's *DCA* p. 2268. It's Calendar Item 1202, that's Calendar Item 1202. It relates to Petition 81238 and can be found on—in the *Advance Edition of the DCA* on p. 438. The committee recommends adoption.

BISHOP DYCK: All right, the committee—

LAFERTY: We felt that there needed to be some flexibility in terms of scheduling of General Conference to be more inclusive to a larger group of people and so we would urge its adoption.

BISHOP DYCK: All right. Flexibility, all right. Are there any—there's a green back there, yes, a speech for in section C. I guess maybe mic. 8 or 11; 11, whichever.

KURT KARANDY (North Central New York): I would strongly speak in favor of this amendment because on Monday I return to American University and I have three finals. Then on Tuesday I have a 10-page paper due. And I do not stand alone. A friend of mine is here and she is finishing the final revisions on her thesis. And that takes a lot of dedication and because of that I strongly urge that we support this petition to allow greater flexibility in when we set the date of General Conference. Thank you.

BISHOP DYCK: Thank you. That was—hold it, I'm—I hear your appreciation but you can vote. Voting's good. All right, is there a speech against? Let me try one over here in terms of a question. In section A, blue shirt, mic. 6.

SKYLER S. NIMMONS (South Carolina): My question is with the current language of this current petition how—who's to say that General Conference doesn't come in January or December? The current language, in my opinion, says it happens at a set time, April or May, every four years. Can we set some type of limitation that says June or July?

BISHOP DYCK: It's a question.

LAFERTY: The language would allow flexibility and, and the—with

the Commission on General Conference setting the exact dates. I can't guarantee what the Commission on the General Conference will do; I'm not a member of the Commission on the General Conference. And it would allow them the flexibility to de—to set that date. Whether that would be June or July, or January or February, or April or May as we cur—as currently have it now.

BISHOP DYCK: You can come to Minneapolis in January.

(laughter)

NIMMONS: In that case, I'd like to make an amendment!

BISHOP DYCK: You did. I'm sorry you ma—you did make a speech first.

NIMMONS: Yes.

BISHOP DYCK: You made a speech first.

NIMMONS: OK.

BISHOP DYCK: So you can't make it.

NIMMONS: I can't make an amendment?

BISHOP DYCK: Sorry. All right, blue in section D. Mic. 11.

TONY HOLIFIELD (Arkansas): I would like to move to amend this petition by changing the words, or by adding the words "the General Conference shall meet in the month of February, March, April, or May once in four years at such time," etc., etc. If I have a second, I'd speak to it.

BISHOP DYCK: Is there a second? Second, you may speak to it.

HOLIFIELD: I just simply believe that the timing of General Conference comes at a good time, generally speaking, and that if we can leave it in this same general time of the year, we'll be better off.

BISHOP DYCK: All right. There's a red card in section C and I can't see the person, all I can see—yes, you. I'd no idea who was going to pop up. Mic. 11. Yeah, we—onto one speech for, one against. Mic. 8.

EVELYN R. MCDONALD (New York): I speak against the amendment because I trust the people to do their job.

BISHOP DYCK: All right.

(pause)

Yeah, all right. We just had a little disagreement up here. It's all right. Is there anybody who would like to speak for this? Green card. All right, then I think you're ready to vote on the amendment.

LAFERTY: The committee—the committee on the original motion did not want to put any restrictions and so they wanted to give the commission total flexibility in deciding that date and so we would urge that you would reject the amendment.

BISHOP DYCK: All right. Then, you're ready to vote. Please press "1" to adopt cal—this amendment, and press "2" to reject it. Please vote when the timer appears.

(pause)

And the amendment does not prevail. [*Yes, 235; No, 606*]

We are back to Calendar Item 1202 unamended. Speech for, here in section A, near the aisle there.

CAROLYN BRISCOE (South Carolina): This petition originated in the task force to study the episcopacy. And we were concerned about the youth and young adults and the fact that if we meet during the school year, we virtually exclude them or put them under extraordinary hardships. We also exclude those people who teach in schools, colleges, and universities to a great extent, because this is so near—

BISHOP DYCK: Please sum up.

BRISCOE: —the school year. I would urge you to vote for the petition as written.

BISHOP DYCK: Anybody wish to speak against the amendment? Here in the front row, section A, mic. 2. I mean the calendar item, sorry about that. We are on unamended 1202.

SOLOMON OLUSIYI (Nigeria): I want to speak against this amendment. We in Africa, we consider whether in America, if the time of General Conference is being changed to the time of winter, I don't think we can adopt the condition, which is my censure of the health and education. Secondly, this General Conference comes once in the fourth year. I think that will not be a reason for students that this amendment should be adopted. For that, I ask—

BISHOP DYCK: Please sum up.

OLUSIYI: —people to vote against the amendment. Thank you.

BISHOP DYCK: All right, I can only take one speech against. Then—all right, over here, and then we move.

JORGEN THAARUP (Denmark): I will speak against the motion because when we are turning into being a worldwide Church, there will be different arguments from each region all over the world: summer, winter, spring; schools, work, everything; and if we shall save—if we shall not have this discussion on every General Conference, I find it good to have it fixed one time and that's it.

BISHOP DYCK: We've had two speeches for, two speeches against. Would you like to make a final statement?

LAFERTY: Yes, I would like to say, I stand here today as a reason that flexibility is needed in setting the date of the General Conference. While I have been honored to be a delegate to this General Conference, I graduate from Ohio Wesleyan University on May 11 which is just a little over a week from today. I will receive my undergraduate degree but yet I still have to go back and take finals. While I understand that there is some concern, the reason that we wanted flexibility is that so that the commission could look at all different groups of people and determine what date would be the optimal for all groups of people. The deletion of

the prescribed months of April and May allows the commission flexibility in setting that date. The passage of this amendment does not mean that the General Conference will not continue to be held in April or May. This amendment allows the commission flexibility in setting the date, which would make it feasible, yes, for young people, but also, hopefully more feasible for all people. And this also might help us examine dates that can help maximize cost savings and so we would urge its adoption.

*Change in GC Dates Declined*

BISHOP DYCK: All right, then we move for—forward to the vote. Those—press “1” to adopt the Calendar Item 1202; press “2” to reject it. Please vote when the timer appears.

*(pause)*

And it is adopted. [*Yes, 518; No, 311*]

LAFERTY: No, it's rejected, Bishop.

BISHOP DYCK: Oh! This is two-thirds. Sorry, it is not adopted. It's 62 percent.

LAFERTY: I would like to invite to the podium now Jim Harnish, who is the chair of the Subcommittee on the General Conference.

*Transitional Period from Central to Regional*

JAMES A. HARNISH (Florida): Bishop, members of the conference, I invite your attention to p. 2268 in the *DCA*, p. 2268, Item 1204, you'll find on p. 439, Petition 80137. We hope we can move quickly. This petition comes to us from the General Commission on Christian Unity and Interreligious Concerns. It meets a gap in the *Discipline* that created challenges in the last quadrennium related to admitting the west—the new conference to the West Africa Conference. The committee recommends that we adopt.

BISHOP DYCK: All right, Calendar Item 1204 is before you and this is one of those calendar items that has one-minute speeches; one for, one against. Are—would you like to speak to it anymore? OK. All right, anybody wish to speak to it? All right, in section C.

VICKI M. BRENDLER (Greater New Jersey): I wonder, in light of the last amendments that we have, and petitions that we've just accepted, if we should change the next to the last line to “regional conferences.” I propose that amendment.

BISHOP DYCK: Second. Would you like to speak to it?

BRENDLER: It just seems to be consistent. It wouldn't take effect though until 2013.

BISHOP DYCK: All right. Are you accepting that?

HARNISH: Certainly, yes.

BISHOP DYCK: OK, then it would—we would put “regional” in for consistency purposes.

HARNISH: Certainly.

BISHOP DYCK: Do you understand, OK. All right, this calendar item is before you. Over here in section A, you have a question?

*Effective Date of Name Change*

JACK RYDER (Northern Illinois): If I just—if I understood what she just said correctly at the very end, almost as a footnote, that the changing the word to “central” would not take effect until January 1, 2013, but the rest of the amendment would take effect upon passage or approval by the annual conferences and then ratification by the Council of Bishops, is that correct?

HARNISH: That would be correct, yes.

RYDER: Can we do that?

HARNISH: It does create a dilemma.

RYDER: Can we do that? Can we pass an amendment, or constitutional amendment that takes effect at two different times?

HARNISH: Good question.

BISHOP DYCK: All right.

HARNISH: Would the parliamentarians rule on that?

(laughter)

BISHOP DYCK: OK, if—you've spoken but if somebody wishes to amend—let's just do it. That's what happens when you try to do friendly amendments, isn't it? All right, over here, mic. 1.

KIM REISMAN (North Indiana): Is there a reason why in the suggested addition, in the last line, "central conference" is still used in light of all that we've been doing? Was that deliberate or is that a mistake?

HARNISH: This was obviously proposed and came through committee before any of the language regarding regional conferences had been approved.

REISMAN: I understand that, but there was not even a suggestion that if...do we need to change that, then?

BISHOP DYCK: That's what we were discussing.

REISMAN: My fault then. We were having a conversation over here. Sorry.

BISHOP DYCK: All right. Does anyone wish to do this officially for us?

HARNISH: I...OK, I think the parliamentary question that I really had sincerely referred to the parliamentarians. If the regional language does not take effect in the rest of the *Discipline* until 2013, and if we go ahead and change that word in this paragraph now, which is not dated 2013, do we have any kind of a parliamentary or disciplinary problem between now and 2013? And I'd appeal to the parliamentarians to rule on that.

BISHOP DYCK: All right, our parliamentarians say we should just leave it alone.

HARNISH: OK, we'll leave it at central conference.

BISHOP DYCK: All right. These other questions? Back in section C? Actually, I think you were mic. 8 and then I will come over to you. You have been trying and I didn't see you then, so, mic. 8, and then I'm gonna go over to mic. 9.

TIMOTHY J. RISS (New York): I would like to amend as the previous amendment with "regional" for "central" in that paragraph and then follow with the same language that we have had at the end of all the other paragraphs that we have dealt with. For example, if you're in the *DCA Advance*, in the next column underneath worldwide nature no. 3 there's a parenthesis that says "the change in name from central to regional" etc. I would like to add that as well.

BISHOP DYCK: Is there a second? All right, would you like to speak to it?

RISS: I think it's important to make everything consistent.

BISHOP DYCK: OK. Is that against? Back in section C, a speech against?

JUNE D. MCCULLOUGH (Greater New Jersey): As I read this, I would have to speak against the amendment, because this would take effect on January 1, 2009, and we may need it for the next General Conference.

BISHOP DYCK: OK, we have a speech for and against, so we need to move to voting. Do you want to state anything?

RISS: Leave it to the house.

BISHOP DYCK: All right, we're gonna leave it to the house. Get ready to vote. And to...you're amending to change "regional" to "central" conference in the standard language of central conferences to regional...and adding the parenthetical statement "the change in name from central to regional takes effect January 1, 2013" at which time this parenthetical procedural note will be removed from the Constitution. All right. That's the amendment that you're voting on. Enter "1" for yes,

"2" for no. The question is now before you, and when the clock appears on the screen you may vote. [Yes, 479; No, 350]

(pause)

And it is approved. Now we have the Calendar Item 1204 before us as amended and I'm going to mic. 9.

CAROL K. LOEB (Southwest Texas): Thank you, bishop.

BISHOP DYCK: Point of order?

JAMES (JIM) W. FOSTER (Texas): Bishop, was that not last amendment a constitutional amendment and needed two-thirds?

BISHOP DYCK: It's an amendment and needs a majority. When we get to the main motion, we'll need a two-thirds. Back to mic. 9. Thank you for just making sure we're on track.

LOEB: Bishop, I move to amend paragraph 15 by inserting the words "of the Episcopal area" after the phrase "annual conferences, missionary conferences, and the provisional annual conferences" wherever it appears in the paragraph. I also would add a new paragraph that says "delegates shall be elected from the conferences of the Episcopal area on a proportional basis of membership in the conferences. In Episcopal areas that have more conferences than delegates the Episcopal area shall establish a fair process for rotating the delegates between the annual conferences they're in and shall communicate the same to the secretary of the General Conference." If I have a second I will speak to it.

*Unequal Episcopal Leadership Levels in Central Conferences*

BISHOP DYCK: Second?

LOEB: Bishop, we're wonderfully living into the worldwide nature of the church, and yet we're not getting representation from our largest growing area. In the 21 central conferences of Europe there are a total of 69,000 people and they have 42 delegates. In one African

central conference there are 389,000 people with 8 less delegates. In the 21 conference—

BISHOP DYCK: Please sum up.

LOEB: —in the Philippines there are 201,000 people with 42 delegates. In just one North Katanga annual conference there are 529,000 people with only 38 delegates. We have 6 conferences that have 500 people or less and 41 conferences with 10,000 or less—

BISHOP DYCK: Please, please come to a finish.

LOEB: May I just finish the sentence?

BISHOP DYCK: Please do.

LOEB: OK—that have 413,000 people, and yet Nigeria has 600,000 people, and has half the number of delegates. This is an inequity.

BISHOP DYCK: Thank you, thank you. Remember we're on a one minute...down here in section A. If you'd go to mic. 3. We also are one speech for, one speech against, and and one minute.

A MARK CONARD (Kansas West): I rise to speak against the amendment. The annual conference is still the basic body in The United Methodist Church. Our representation should be on the basis of the annual conference. The Episcopal area is an administrative supervisory responsibility. This concern was raised in the Legislative Committee. I am certain that the Study Commission—or Committee—will give that attention. In the meantime, the annual conference is the basic body in The United Methodist Church. I urge defeat of this proposal.

BISHOP DYCK: Thank you. We have one speech for. Once again, that's all we can take on the amendment. I'll return to Rev. Harnish.

HARNISH: Thank you, Bishop. I think my brother here has expressed the perspective of the majority of the committee. These matters were discussed. The concern for proportion representation was represented in the committee. The majority of the com-

mittee settled in where Mark just expressed that the annual conference is the basic unit of the church.

BISHOP DYCK: Thank you. Then if you would press "1" to adopt this. Amen. You know, I would. Do we need to read this? Do we have it? Are you clear on what you're voting for? OK, you're ready. Question over here.

RYAN M. RUSSELL (Pacific Northwest): Which conferences would be affected by this motion, or amendment?

BISHOP DYCK: Can someone answer that?

HARNISH: I don't...I mean, we did not analyze the details of that in the committee when this proposal was given to us, so I really can't answer specifically how it would impact a specific annual conferences.

BISHOP DYCK: All right.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Can the person who made the amendment maybe answer that?

BISHOP DYCK: Yes, Ms. Loeb, can you answer that? Mic. 9.

(pause)

LOEB: Any conferences that are in an Episcopal area would be affected. If there were two conferences they would not be affected because it would still be on proportional basis. If there were more than two it could—but it is not guaranteed that it would—be affected.

BISHOP DYCK: All right. Then are you ready to vote? Then press "1" if you wish to approve this amendment, and press "2" to reject it. Please vote when the timer appears. [*Yes, 246; No, 165*]

(pause)

And it does not. It's not adopted. So we're back to the Calendar Item 1204. Anyone wish to speak to it? If not, you're ready to vote. Press "1" to adopt Calendar Item 1204; press "2" to reject it. Please vote when the timer appears. [*Yes, 690; No, 165*]

(pause)

And it is adopted.

HARNISH: Well, Bishop, I thought we'd get that one in under the eight minutes, but we'll try it again.

BISHOP DYCK: All right.

#### *Term Limit Allowance*

HARNISH: On the same page, 2268, Item No. 1205. The title is, "Term Limit Allowance." Under the circumstances, maybe a speaking limit allowance would be appropriate.

(laughter)

But 1205, you find it on p. 449. This Petition No. 80510 is permissive language. It would allow an annual or provisional conference to set term limits for the election of delegates. The committee recommends rejection of this petition because we have term limits. They're called elections.

BISHOP DYCK: (*laugh*) All right. Calendar Item 1205 is before us. The committee recommends rejection. Then I'm gonna move on to—

HARNISH: We're ready to go.

BISHOP DYCK: If you would adopt it, please press "1," and if you would reject it, please press "2." [*Yes, 248; No, 574*]

(pause)

And it is rejected.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Bishop, I would like to invite Sandra Steiner Ball, who is the chair of the Subcommittee on the Annual and Jurisdictional Conferences, to present our next calendar item.

#### *Annual Conference Membership—Lay and Clergy*

SANDRA STEINER BALL (Peninsula-Delaware): Please turn to p. 2365 of the DCA, Calendar Item No. 1203. This item was published

incorrectly in Tuesday's *DCA*, so make sure you're looking at the corrected calendar item on p. 2365. This item refers to Petition No. 80163, which can be found in the *Advance* edition of the *DCA* on p. 444. The committee recommends to adopt Calendar Item 1203 as amended, and here is the rationale. First, this petition deals with the membership of the annual conference. Paragraph 32 of the *Book of Discipline*, Section 6, Article 1 of the Constitution, with which this petition addresses, has been amended sixteen times since 1968. This petition eliminates the redundancy of listing the detailed list of lay and clergy membership in two places in the *Discipline*, both in paragraph 32 and paragraph 601. Since the General Conference definition of clergy and lay leadership can be found in detail in paragraph 602, this petition will allow for the General Conference to define clergy and lay membership of the annual conference without having to change the Constitution each time a change is made in annual conference membership. Second, the petition continues to allow the annual conference, by its own formula, to provide for the equalization of clergy and lay membership. Third, it reduces the number of years members shall have been members of The United Methodist Church from two years to one year preceding their election. The committee recommends this particular change because many of our laypersons are very active in our churches today before they enter formal church membership. We have also become a very mobile society, and new members transferring their membership from one United Methodist congregation to another often come with years of knowledge and experience in The United Methodist Church. The committee recommends to adopt.

BISHOP DYCK: All right. Calendar Item 1203 is before you. Make sure you're on p. 2365 for the correct reading of it. I see back here in section D a red card. If you would go to mic. 10, please.

RICHARD HEARNE (North Texas): Bishop Dyck, many of us have a saying that as long as Catholics keep marrying Baptists, there'll always be a Methodist Church. And we're getting a lot of people in our churches who really don't understand how our system works, so I would suggest that two years is a minimum before someone should be elected either to an annual conference or a General Conference.

BISHOP DYCK: Thank you; that was a speech against. And let's see, I think the one just to the right there, the green card to the right there in section D, my right, your left—maybe your left—no the other one. Oh, were you just holding that card up for him? Oh, which one are you going...OK. I don't even...are you going to speak for this? OK.

#### *Scouting and Annual Conference Membership*

KEVIN GOODWIN (Peninsula-Delaware): I'm in favor of this because of what happened in Pittsburgh. They tried to add the scoutmaster to the list of annual conference members. They forgot to change paragraph 32 and thus the Judicial Council had to rule after General Conference that the scoutmaster was not a member because it was an unconstitutional change. By making this change we eliminate the possibility of that happening again for somebody who is not totally in depth with how our Constitution—

BISHOP DYCK: Please sum up

GOODWIN: —is put together. So I'm in favor because it simplifies the process.

BISHOP DYCK: Thank you. Question over here?

HAKAN ENGLUND (Sweden): I have a question of clarification, or it might be an amendment, but it shouldn't read "lay, professing"; it should have been "professing members."

BALL: That's correct. Yes, "professing members"; it should be that.

BISHOP DYCK: Thank you. Is there a speech against? I see one for, but I need to make sure I offer a speech against. And seeing no speeches against, I'll come over here for a speech for.

ADAM J. HAMILTON (Kansas East): Our goal is to start a whole lot of new churches in the next so many years, and when you start a new church many of those folks are going to be joining The United Methodist Church for the first time and my hope is that we decide to approve this and I would actually wish we could amend to say "for new churches there would be membership—no minimum membership time." My hope is our new members at new churches are coming to annual conference and learning how to be United Methodists. Thank you.

BISHOP DYCK: Thank you. All right, a question back in section D.

PHILLIP D. SEGREST (Alabama-West Florida): Does this eliminate the requirement that the lay delegates be professing members? Because that's in paragraph 32 and I don't see it in paragraph 602.

BALL: The question was asked before. Yes, it should read "professing members." That should be added as friendly amendment, but that was the intention of the—of the petition to read—

SEGREST: I didn't realize an amendment had been made.

BALL: —"professing members."

BISHOP DYCK: No amendment has been made. You asked a question. If you wish to make an amendment, you could.

SEGREST: Yes, I would—

(pause)

BISHOP DYCK: Do you want to make an amendment?

SEGREST: Well, I was just told the amendment hadn't been made. Is that—

BALL: It was a correction.

BISHOP DYCK: All right the committee is going to—has corrected it. It should read “the annual conference shall be composed of professing”...How would it read?... “professing lay and clergy”—

BALL: “Professing lay and clergy members.”

BISHOP DYCK: As defined by the General Conference.

SEGREST: If that’s adequate to cover it, that’s fine. If that doesn’t require a vote.

(pause)

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:  
(unintelligible)

“Professing” Members of UMC

BISHOP DYCK: “Lay members shall have been confessing member—professing, confessing is good too,—“professing members of The United Methodist Church.”

BALL: Yes.

BISHOP DYCK: All right. OK, we will accept that as the language that we will be voting on at this time. All right. Then, if you will adopt that—including the word *professing* as we have inserted it, press “1”; if not, please press “2.” And please vote when the timer appears.

(pause)

And Calendar Item 1203 is adopted with more than two-thirds vote. [Yes, 718; No, 117]

LAFERTY: Bishop, I would like to thank the Conference for its hard and diligent work on our constitutional amendments. Also I want to thank Ouk-Yean Kim Jueng of the Northern Illinois Conference who has been on stage with us to pro—who is a subcommittee chair on the Worldwide Nature of the Church Subcommittee, who has been providing us support and resources over this debate today. And we’re done with our report.

BISHOP DYCK: You’re leaving us?

LAFERTY: I’m leaving ya.

(applause)

BISHOP DYCK: Thank you. Thank you for your hard work. All right, we must have a new crew here. Fresh recruits, all right. I want to welcome...yes, the brown top, mic. 4.

MARY BETH BLINN (Virginia): Bishop, I would like to move the reconsideration of Calendar No. 760. I voted with the majority on this item and I’ll speak to it if this is appropriate.

BISHOP DYCK: Is there a second? There’s a second. You may speak to it.

BLINN: This is the only item in that series—

BISHOP DYCK: Pardon?

BLINN: Oh, I’m sorry, p. 220...2176, Petition 80812.

BISHOP DYCK: All right. And that’s on p.—

BLINN: P. 2176

BISHOP DYCK: OK. Would you like to speak to it?

BLINN: Yes, this was the only item in the series of petitions which we have passed concerning the worldwide church, and I think if we could reconsider this and come to a consensus, then that would solve the dilemma that we find ourselves in concerning the confusion that would be in the Constitution.

BISHOP DYCK: OK. Motion is to reconsider. It is debatable. Then I think you’re ready to vote. Those who would reconsider please press “1.” And those who would not, please press “2.” Please vote when the timer appears.

[Yes, 518; No, 321]

BISHOP DYCK: And you have voted to reconsider Calendar Item 760. OK, then make your motion.

MARY BETH BLINN (Virginia): I move that we pass Petition No. 08, excuse me, 80812, so that we are consistent in the *Discipline*, in the constitution with our language concerning the regional conferences.

BISHOP DYCK: OK, is there a second? All right, would you like to speak to it?

BLINN: I think we’ve already heard from several people about how the dilemma of having two different words used in the same constitution is very confusing and it doesn’t make any sense. So I would encourage us to at least make an effort to make that consistent all the way through since that seems to be the will of the body.

BISHOP DYCK: Thank you. Someone want to speak against it?

UNIDENTIFIED MALE SPEAKER: Point of Order.

BISHOP DYCK: State your point of order.

UNIDENTIFIED MALE SPEAKER: Bishop, does the motion for reconsideration not require a 2/3?

BISHOP DYCK: No.

UNIDENTIFIED MALE SPEAKER: No, OK.

BISHOP DYCK: It is a majority.

UNIDENTIFIED MALE SPEAKER: OK

BISHOP DYCK: I have a little list here.

(laughter)

(applause)

BISHOP DYCK: All right, does anyone wish to speak against it? All right, over here, Section A.

JACK RYDER (Northern Illinois): I have a question. I have a note in my *DCA*, or *ADCA*, and I thought that we might have had an amendment when we were discussing it before to change *shall* to *may*. Is that amendment still in effect; or are we starting from zero, what’s before us? That is my question, I guess.

BISHOP DYCK: All right, the motion, I believe—and the maker can correct me—was the petition, so that means we start, as they say, from scratch. So it is as it appears

before you in the—as—in the calendar item. In here, OK, the petition. Do you have a question over here?

MARSHALL S. BAILEY (Virginia): If it would be in order, I would like to make a motion to divide the issue and have it where one part of the motion would be changing from *regional* to *central* or *central* to *regional*; and then the other part would be the rest. Is that in order?

BISHOP DYCK: Yes.

BAILEY: Then, so moved.

BISHOP DYCK: You've made that motion. Is there a second? Second. Would you like to speak to it?

BAILEY: I just feel that we do definitely need to come to the consensus of having the same language throughout the constitution of regional conferences, if that is the will of the body. And we cannot have two different names for the same thing in our constitution, and I feel that this is a way that we can at least get that done.

BISHOP DYCK: All right. Then you would have us divide any of the language around *regional* to vote on.

BAILEY: Anything in the petition that changes *central* to *regional* is one item, and then the rest can be voted on separately.

BISHOP DYCK: OK, that's in order. All right. All right. Those who would divide the question, which means we would deal with it in two separate sections, please raise your hand. Thank you. Those who would not divide the question? I'm going to use the keypad. All right, those who would divide the question, please press "1"; those who would not, please press "2." You can vote as soon as the clock appears.

(pause)

[Yes, 313; No, 532]

And it does not prevail, so it stays as one. OK, Calendar Item 760 is before us. Yes, actually the one, the person standing, and I will—the per-

son standing in the white shirt who is going to the mic. And not just—hold on, Matt. You're not. At mic 5.

SAMUEL (DUNCAN) D. MCMILLAN IV (North Carolina): Point of order. Would the act of reconsidering, with *Robert's Rules of Order* wouldn't be reconsidering as amended?

BISHOP DYCK: The motion was the petition.

MCMILLAN: I understand that; but with *Robert's Rules of Order*, by voting to reconsider, it would be as we voted originally on the petition as amended, not as originally submitted.

BISHOP DYCK: The motion was to reconsider the petition, and that would be as it appears before you. Mic 8.

LAFERTY: Yes, Bishop. I realize now that there was a demand for an encore performance, and so I just come and speak on behalf of the committee. We would urge the adoption of all the amendments. This would help bring clarity and consistency to all that we have adopted. All the constitutional amendments that I brought before you on behalf of the committee have been approved and will be forwarded to our annual conferences for consideration. It is important that we adopt all of these so that we can take all the matters that are before us to our annual conferences and so that they can be ratified or they can be approved or rejected. And so the committee would encourage you to adopt them all.

BISHOP DYCK: OK, I have two speeches for Calendar Item 760. Are there any, any who would speak against it? OK, question over here. Mic 6.

"May"/"Shall" Debate Renewed

TIMOTHY J. ROGERS (South Carolina): I move to amend by changing the word *shall* to *may*. If I get a second, I'd like to make a 15-second speech.

BISHOP DYCK: All right, I heard a second; and you may speak to it.

ROGERS: The body has voted once already to make this change and I think that *shall* still might mean *shall*. Thank you.

BISHOP DYCK: Thank you. Speech against right here in Section A.

OLHA TYSHLOVETS (Ukraine Moldava Provisional): We've been talking a lot about consistency; and the last petition on the worldwide nature of The United Methodist Church that we voted up, we remained the language the way it is there. There *shall* be regional conferences. So we have, we already have one petition that says there shall be regional conferences. Why do we want to create this confusion again and now state there *may* be regional conferences? Let be consistent. Thank you.

BISHOP DYCK: Thank you. That was a speech against. Is there a speech for? Now I'll take another speech against, over here. Mic 5.

WILLIAM (SCOTT) CAMPBELL (New England): The whole point of moving reconsideration was to allow us to bring this petition into continuity with everything that is before us. I would urge us to allow the body to have an opportunity to do that or not. May we defeat this motion.

BISHOP DYCK: All right, I can take a speech for, over here in Section A, I think it is still. Yes?

BISHOP SALLY DYCK: Yes? Point of order. Mic 8.

LAFERTY: Bishop, I was talking to one of my parliamentary friends here who brought his *Robert's Rules of Order*; and in terms of when we move to reconsider, the language says, "No question can be twice reconsidered unless it has been amended after its first reconsideration. If an amendment to a motion has been either adopted or rejected, and then a vote taken on the motion as amended, it

is not in order to reconsider the vote on the amendment. Until,” It says here, “It’s not in order to reconsider the vote on the amendment until after the vote on the original motion has been reconsidered.”

(pause)

BISHOP DYCK: OK. All right. This is the dilemma. You’re right. In terms, if the motion had been for the calendar item. The motion came as the petition number which is on p. 442 of your *Advance*. Now let’s just test this, OK? Just work with me here, all right? If it is your understanding that we could go forward as a calendar item as opposed to the petition, therefore as the calendar item it comes back to us as reconsideration with whatever amendments were made earlier, I believe it was today—maybe it was last week, I can’t remember now—would you be willing to allow us to deal with this, with this as a calendar item instead of a petition? Do you understand what I’m trying to say? If you would be willing to deal with this as a calendar item and we would then be able to take all the amendments that you’ve already worked out, would you please raise your hand?

(pause)

Thank you. If you would not be willing do that, please raise your hand.

(pause)

All right. Then we’re, we’ve got two speeches for Calendar Item 760 as amended earlier today. All I can take are two speeches against. Anybody against? Then I think we’re probably ready to move on. Matt.

UNIDENTIFIED FEMALE SPEAKER: Is it appropriate (*unintelligible*)

LAFERTY: Yes, I would again just encourage us to adopt this item. We have adopted the other 22, and so this would help bring consistency and clarity to what we’re doing. I

would urge us to adopt this calendar item.

BISHOP DYCK: All right. Then if you’re willing to adopt Calendar Item 760 as amended earlier today, please press “1.” If not, please press “2”; and please vote when the timer appears. Please vote when the timer appears.

(pause)

This requires two-thirds vote, and it is adopted with 77 percent. [*Yes, 649; No, 195*] Thank you. All right. We welcome Kathleen Baskin-Ball.

(applause)

KATHLEEN BASKIN-BALL (North Texas): Yes. Yes. I had “good morning,” and then I had to scratch that out. And then I had “good afternoon,” and then I had to scratch that out.

(laughter)

So now it’s “good evening, Bishop Dyck.”

BISHOP DYCK: Good evening!

BASKIN-BALL: And I think I have the right bishop, too.

(laughter)

#### *All Clergy Members Vote*

Right, so, and members of the conference, I’m Kathleen Baskin-Ball, clergy from the North Texas Conference and chair—still chair—of the Committee on Ministry and Higher Education. We have one constitutional item that we would like to place before you for your consideration. It is found on *DCA* p. 2178. This is Calendar Item No. 787, Petition No. 80172, and can be found in the *Advance DCA* on p. 448. The petition as amended expands the voting rights to elect delegates to jurisdictional or central conferences to associate members, probationary members, and local pastors who have completed their educational requirements and have served a mini-

mum of two years under appointment. The committee recommends that the General Conference adoption this petition as amended and I’d like for you to hear from Matheus Francisco, who is the subcommittee chair and a clergy member of Western Angola, and from the subcommittee secretary, Joy Barrett, who is a clergy member from Detroit. They’d like to briefly state their rationale.

BISHOP DYCK: Thank you. Calendar Item 787 is before us, and we will hear the rationale from the subcommittee.

MATHEUS FRANCISCO (Western Angola): Yes, Bishop. If you allow me, because of English being my second language, I would like to invite my secretary from the subcommission to present the rationale.

BISHOP DYCK: You would like to what?

FRANCISCO: To ask the secretary of subcommission to present the rationale.

BISHOP DYCK: Yes.

FRANCISCO: OK, Joy?

BISHOP DYCK: Thank you.

FRANCISCO: OK, Joy.

JOY A. BARRETT (Detroit): This petition addresses changes to Paragraph 35 of the constitution and the enabling legislation necessary if the constitutional amendment is affirmed. This petition recommends a change in the voting rights for clergy as amended by the legislative committee. This petition extends voting rights to local pastors, associate members, and probationary members under appointment, in one specific way. They will now be able to participate in the election of delegates to the general, jurisdictional, and central—now regional—conferences. While not able to serve as delegates themselves, they will share in the selection of those delegates. This voting right becomes available after persons have completed all educational requirements, whether that be course of study, a master of divinity degree, or other master’s degree

program and graduate theological studies, *and* have served at least two years under appointment.

Our forebear, John Wesley, when confronted with new realities and through much prayer and discernment, decided it was of God that laity should preach and that worship could be holy even out-of-doors. Brother and sister delegates, the time has come for this change. We are blessed with associate members, local pastors, and probationary members who serve faithfully in our local churches and communities. We have seen significant increases in the number of local pastors and associate members. They represent a variety of racial, ethnic, and cultural constituencies; and they demonstrate deep commitment to this church. This petition requires two years under appointment and completion of all education requirements before being eligible to vote, allowing and affirming the importance of formation as clergy member in the annual or reg—central conferences, and education for our pastoral and clergy leaders. We recommend adoption of this petition as it has been amended and is before you.

BISHOP DYCK: Yes. Calendar Item 787 is before us and I will go all the way to the back of Section C. I see a rolled up sleeve, yes, you. Mic 11.

THOMAS F. TUMBLIN (West Ohio): As a seminary professor, I tell my students that they have just entered a calling where the average-size United Methodist church cannot afford a full-time elder. I support this petition and this motion because it allows access to those who are on the journey to full impact ministry, whether ordained or not; and it's equitable step forward.

BISHOP DYCK: Thank you. I see a red card back in Section C. Yes, standing. Mic 8.

JAY BRIM (Southwest Texas): Bishop, we're in—in Southwest Texas we're very proud of the service of our local pastors, and we're thankful for their faithful service. However, I'm very concerned that this General Conference may be

moving too quickly on a matter that will be a significant change in voting rights for local pastors in a connective matter. Since we have a study on ministry, I believe we should refer this matter and allow it to be studied. And I move to refer this to the Study Committee on Ministry.

BISHOP DYCK: You made a—I'm sorry. You made a speech before you made the motion. Don't you hate that when that happens.

*(laughter)*

All right. Green over here, speech for. Yes, you're standing.

RUTH G. DIXON (Baltimore Washington): By the grace of God, I will be a local pastor on July 1<sup>st</sup>. I am sitting as a fully elected delegate at this General Conference. It saddens me that if this is not passed, I won't even be able to vote for the delegates for the next General Conference. I urge you to vote in support of this petition. Thank you.

BISHOP DYCK: All Right. We have two speeches for. I can only take one speech against. I'm going with—over here in Section D. Yes, you. There you go; and if you would go to mic 8, please.

ZACHARY ALLEN (West Virginia): I think that we're going down a path that's a little bit dangerous because we're preparing to give complete rights, or almost complete rights, to those who are not ordained that belong to those that are. So it strikes me as strange that laity wouldn't be allowed to vote for the clergy delegates. We're giving people who are not ordained the authority to do things over those who are.

BISHOP DYCK: Please sum up.

ALLEN: There are annual conferences in our church where it is potentially possible that there will be no elders seated in their general delegations. I do not believe that this is a path—

BISHOP DYCK: Please sum up.

ALLEN: —that we need to go down.

BISHOP DYCK: Please sum up. And yes, a question over here. Mic, in Section A, mic 3.

LARRY D. PICKENS (Northern Illinois): Thank you, bishop. Is it in order to make a motion to refer this to the Committee on the Study of Ministry?

BISHOP DYCK: Yes.

*Call to Refer Clergy Voting Rights to Study of Ministry*

PICKENS: Then I would like to forward a motion that we move this petition to the Committee on the Study of Ministry; and if there is a second, I'll speak to it.

BISHOP DYCK: Is there a second? All right. Please. Go ahead.

PICKENS: As it has already been mentioned, there are some critical issues related to this petition that I think we really need to do some in-depth study around. And particularly I think that as we engage ecumenically, it's very important that we square the nature of the order of our ministries with our ecumenical partners. And I think that as we engage in these kinds of constitutional issues, it would important for us to also deal with some of the theological dynamics that affect the questions that have been raised here tonight. So I would ask the body to please refer this to the Study Commission.

BISHOP DYCK: All right. To refer is the—the person standing closest to mic 9. Is that 9? No, 10.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: 12.

BISHOP DYCK: 12, 12. Sorry. Can't see it from here.

NORMAN H. COLEMAN III (West Ohio): At the last General Conference, I served as the chair of the subcommittee that was dealing with this type of legislation. I also brought it to the floor. At that time, it had been referred for at least three General Conferences. That's 12 years. How much time do we really need to study something before we allow our local pastors and others to

fully participate in the voting process, thus giving local, small, and rural churches a voice here at General Conference?

BISHOP DYCK: All right. That was a speech against referral. Is there a speech for referral? Yes, right here in Section C, if you would go to mic 9.

KIM S. CAPE (Southwest Texas): I'm supporting a referral for this petition because we are confusing, there's much confusion about the difference between ordination and certification. A local pastor serves in a local church. They vote, they already have voting rights on many, many matters, everything except connectional matters, and we're confusing apples and oranges. I believe it's in the best interest of our church and its future to refer this matter. Thank you.

BISHOP DYCK: Thank you. I'm going to recognize this person right here near mic 2. Hopefully that—maybe a question.

KENNY BASKINS (North Alabama): Yes it is. The question is—and the person who said that these individuals would be able to be elected and replaced ordained clergy, that's not the way the petition reads, is that correct?

UNIDENTIFIED MALE  
SPEAKER: Yes.

BASKINS: That is the way the petition reads?

BISHOP DYCK: No.

BASKINS: So we're talking about individuals who would be able to elect ordained clergy but who they themselves would not be eligible for election.

UNIDENTIFIED MALE  
SPEAKER: Yes, yes, yes.

BASKINS: Sounds like a matter of justice to for us.

UNIDENTIFIED MALE  
SPEAKER: That is the position of the commission. This is the position.

BISHOP DYCK: OK. All right. I have one more speech against. I'm gonna go all the way back. All I can

see is a hand. It's the last red card in the room in Section C. Yeah, yeah, that's you. I don't even know who's under that hand. Come on.

JORGE LUIS MAYORGA (Wisconsin): Thank you, Bishop.

BISHOP DYCK: Oh, wait. I think it was this one right here. Yes, there you go. Sorry.

*(laughter)*

You cross the aisle. There you go. Mic 11.

ROSA WASHINGTON-OLSON (California-Nevada): It saddens me when I see my brothers and sisters who are so qualified assigned to churches that are growing and doing an excellent job. You have said these people have what these churches need; and all they are doing is voting on their peers, and the only thing that separates them is one is certified, one is classified. I take myself for example. I have been active in church since I was in the seventh grade in leadership capacity; and I know, I know what the pastors can do, so don't tell me I can't vote on you. My church can grow faster than you with an ordination, so vote!

BISHOP DYCK: All right.

*(laughter)*

*(applause)*

Thank you. We have two speeches for, two against, on referral. I think you're ready to vote on referral. All right. We're going to vote on referral. So if you would refer the press "1." If you would not refer, please press "2." Please vote when the clock appears.

*(pause)*

*[Yes, 305; No, 559]*

BISHOP DYCK: And you did not refer it. Now we're on the Calendar Item 787. You have two speeches for, two speeches against. We're under the 221 Regulation, so—rule. Now, I can't take a speech for. I'll

take one of your questions back there in the red shirt.

JAMIE E. JENKINS (North Georgia): Bishop, my question is twofold. One, I'm assuming that local pastors mean part-time or full-time local pastors. Is that correct?

BISHOP DYCK: Do you wanna answer that?

UNIDENTIFIED MALE  
SPEAKER: OK.

BISHOP DYCK: You're assuming it was part-time or—

UNIDENTIFIED MALE  
SPEAKER: Can you come again, please?

BISHOP DYCK: Go ahead.

UNIDENTIFIED MALE  
SPEAKER: OK. The question he made—

BISHOP DYCK: Do we... would you state the question again?

JENKINS: Yes.

UNIDENTIFIED MALE  
SPEAKER: Sorry, I was talking with my secretary.

JENKINS: Local—when you refer to local pastors having voting rights, I assume that means part time and full time.

UNIDENTIFIED FEMALE  
SPEAKER: Yes.

JENKINS: Second question—

UNIDENTIFIED MALE  
SPEAKER: Yes.

JENKINS: Two years of service under appointment. Since local pastors may serve for a period of time and then not serve and revert to laity status, is that two years cumulative? In, in other words, if a person is in the process for 15 years, and in that 15 years serves six months four times, is the two years continuous, immediate to election, or just cumulative?

BARRETT: They have to have completed their educational requirements and served two years.

JENKINS: But my question is, is it two years over any period of time?

BARRETT: Yes.

JENKINS: Or is it two years immediately preceding the election or the—is there any limitations to the two years under appointment?

BARRETT: As you can see, the material in front of you does not give any qualifications around those two years. I suspect that people will ask that question in a variety of ways, and there may be various interpretations to that question. We did not talk about that needing to be immediately contiguous to participating in this kind of vote.

JENKINS: Seems that that's a lack of clarity as we go forward, since each Board of Ordained Ministry and annual conference would have to make their own decisions on qualifications—

BISHOP DYCK: OK.

JENKINS: —for voting members.

BISHOP DYCK: All right. You've asked your question. Let...there seems some other questions. In blue here, section C, going to mic. 11. I'll come back to you over at 12 in a minute. Mic. 11.

JUDITH A. STEVENS (New York): I was actually on this legislative section, and I believe, Joy, that we talked about that the two years should be after they complete their educational requirements.

BARRETT: For local pastors, they would be serving under appointment while they are in the midst of completing their educational requirements.

STEVENS: OK.

BARRETT: And so upon completion of those educational requirements, they would be eligible to vote because basic course of study takes five years full time and ten years part time, so they certainly would qualify because they would have been appointed as a local pastor—

STEVENS: OK.

BARRETT: —during all that time.

STEVENS: OK.

BARRETT: Now for—

STEVENS: That's fine.

BARRETT: —probationary members, they would finish their educational requirements and serve two years under appointment before they would then be eligible—

STEVENS: Right.

BARRETT: —to participate in this vote?

STEVENS: And I was just wanting to be helpful with that because I thought I'd remembered it. My point is this: Several people have already asked me this question. If you look at the wording—

BISHOP DYCK: Is this a point of clarification?

STEVENS: Yes. If you look at...let me see...that is letter E. The way it's written, it is not clear to a number of people whether we...that we are limiting the voting rights to the election of delegates for jurisdictional—it's been a long day—jurisdictional, general, and central conference. People are asking me if we are also advocating that they have voting rights on matters on ordination, character, and conference relations of clergy, which immediately follows that. Just think there are ought to be some way that that can be cleared.

BISHOP DYCK: OK, so that's...do you have that sort of clarification in question? Do you have a clarification from that?

BARRETT: Yes, I think I can explain that. We are looking at p. 2179, the middle column, at the bottom. It is letter E. "Full-time and part-time local pastors under appointment shall have the right to vote in the annual conference on all matters except constitutional amendments, election of delegates to the general and jurisdictional or central conferences, and matters of ordination, character, and conference of relations of clergy." Now the exception is what's in bold, and the exception applies only to the election of delegates to the general and jurisdictional or central conferences.

BISHOP DYCK: All right.

BARRETT: That exception does not apply either to constitutional amendments or to matters of ordination, character, and conference relations of clergy. Thank you for asking that question for clarification.

BISHOP DYCK: Thank you. I promised mic. 12. Mic. 12?

LEWIS A. PARKS (Central Pennsylvania): I would like to amend the motion to read...this is over on 2179, left-hand column, in the middle, "when they have completed all of their educational requirements and have served a minimum of two consecutive years under appointment."

BISHOP DYCK: Is there a second? Is there a second? OK. Yes, would you like to speak to it?

PARKS: Well, I think it addresses the issue of the fact that a local pastor would cease to be a local pastor when they're not under appointment, and the two-year requirement would ensure that they've been engaged in the life of the local congregation as well as in touch with connectional matters and be better equipped to participate in electing persons who will give them voice.

BISHOP DYCK: Thank you. All right, is there another discussion on the amendment? Let me go to the speech against there, in section C, if you'd go to mic. 9.

PAULA WHITBECK (Central Texas): The way this is amended at this point...for instance, a local pastor could serve 2008 to 2010—two consecutive years—discontinue, and then in 2020 or whenever the next election is have two consecutive years under appointment and still vote is a long way down the road. So I would reject this amendment.

BISHOP DYCK: All right. That's a speech against. Is there a speech for?

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKERS: Point of order!

BISHOP DYCK: Point of order? Please state your point of order.

*Amend Paragraph 35  
Rather than 318*

ROGER L. GRACE (West Ohio): Thanks to my helpers who shouted. I cannot shout. I can't raise my voice. My point of order, Bishop, is that we're dealing tonight with the constitutional part of this, which is paragraph 35. The amendment was made to one of the supportive pieces. If we're going to change anything, it would have to be in the constitutional part; otherwise, it's going to be ruled out of order somewhere along the line, I believe.

(pause)

BISHOP DYCK: OK. Point well taken.

(laughter)

The amendment needs to be placed in the constitutional part, I guess, as opposed to where I had put it, which was in paragraph 318. Correct? Where is the maker of the amendment? Who made the amendment? Yes, mic. 9.

PARKS: Would you allow me to move it over across the page?

BISHOP DYCK: I'm going to allow you to do that.

PARKS: I'd like to do that.

BISHOP DYCK: Good.

(laughter)

PARKS: Thank you.

BISHOP DYCK: So it's under—

PARKS: Under 35.

BISHOP DYCK: It's under paragraph 35 consecutive—

PARKS: At the bottom, "have served a minimum of two consecutive years under appointment."

BISHOP DYCK: All Right. OK, so it's just in that paragraph; it's the very last line on p. 2178. All right. OK, I'll come to this question here—the white.

SAMUEL (DUNCAN) D.

MCMILLIAN IV (North Carolina):

Bishop, Would it be in order to make an amendment to the amendment?

BISHOP DYCK: Yep, you can do that.

MCMILLIAN: Can we make it that it be two consecutive years prior to election?

BISHOP DYCK: Yeah.

MCMILLIAN: Well.

UNIDENTIFIED MALE SPEAKER: I'm saying proposed—

BISHOP DYCK: Is there—

MCMILLIAN: Yeah, participating the voting.

BISHOP DYCK: Now we've got apples and oranges together here. So they're telling me that would need to be in paragraph 318 and not in paragraph 35, correct, for what you're trying to do.

MCMILLIAN: Well, then can I add it to that separate part then, so it'd be correct?

BISHOP DYCK: So you would amend this Calendar Item 787 to put, "two consecutive years prior to election." That language would appear in paragraph 318.5, that section there on 2179. Is that what you're wanting to do?

MCMILLIAN: Yes ma'am.

BISHOP DYCK: Is there a second to that? Second? I don't hear a second. OK, all right. Yes? Yes?

JACK RYDER (Northern Illinois): The constitutional provision that we're operating under was adopted in 2004 and is not printed in anybody's *Discipline*, but it says that "in the event that the General Conference adopts an amendment to the Constitution, the General Conference may immediately adopt enabling legislation." The enabling legislation is what's on page 2179, but it seems clear in the Constitution that we must adopt the constitutional amendment first.

BISHOP DYCK: OK, OK, all right, can we do this? Let's deal with paragraph 35, and presently I understand paragraph 35 to be amended to simply say "minimum of two con-

secutive years." Correct? All right. And I have a speech for and against on that one. Are there any others?

(pause)

Yes, and then we'll deal with the enabling legislation after we put this one to a vote. I've got a sense you're ready to vote on this one. Then, if you would amend this one to read "minimum of two consecutive years under appointment," that's paragraph 35 on p. 2178, well, it's a Constitution, press "1" for yes and "2" for no, and please vote when you see the clock. [*Yes, 649; No, 167*]

(pause)

And it is adopted with 80 percent, and this is constitutional so it needs at least two thirds, so it is adopted in paragraph 35. Now I'm going to come back to the man who was at five, and if you would like to make, to make the...right, why don't you just read what you would like to do?

MCMILLIAN: All right. In paragraph, well on p. 2179, paragraph 318.5, where it reads "We have the...when they have completed all of their educational requirements and have served a minimum of two years," enter "consecutive years of service immediately prior to the election."

BISHOP DYCK: Is there a second? Let's just start all over. Second? All right. Would you like to speak to it?

MCMILLIAN: I think it speaks for itself because of the debate brought up previously.

BISHOP DYCK: Yes, point of order?

A MARK CONARD (Kansas West): Had we approved...I thought we just voted on the amendment and we had yet to vote on paragraph 35, that that would have then required two-thirds vote, or did I miss a vote somewhere?

BISHOP DYCK: No, we just voted the amendment to paragraph 35, is that your question? Oh.

CONARD: Then should we not vote on paragraph 35?

BISHOP DYCK: Yeah, Yep. All right. Back on paragraph 35; paragraph 35 only. Do you have a point of order? All right. Just, let's just take care of paragraph 35 here. We have speeches. So let's go ahead. I can't take any speeches for anyway, so let's go ahead and put paragraph 35 before us.

UNIDENTIFIED FEMALE SPEAKER: Excuse me, Bishop.

BISHOP DYCK: Yes?

UNIDENTIFIED FEMALE SPEAKER: Do we have the opportunity—

BISHOP DYCK: Yep, you sure can.

UNIDENTIFIED FEMALE SPEAKER: —for a last word?

FRANCISCO: Yeah, OK. I would like to say to all our delegates that the local pastor, the person that is working so hard, and I believe here in USA, the majority of members are in local ruler area where the local pastor's working, and they have a lot of expedience in situation that they can pass it to the person they believe can represent them in the conference and General Conference. I would like to ask all of you to think about the work, not about the person of the local pastor. He will not come to the General Conference, but he will trust the person will call to represent him and the people. Please, try to do something good for these people while working so hard for the church.

BISHOP DYCK: OK. Paragraph 35 of Calendar Line Item 787 is properly before us.

STEPHEN P. TAYLOR (South Carolina): Bishop Dyck?

BISHOP DYCK: Point of order?

TAYLOR: Bishop, I understand that we were voting on an amendment to add just prior to the—are we voting on that amendment?

BISHOP DYCK: No.

TAYLOR: Because you allowed a speech for that but no speech against that second amendment.

BISHOP DYCK: On the amendment?

TAYLOR: We had, we passed one amendment to put conesec—no.

BISHOP DYCK: Consecutive?

TAYLOR: Consecutive. And then there was another amendment to, just prior to the election, that this young man brought and spoke to it, and spoke a speech for it, but did not allow a speech against.

BISHOP DYCK: OK, we amended paragraph 35, and that was approved. OK?

TAYLOR: Yes, ma'am.

BISHOP DYCK: And so, since this is not divided, specifically we need to vote up or down paragraph 35 of Calendar Line Item 787.

TAYLOR: OK.

BISHOP DYCK: I have two speeches for and two speeches against Calendar Line, Calendar Item 787; it's properly amended—

TAYLOR: So we're just voting on 35.

BISHOP DYCK: —so we will put paragraph 35 before us at this time to vote on just paragraph 35 of Calendar Line Item 787. Point of order.

C CHAPPELL TEMPLE (Texas): Bishop, it's simply a word change. I believe in our consent calendar we have already approved a change from "probationary" to "provisional." Should we not reflect that in the amendment here?

BISHOP DYCK: I don't know. Is it in there? Explain; yeah, go ahead and explain that.

*Call to Change "Probationary" to "Provisional"*

BARRETT: Thank you very much. That's a very helpful word and I think it would be perfectly in order for us to change the word *probationary* to *provisional*.

BISHOP DYCK: And this is in paragraph 35?

BARRETT: I'm sorry, Bishop, I am not able to answer that question.

BISHOP DYCK: Did you mean paragraph 35? Yeah, paragraph 35. And, so, instead of "probationary members," you're saying it is "provisional"?

BARRETT: In several of the 300 paragraphs, we did take that action. I do not remember myself right this minute if that applied to paragraph 35.

BISHOP DYCK: OK, you know what? I think this is an excellent time to take a recess.

*(applause)*

And we're gonna sort this out. I'm going to give you 10 minutes and Gere has a message. But I'm going to give you 10 minutes after he finishes talking and be back in your seats in 15.

REIST: I just thought you might like to know before you go in recess that, at this point, we don't have enough basketballs.

*(applause)*

Northern Illinois and Western Pennsylvania have both put in bids of \$40,000. Then Greater New Jersey went in with \$75,000. And, if you add up all the other annual conferences that are getting basketballs—are you all, yes, you're all sitting down—if you all pay the pledges you've made, we have pledges for \$308,030. And we're still taking bids.

BISHOP DYCK: All right, you're in recess. And I'll see you back here at about...we'll have music at...or if we have music...we'll come back at 10 after 10.

BISHOP DYCK: We've had our break. It's time to return to your seats. All right. Please return to your seats. Please return to your seats so that we can have a word of prayer as we begin again. Please return to your seats so that we may be in a spirit of prayer. As we resume our time, we've made some progress. You've been moving along here, and we wanna continue to

move along. I don't think it's 99 items on the wall anymore. I don't know how many it is, but we still have more. All right. Let us be in a spirit of prayer. Let us pray.

(prayer)

All right. Take your seats. Take your seats. Let me explain where we are. Listen carefully. You haven't taken your seats yet. Please take your seats quickly so that we can understand where we are. I have an explanation here. All right. Now, earlier on consent—on the consent calendar, we had Item 828, which you can find on p. 2233. And that consent calendar allowed us to replace wherever it said “probationary,” to replace it with “provisional.” But we're really not sure if that applies to the constitution, so we want to be careful and to be official in replacing the word *probationary* in Calendar Item 787 in Paragraph 35—just a second. Lost my page. I'm sorry, I lost my page. So on Paragraph 35, it says “probationary members,” about the fourth line up. And we want to make sure that we do this right and that we replace *probationary* with *provisional*. And so I would entertain a motion, invite someone to move that change from *probationary* to *provisional* and also to change that editorially wherever “probationary,” the word *probationary*, appears in the constitution.

And, I—are—I will go to section D, mic. 8. Are you prepared to do that?

ELLIS E. CONLEY (West Virginia): I so move.

BISHOP DYCK: OK. Would you like to state what you're moving, please?

(laughter)

I'll help you.

CONLEY: You did it so well. I don't know how I could repeat it better than that. We want to change the word *probationary* to *provisional* in the constitution, Paragraph 35 and

all the additional paragraphs that are listed in the petition.

BISHOP DYCK: Great. All right. You—you stated that well. Is there a second?

FLOOR: Second.

BISHOP DYCK: OK. I'm thinking you're ready to vote. All right. This is an amendment to Paragraph 35. If you would replace the—*provisional* for *probationary* here and editorially wherever it appears in the constitution, press “1.” If not, press “2.” Vote when you see the clock.

(pause)

And it is adopted. [Yes, 717; No, 68]

Now, Paragraph 35, only, is before us. We've had two speeches for and against the whole calendar item. At this point, only Paragraph 35, which is in the constitution, is before us. Mic. 8 from section D. You have a question?

CONLEY: Bishop, members, and friends of the General Conference, I would move to amend Paragraph 35.

BISHOP DYCK: OK.

CONLEY: By adding the words at the end of the paragraph, “preceding the election.” If I get a second, I'd like to speak on it.

BISHOP DYCK: I didn't quite hear you. “Receiving—

CONLEY: “Preceding the election.”

BISHOP DYCK: Rec—receiving the election?

CONLEY: So the last two lines would—Yes, ma'am. “*Preceding.*”

BISHOP DYCK: “*Preceding.*”

CONLEY: There you go.

BISHOP DYCK: I'm so sorry. It's “*preceding.*”

CONLEY: Yes, ma'am.

BISHOP DYCK: You all knew that. OK. “Preceding election.” Is there a second? All right. Would you like to speak to it?

CONLEY: I think that's the intention of our speaker earlier at no. 5,

and I think this clarifies the clear intention of this change in the constitution, so that if persons were to transfer into that annual conference, they would have to serve two years before the election. And also that those persons who are able to vote must be serving preceding the election.

BISHOP DYCK: All right. Does anybody wish to speak against it? Over here, mic. 3.

M. KIM MOORE (Kansas West): I'd assume the intent of this would be *immediately* preceding the election. I don't see how the words “preceding the election” add anything to the amendment. They would have to have occurred before the election, but maybe—maybe that wasn't the intent.

BISHOP DYCK: Was that your intent?

CONLEY: Yes, ma'am, it was. I apologize for not making that clearer.

BISHOP DYCK: So it actually—I may have said it wrong.

CONLEY: “Immediately,” “immediately preceding election.”

BISHOP DYCK: “Immediately preceding election.” All right; OK, seeing no other, let's proceed to vote. Those who would add the words at the end of Paragraph 35, “immediately preceding the election,” please press “1” for yes and “2” for no. And vote when you see the clock on the screen.

BISHOP SALLY DYCK: And it is adopted: “immediately preceding the election.” [Yes, 695; No, 104] Paragraph 35 is before us as amended. Are you ready to vote?

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKERS: Yes.

BISHOP DYCK: Then I think we'll proceed to vote. All right, back here. Par—mic. 12.

EDWARD A. KAIL (Iowa): Bishop Dyck, is an amendment in order?

BISHOP DYCK: Yeah, um-hm. Yes.

*Inserting "Course of Study"  
Language*

KAIL: In the line that speaks about those probationary members—

BISHOP DYCK: Now provisional members.

KAIL: Now provisional, the amendment would insert, or would read this way: "Those provisional members who have completed all of their educational requirements and local pastors who have completed the course of study."

BISHOP DYCK: Is there a second?

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Second.

BISHOP DYCK: You wish to speak to it?

KAIL: Yes, please. I've consulted with the staff of the Board of Higher Education and Ministry and they were concerned that the basic educational requirements of the local pastor could be interpreted in two ways. The committee assumed that it meant completion of the five-year course of study. But the item doesn't say that, so I want to insert that language so that it is definitely clear.

BISHOP DYCK: All right. Anyone wish to speak against it? Over here in section A. Mic. 3.

JEROME R. DEVINE (West Michigan): I have as a district superintendent, several pastors who are seminary graduates serving as local pastors. They are not probationary members. They do not intend to become ordained elders. They enjoy the status as local pastor. If you do this, you would not allow them to vote, so you'd have to put in there the, at minimum, the five-year course of study or they will not be able to vote.

BISHOP DYCK: All right, that was a speech against. Is there a speech for? Can entertain a speech for. Back in section D.

CHARLES D. (DENNY) WHITE JR. (Western North Carolina): Thank you, Bishop. I don't know what the

zip code of Fort Worth is but we live in a different one back here. The gentleman's concern could be dealt with if you simply inserted after the words "Course of Study" in that amendment, the words "or an MDiv degree." I would so move as amendment to the amendment.

BISHOP DYCK: OK, all right, I'm—you know it's late, I'm just going to test ya. Would you be willing to add that in? If you would, please raise your hand. Thank you. If not, please raise your hand. OK, so those who have completed all educational requirements—where does that—how does it read exactly? Where's that inserted? Please go back to the mic. and 10. How would it read?

WHITE: As I understood the gentleman's motion about the course of study, it was being added at an appropriate place which I do not have in my hands. But—

BISHOP DYCK: Well—

WHITE: —wherever that amendment was, the words "or an MDiv degree" would follow the words "Course of Study."

BISHOP DYCK: Oh, so it'd be—

WHITE: It had to do with those—

BISHOP DYCK and WHITE: —local pastors who have completed course of study

BISHOP DYCK: or—

WHITE: or an—

BISHOP DYCK: an—

WHITE: MDiv degree.

BISHOP DYCK: Or MDiv, I getcha. All right. That's what's before you. If one of you want to speak there in section D.

JUDITH (JJ) J. WHITNEY (Arkansas): I just want to speak to provisional deacons who get an MA degree. So, I think it should just say "educational requirements."

BISHOP DYCK: OK, we—we've agreed to this amendment and I'm going to have you go ahead and vote.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Bishop, please.

BISHOP DYCK: Who—I—and you can speak. Yes.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Please—

JOY A. BARRETT (Detroit): Bishop, if I may, I think if I understand the Kail amendment, it would read, "provisional members who have completed all of their educational requirements and local pastors who have completed course of study or an MDiv degree" and that way we care for the probationary members—

BISHOP DYCK: Thank you.

BARRETT: —on track to become deacons as well as the others we have spoken of.

BISHOP DYCK: Thank you.

BARRETT: Thank you.

BISHOP DYCK: All right. This is the amendment to paragraph 35. If you would vote yes for the amendment, enter "1." If you would vote no, please enter "2." When—be sure and vote when the clock appears on the screen.

*(pause)*

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Thank you. It was different than really what was moved. You made it clearer but—

BISHOP DYCK: And it is adopted. [Yes, 674; No, 142] Paragraph 35 is before you as amended and I've—I'm going to put it to a vote. Those who would vote yes, enter "1." Those who would vote no for Paragraph 35, enter "2." Be sure and vote when the clock appears on the screen

*(pause)*

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: —tell them to stand up.

BISHOP DYCK: If your pads are not working, be sure and stand up.

BISHOP DYCK: Oh, OK. This requires a two-thirds vote and it is adopted at 75 percent. [Yes, 618; No,

203] OK, we've—we have approved Paragraph 35. Now we can go on to the enabling action that's on the next page, 2179. I'm going to come back to our friend. We haven't passed any of these amendments for—yet. And would you like to come back and make your motion? At para—at mic. 5, yes? You did it a long time ago.

(laughter)

MCMILLAN: So, you want me to restate the amendment?

BISHOP DYCK: Yes

MCMILLAN: All right.

BISHOP DYCK: Please make your motion again.

MCMILLAN: All right. I make the motion to amend on p. 2179, the legislation part, the second paragraph, in the bold print, it would read as this: "When they have completed all their educational requirements and have served a minimum of two consecutive years immediately preceding the election but," and then finish off.

BISHOP DYCK: Immediately—

MCMILLAN: Immediately precede—

BISHOP DYCK: "Minimum of two consecutive years under appointment immediately preceding election"—is that what you said?

MCMILLAN: Yes, ma'am.

BISHOP DYCK: OK. Is there a second? All right, would you like to speak to it?

MCMILLAN: I believe since we approved it for the constitution that the legislation should support the constitution.

BISHOP DYCK: All right. This is the enabling legislation. I see a speech against; mic. 5 there.

SUSAN S. GARRETT (Virginia): Bishop, I, I speak against that amendment 'cause it—because it does not completely reflect the work that we did on the constitutional amendment. It does not change the paragraph related to educational requirements. And I guess it's not in

order now for me to move an amendment to the amendment.

BISHOP DYCK: It is in order.

GARRETT: All right. I would move that paragraph 316.6, paragraph 318.5, and paragraph 327.2 and 602.1 reflect all the changes we made in paragraph 35 of the constitution. That they be completely consistent.

BISHOP DYCK: All right, is there a second?

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKERS: Second.

BISHOP DYCK: All right, would you like to speak to it? You sort of have but—

GARRETT: I sort of have.

BISHOP DYCK: Yeah, OK.

GARRETT: I just feel like one of the places we can get into a lot of trouble is if one part of the *Discipline* differs in any way from another part of the *Discipline* except—especially in something as important as clergy issues.

BISHOP DYCK: OK, I don't see any other green or red cards up. All those who would approve this amendment to the amendment raise your hand. Thank you. And those who would not approve, raise your hand. And it amends the amendment. So the amendment includes the consecutive—minimum two consecutive years under appointment as well as these educational requirements, so that they are consistent throughout the various paragraphs. You with me? Ya there?

(laughter)

All right. Then I see no red or green cards. I—the amendment is before us. All those who would approve it, please raise your hand. Thank you. And those who would not, the same sign. And it is amended, and is approved, adopted, in that regard.

OK, now the whole enabling legislation is before us. I see, and you know, we have two—we have two speeches on Calendar Item No. 787, so I think we can now go back to our

presenter to make any final statements before we vote.

MATEUS S A FRANCISCO (Western Angola): I think we don't have much to say—

BISHOP DYCK: (laugh)

FRANCISCO: —but I would like to appeal to the heart of all the delegates to remember that when someone knows that there is a person that I can trust to carry my message, I can give him the credit involved. But if I doesn't have opportunity to have someone who can tell me—tell about my situation, in the General Conference, I can vote. Therefore, I appeal to all of the delegate to remember that the local pastor has a right to express to the delegate his opinion and opinion of the congregation. Please vote for the favor of the local pastors.

BISHOP DYCK: All right. The enabling legislation for Calendar Item 787 is properly before you as amended. Please press "1" if you would adopt it, "2" if you would not. Be sure and vote when the clock appears on the screen. This is simple majority.

(pause)

And it is adopted. [Yes, 696; No, 135] Thank you very much. Thank you to your committee. And we appreciate your work.

(applause)

I would look to you and your—

L JONATHAN HOLSTON (North Georgia): Jonathan Holston, North Georgia, with Financial Administration.

BISHOP DYCK: Right, and do you have legislation for us?

HOLSTON: Yes, yes we do.

BISHOP DYCK: Please proceed.

HOLSTON: Tonight, two of our subcommittee chairs will present our petitions before you. One will be a constitutional petition. Two of our first items will be presented by Byrd Bonner.

*Ethics and Conflict of Interest and  
Fiduciary Responsibility*

BYRD L. BONNER (Southwest Texas): Thank you, Bishop. Delegates, I think that this may be our last constitutional amendment for the evening.

(applause)

Keep that good spirit.

I direct your attention to Calendar Item No. 770, Calendar Item 770, found on 2177 in your DCA. 2177. It's a constitutional amendment proposal. It relates to Petition 80342, 80342, found on p. 759 of Volume 1 of the ADCA. 759 in the top left-hand corner. This is a proposed constitutional amendment that relates to a call for accountability and financial integrity at all levels of the church. During this very General Conference in the last couple of days, we have all seen and had shown to us by our Judicial Council that conflict of interest policies cannot be legislated for *that* body. The need for ethics statements in conflicts of interests policies at all levels of the church is a matter of accountability and financial integrity. In recent years, corporate and fiduciary oversight has skyrocketed.

As you're aware, religious institutions are, in many cases, exempt from some of the regulatory and legislative requirements that are involved in that corporate and fiduciary oversight. But that does not mean that the church is not required to step up to the requirements, and set the requirements and pace for the world around us. Legal counsel at GCFA and those of our church with audit oversight responsibilities see this as such a prime importance for our local churches, our districts, our conferences, and our general agencies around the world, that they seek to place this requirement in the constitution of our church. As you can see on p. 759, Petition No. 80342, ask for a new paragraph to the constitution immediately following paragraph 5 in our current constitu-

tion. It would be in the first section, which also includes a paragraph relating to titles to property.

Many may ask, Why in the constitution? The legal climate that the church finds itself in, the ecumenical relationships and communications that the legal coun—various legal counsels for the Church maintain, find it of the utmost importance for denominational groupings from local to global, have this kind of requirement in place so that it can ensure some degree of accountability and fiduciary integrity.

In the Subcommittee on Funds Administration and in the Financial Administration Legislative Committee, believe me, we looked at and talked about just about every kind of local church grouping you can think of that would come under the title of "official": I'm looking to the...official organization, group, committee, council, board, or agency within The United Methodist Church. And there may be various arguments for some groups needing to be under this requirement and some groups that may or may not carry that term "official." But it is such an important step to ensure that our United Methodist Church not only conforms to the fiduciary oversight and accountability requirements, but sets the pace for our sisters, sister denominations, and faith groups. There are several features of this that the committee and subcommittee looked at and debated. But as you can see in the DCA on p. 2177, the vote was overwhelmingly in favor: 59 in favor and only 3 opposing the approval of this constitutional amendment. And in closing, I would simply say that that speaks to the importance that those around the tables at the Financial Administration Committee finally came to see that this be a part of such—be placed in such an important part of our *Book of Discipline*. The committee recommends adoption.

All right. Calendar Item No. 759 is before us. Remember, we're still on the two for, two against and one-

minute speech. Question right here. Mic 2.

STEVE WEST (North Alabama): Does this apply to local church groups and committees?

BYRD L. BONNER (Southwest Texas): It does. It would.

WEST: I would like to make an amendment. May I?

BISHOP DYCK: Go ahead.

WEST: I would like to add after "agencies of" the words *annual conferences of*, so that it reads: "all official organizations, groups, committees, councils, boards, and agencies of annual conferences of The United Methodist Church." May I have a second?

BISHOP DYCK: Is there a second? I heard a second. Would you like to speak to it?

WEST: It would be very difficult to have all the groups of my church come up with ethics and conflict-of-interest policies. That is a very nebulous word—*group*. What does that mean?

BISHOP DYCK: All right.

WEST: That's all I have to say.

BISHOP DYCK: Thank you. Is there a speech against? Over here, Section B. If you want to go to mic 1.

ED FENSTERMACHER (North Indiana): I think it's important for integrity—financial integrity not just to be an issue at the denominational level but the local church level. And I think this could be easily implemented by adopting a basic statement about conflict and policies regarding those and use those at the local level. So if we want clarity and transparency at the denominational level, that needs to be true at the local church level, too. I would speak against this.

BISHOP DYCK: All right. Thank you. Is there a speech for? Looks to me like you're ready to vote. If you would amend after "agencies, annual conference of"—

BONNER: May I, may I say a word?

*Call to Add Annual Conferences and General Agencies*

BISHOP DYCK: Chair. Chair.

BONNER: Just a word to say—is—the, the proposed amendment would insert *annual conference*. That would not by this constitutional proposal apply to the general agencies of the church. The general agencies already have several provisions in the *Discipline* in the 700-paragraphs that address parts of ethics and conflict-of-interest policies. But the committee would think that *annual conference* would be way too limiting and that it should apply to bring accountability, fiduciary responsibility in our local churches, districts, conference, jurisdiction, regional, and general.

BISHOP DYCK: All right, so the amendment is before us. Yes? Mic 2.

WEST: That was the intent of my motion. If I could change that to add *annual conferences and general agencies of*, that would be in keeping with my motion.

BISHOP DYCK: All right. Would someone second that? All right. *Annual conference and general agencies of*. Are those the words?

WEST: Yes.

BISHOP DYCK: OK. Then would you like respond to that?

*Call to Add Sexual Harrassment Policies*

BONNER: I would like to respond to that. Again, that local, district, other levels of the church, including regional and jurisdictional, would be equally important. I think that we can think of sexual harassment policies that I'm—I don't wanna say all of our conferences have now and all of our local churches have now—but I'm hoping that with the resources that are available through GCFA, through conference chancellors, and through other agencies of the church, including the General Commission on Status and Role of Women, that that sort of policy is pretty pervasive in the life of our church from local to general.

And I think the same kind of resource would be available for the conflicts of interest in ethic policies.

BISHOP DYCK: All right. So those who would adopt this amendment, please raise your hand. Thank you. Those who would not, and it does—it is not adopted. 759 is still before us. Any speeches for or against? Then let me go over there to a green shirt in Section B. You were really waving for him? OK.

ROBERT LOCKABY (Holston): I agree very much with the intent of the prior amendment. Let me try that again. I move to amend this paragraph by adding the following sentence: "A local church may adopt such a policy for all groups that"—strike that. "A local church may adopt such a policy that would apply to all groups within the church."

BISHOP DYCK: Is there a second?

BISHOP DYCK: All right. Would you like to speak to it?

LOCKABY: I think it speaks for itself.

BISHOP DYCK: All right. Anybody speak against? Back here, Section D. Come to mic 8.

MICHAEL B. WATTS (Kentucky): I would like to speak against this amendment. As conference treasurer, I see many situations in local churches where these type of policies would help give guidance to the local churches as, as well as the annual conference and the general church.

BISHOP DYCK: Thank you. Does anybody wish to speak for the amendment? Seeing none, it seems to me like you'd be ready to vote; but I'll turn to Bonner.

BONNER: Just one word. The language used—remember, this is a constitutional amendment; and you see it does have the "shall" language. The language proposed in the amendment is that a local church *may* adopt a global policy for all of its groups. I think that when we're approaching a constitutional amendment that has fiduciary accountabil-

ity and legal implications and has been crafted by the legal council for the church. I would urge us to be very weary of tinkering with the language on the floor of the conference.

BISHOP DYCK: All right then, all those who would adopt this amendment, please raise your hand. Thank you. And those who would not, please raise your hand. And it is not adopted. Calendar Li—Item 759 is still before us.

BONNER: Item 7—Para—Item 770.

BISHOP DYCK: 77, yes, I'm sorry. I wrote it down wrong. The man back in Section C. Right there. Yes, you. Go to mic 8 maybe.

TIMOTHY J. RISS (New York): On occasion, the Judicial Council has ruled that neither it nor the Council of Bishops is a council for some of the legislation in the church. Is it the intention of the maker of this amendment that the Council of Bishops and the Judicial Council would be included?

BISHOP DYCK: Please respond.

BONNER: Well, I can't actually speak for the maker of the, the petit—the filer of the petition and what GCFA intended; but within the subcommittee and the legislative committee, the discussion included the Council of Bishops and the Judicial Council as being an official organization or group.

RISS: I would just like to be sure that that's in the transcript and the minutes. Thank you.

BISHOP DYCK: OK. I see no red or green cards. I'm going to—oops, there's a red card. Mic 5.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: I'm not even, I'm not even gonna tell you who I am; but *conflict* is misspelled both in the *DCA* and the *ADCA*. Fix it.

BONNER: Right. It, it will be the, the titles are editorial by the petitions direct—petitions coordinator.

BISHOP DYCK: Thank you. All right. Back in Section C. Mic 8, perhaps.

*Call to Add Units "Receiving Funds" to Petition*

HOLLY GRANT (East Ohio): I'd like to propose an amendment for clarity: "All official organizations, groups, committees, councils, boards, and agencies of The United Methodist Church receiving funds shall adopt ethics and conflict-of-interest policies." So the words I'm adding there are *receiving funds*.

BISHOP DYCK: OK. Is there a second? All right. Would you like to speak to it?

GRANT: I think it's just necessary for clarification to show the purpose of the amendment—

BISHOP DYCK: All right.

GRANT: —of the petit—the paragraph, I mean.

BISHOP DYCK: All right. Would someone like to speak against it? Yes, over here in Section D. Section D, mic 7, or 10. Are you closer to 10?

CHARLES D. (DENNY) WHITE JR. (Western North Carolina): Thank you, Bishop. This is Denny White from Western North Carolina again. There are groups in the church which have duties to perform which involve the necessity of maintaining no conflict of interest, but the groups receive no funding. One that came to mind, as I talked to the person who sits beside me, is the District Board of Church Location and Building, for example, which might have on it a member from a local church which proposed some sort of action which needed the approval of that board. For that person not to recuse him or herself would, I think, be a conflict of interest. So I would be opposed to the portion of this amendment which has the language about agencies who receive funds as being the only ones to which this would apply. Thank you.

BISHOP DYCK: Thank you. Anyone wish to speak to the amendment? All right, one in Section D, mic 10.

MATTHEW A. EVERHART (North Georgia): I move to suspend

the rules and call to question all that is before us.

BISHOP DYCK: All right. There's a second. If, yeah, if you would suspend the rules, please raise your hand. Thank you. If not, please raise your hand. And the rules are suspended. And the rule you'd like to—do you want to make the motion to call the question?

EVERHART: Yes.

(laughter)

BISHOP DYCK: All right. Second? It's late, I'll take it. All right, all right, then. Those who would vote on all that is before us, please raise your hand. Thank you. Those who would not, please raise your hand. So Calendar Item 770—I've got that right—you can still speak.

BURT BONNER: Is the—are we going to vote on the amendment first, the proposed amendment?

BISHOP DYCK: Oh, the amendment, right. Did you want to speak?

BONNER: Yes. I would only say to the amendment, even though I'm confident that the maker of the motion to amend did not intend it, it has somewhat of an entitlement air to it because it talks about groups receiving funds. In the case of a local church, obviously a local church receives funds from the members; but that's not typically the manner in which we talk about groups or agencies—councils—receiving funds. And so since this is global for all groups in the church, I would urge that the amendment would not be appropriate.

BISHOP DYCK: OK, so the first vote before us is the amendment, which is the addition of the two words *receiving funds*. All those who would amend it to include the words *receiving funds*, please raise your hand. Thank you. Those who would not, please raise your hand. Thank you. And it is not adopted.

770 is before us. And those who would adopt 770, please enter "1" on your keypad; and those who

would not, please enter no. This is a constitutional amendment, so it will require 2/3 vote. Please—did I say that? OK, "1" for yes, "2" for no. All right. Start the clock again, just in case I distracted somebody. All right, now, vote when the clock starts. Vote when the clock starts. Oh, it takes a moment. All right, we're almost done. There we go, vote.

(pause)

And it is adopted at 90 percent. Thank you. [Yes, 744; No 86]

All right, thank you very much. We will go to any announcements. We'll have a final prayer, and send you on your way.

FITZGERALD (GERE) REIST: I'd like to invite Steve Zent and Mike Crowfort—Crowfoot? Is that the pronunciation?—to stand up. They're our voting technicians over here, and Steve is leaving in the morning.

(applause)

I tell you, folks, you're slowing down. I've only gotten two more purchases of basketballs. We've only raised \$310,000 so far! Now, it's my understanding that Bill Gates Sr. said that he would match the highest bid, which at this moment is \$75,000, so we're getting close to \$400,000. And Bishop Bickerton has asked that we keep this going until—uh oh, it looks like something's coming up here—until noon tomorrow, instead of ending it tonight. So you will still have opportunities. The basketballs that have been signed are in the GCFA office. They may be picked up in exchange for \$1,000 or more. And we just wanted to let you know that you have been so generous that we've had to send out for more basketballs. And I just had an update that the South Carolina delegation pledges \$2,000 for Nothing But Nets. It will likely be more, but this is our guarantee as of tonight. So that makes it

\$312,000. Let's keep going. Have a good night, everyone.

BISHOP DYCK: Thank you. And let me thank these two wonderful people behind me, Bishop Craig and Bishop Grove, this great team. Thank you to all of you for your graciousness, and please receive this prayer as you go.

*(prayer)*

**Friday Morning,  
May 2, 2008**

*(music)*

*(applause)*

MARCIA MCFEE: Amen! Good morning, church! I invite you to begin to find your seats for our beginning of worship. Friends, what day is it? Friday! God is good. All the time. Yes, well, I think even the equipment is ready to go home. We've got a—had some diff—technical difficulties with the screen back there, but they're gonna continue working on it. So I invite you to begin to prepare your hearts for worship, friends, and find your seats if you would. We wanna thank the Festival Choir of Christ United Methodist Church, Sugarland, Texas—

*(applause)*

—who's been singing for us this morning.

*Eugene Lowry Plays Piano for  
Worship*

And I want to introduce to you a special guest we have this morning. One of Methodism's most beloved and celebrated preachers, Dr. Eugene Lowry, is with us today; and while he's not preaching this morning, he will be doing the other thing that he is famous for and that's playing jazz piano. And I know that many of you have heard him in your churches and conferences. We also have another special guest that you

just heard in that last song and will be singing a solo in the anthem later on, special guest Barbara Johnson Tucker, beloved singer in The United Methodist Church. We thank you for being here as well. I think she's actually on her way around.

Our theme this morning is, finally, the releasing. Just as the release of leaves from the trees before winter is a sign of life, not death, making way for new life in the spring, so is letting go part of our spiritual journey as well. And so we come to this time of worship, of releasing, of letting go into God's hands. This morning for our invocation, we have Tongan United Methodists from across the connection, from California to Alaska to Texas and points in between, bringing us a traditional invocation. And they are joined by Bev—Bishop Beverly Shamana. We celebrate the gifts of our Pacific Islander United Methodists' indispensable gifts to our United Methodist church.

*(applause)*

Hear them now as they bring their invocation, "O Lord, Open Our Lips and We Will Declare Your Praise."

*(music)*

*(applause)*

*(Scripture)*

*(music)*

*(applause)*

BISHOP BEVERLY SHAMANA: On this *(unintelligible)* a yellow candle is lit in remembrance of Holocaust victims. As we rest a moment from our work, taking care of our concerns, let us move towards those more expansive and transcendent. Let us deepen ourselves and renew our world by engaging in labors of love, fostering and transforming family and friendships, community and humanity. As we journey together through life, may such flames as these light our

ways and ever remind us to share the warmth of our hearts and the hearts of our homes, the rainbow of our wisdoms and the radiance of our inspirations.

*(music)*

ERNEST L. SWIGGETT (New York): Reading from the Acts of the Apostles, chapter 1, verses 3-11.

*(Scripture reading)*

*(music)*

*(applause)*

UNIDENTIFIED MALE SPEAKER: Hallelujia! Amen!

*(applause)*

*Bishop Ward's Sermon*

BISHOP HOPE MORGAN WARD: "You can get there from here, but there's no going home. Every place you go will be a place you've never been. Try this: drive down Mississippi 49. Follow it to its natural conclusion, the beach at Gulfport, where the riggings of shrimp boats are like loose stitches in a sky that's threatening rain. Cross the narrow beach, 28 miles of sand poured out on an old mangrove swamp, hiding the terrain of the past. Bring only what you must, a book of your memory with the random pages blank. On the pier, when you get on the boat for Ship Island, they will take your picture. The photograph, who you were back then, will be waiting for you when you return." This poem is called "Theories of Time and Space." It's written by Natasha Trethewey, our latest Pulitzer Prize-winning poet from Mississippi. My home in Mississippi these days is a place that continues to amaze me with the giftedness of writers, poets, essayists, and novelists. It has been observed that we have so many wonderful writers because we have so much to explain.

*(laughter)*

I prefer, however, that we have so much to explore. Why did they stand looking up? Let's refer it to the committee. A minority report and a majority report: Were they right to stand up and stare up? Were they wrong to stare up? If you think they were right to remain staring up, press "1." If you think they were wrong, press "2." No, no, this is a wonder, this text for today. It's God's latest wonder. And this moment in time, this mysterious moment in time, which the scripture seeks to capture in words of people that are always inadequate to express mystery and majesty and wonder, have been problematic for us through the years. This was the text on which they nailed Galileo. This world has to be flat, no other configuration. Why else would they stand looking up? Why else did God go up?

But this morning on this ascension-remembering, General Conference-ending morning, it's important for us to explore this moment in time, this great Christian mystery, which illuminates all the mysteries of our faith. From the movement of God, as we look up toward a blue, Advent sky, God is coming; and we look down into a manger, where God, a child, lies. Up again to the star, bright, beckoning Magi to come from afar. Then, down, into baptismal water. Up onto a mount of temptation and then out among the people, casting out demons and healing, feeling pressed back by the rejection of that hometown crowd. Up on a mountain to sit and to teach; being pushed back by the religious authorities. Up on a mountain for a moment of transfiguration and then down into a very long, Lenten journey. Up upon the back of a donkey, palm branches waving in the air. Down against denial and betrayal and danger and death. Up on a cross; down into a tomb. Up alive; appearing behind closed doors; mysteriously present in the breaking of bread. On a beach cooking fish. And now, in this moment, ascended above all things, filling this entire

universe with a power and love and light of God.

We've been here for quite awhile and during these days we have been in all of these holy and mysterious places. There have been moments of anticipation; there have been moments of great joy; there have been Lenten times. There have been transfigured moments; there have been moments of temptation. There have been moments of teaching; there have been moments of pushing back. But the mystery of this ascension-remembering day is the great, great truth of God's mystery, which illuminates all those moments in our lives. Christ's journey in all those ups and downs and ins and outs is illumined by this ascension mystery and it is, indeed, a mystery. In the American novel *The Secret Life of Bees* a young girl named Lily is mystified by a ritual that her welcomers and caregivers are engaged in. They are worshipers of Mary and they speak of the ascension of Mary into heaven. Lily is mystified by their words and so she says to her wise mentor and caregiver, August, "What does it mean that Mary went up, up, up?" August replied, "Oh, Lily," placing her hand over her own heart, "she did not go up, up, up, so much as she went in, in, in."

We give thanks for every mysterious and wondrous movement of God in our midst. And we hold before God, as we hear this text and explore it this morning, our souls and our spirits, because we want to hear this fresh word of God. The invitation to the church on this Day of Ascension is really a very strange invitation. It's an invitation to wait. Wait? What do you mean, wait? We have agendas. It is an invitation to remember that there are things that we are not to know. What do you mean, not know? I know, and my speech is ready. I'm very sure. It is an invitation to receive the Spirit. It is an invitation to be a witness, a witness. A witness? I'm ready to make a disciple this day. I'm ready to proclaim what I know is true. The word of this

day is very different. It's a gentle and powerful invitation of our God to wait, to acknowledge that all has not been given, to hope toward the coming of the promised Spirit, to go forth and watch for it, wherever it may be breaking in. It calls from us a new and wondrous humility. We will go forth from this place and people will ask us, "What have you decided?" And there will be many answers. There will even be annotated notes, so that we will understand what we have decided.

But I hope as you are asked that question that you will answer a question, also, that you wish they had asked. And that question is this: What did you learn? What did you learn? Because, friends, in this time together we have learned much about the movement of God's spirit. We have learned much about one another. Our horizons have been expanded; our senses have been awakened. We have recognized the limitations of parliamentary processes and minority and majority reports to say what it is we yearn to say to the world. We have recognized that we want to find ways to be engaged with one another in dialogue in a way that will help us grow in even stronger ways toward this future with hope that God is giving. Not a future that we create, but a future that God is giving to us. What have we learned? Let us watch; let us wait; let us be ready to receive, that we may be witnesses of God's latest gift.

We are a hopeful people. This hope is so very obvious as we think about the wonder of the ascended Christ reigning over all things. This hope is not from within; this hope comes as a great gift. And the future with hope that we celebrate and that we have remembered day by day by day through this General Conference is a future that God is giving. And Christ is beckoning us, "Come, come, come, come toward me; come toward me. Reach out to all God's people. Be alert and ready and attentive and receptive. You will be my

witnesses. You will see the movement of my Spirit. You will be aware that I go before you to Jerusalem and Samaria and to the ends of the earth. There is no place where I am not present.”

After the terrorist attacks on New York City, my husband traveled five months later to Afghanistan for a wheat distribution. And in this dangerous and conflicted and war-torn land at that moment, they entered a village to distribute wheat to those who had tickets to receive. The villages had self-organized in such a way that villagers who were most in need could express that need and they were given a ticket. And when my husband and the others arrived in the village, the villagers were present with their tickets, and the wheat distribution unfolded. Bags were filled with wheat, and many were helped. In the midst of the distribution, a man arrived, obviously very much upset. His hands were empty; he had no ticket. He appeared in the midst of the people and across the barrier of language. It was obvious that he was begging for grain. It was a tense moment. Up on the rooftops, all around the village square, there were armed guards. The air was tense. There was a moment of waiting, there was a time of anxiety, and then, and then, one of the men who had received a full bag of wheat stepped forward out of the crowd toward the man who was begging and had no ticket. His small child stepped forward with him as well, and the child had been given by his father an empty bag. The child held the bag open, and the man with the full bag loosened up the strings and he scooped out a double handful of wheat. And he emptied it into the empty bag. In silence, another stepped forward and loosened their bag and emptied a double handful of wheat in the empty bag. And one by one, the villagers who had received the wheat shared a double handful until the bag was full and was tied up. And the man who had no ticket placed it on his back, and he and his son began the very long walk home.

Our ascended Christ is present in every, in *every* place. After Hurricane Katrina, our Chabadza partner friends in Zimbabwe told us that in a United Methodist church, way out in the country in Zimbabwe, someone rose in Sunday worship to say, “Where is Mississippi, where there has been a big storm? What direction is it?” Lloyd Nyarota, our friend among these people, stood and said, “I think it’s that way.” And the entire congregation spontaneously arose and their hands all went toward us, so far away, as they prayed.

Christ reigns in every place. Christ reigns over all that we are. Christ reigns over everything that we do. And in this General Conference ending day, we know that the ascended Christ is with us.

I have in my pocket yet another gift from the Mississippi Gulf Coast. You received broken things several days ago on your desks, those of you who are delegates. These broken things were collected on the altars of churches in Mississippi and Louisiana. The invitation was given to people to look and see what they might bring from their homes, broken things from the storm, 2½ years later. And in very moving worship services, these things were brought forward. I have in my pocket this morning a bent spoon that was brought forward. The woman who brought this spoon forward held it tight in her hand and she said, “For 2½ years I haven’t been able to throw away this bent spoon. I don’t know why; I just couldn’t toss it in the trash. But you’ve been, you’ve invited me to put it on the altar so that it might be taken to the General Conference. And this morning I bring it forward and I lay it there, and I lay it there so that it will go to that place.” As we lay this symbol of brokenness on the altar this morning, in front of the beautiful, beautiful cross made of broken things, we know that every hope and every hurt of this life are laid here before the cross of the ascended Christ. And we give thanks that this ascension

power is released in all the world and into our hearts and out before us.

After the global gathering in Kansas City, I went, tired and weary with my suitcase, to get on the shuttle. I got on the airport shuttle and went to the very back. There were two men sitting on the back seat of the shuttle. They didn’t appear to have been at their meeting, in fact they had on work clothes and they were headed to the airport. One of them, older, was very friendly and talkative. The other, younger, was very quiet. The older one asked me, “Ya comin’ or goin’?” “Going,” I said. “Where are you going?” “Going home.” “Where’s home?” I told him. “Where ya been?” “In a large gathering of United Methodists.” And he said, “I became a Methodist in prison.” I continued to listen to his story as he told on the way to the airport a long, long story of his life and of his conversion in prison through the ministry of our church. As we got very near to the airport he continued to speak, and as the van drove to the first stop the younger man, who had said nothing, arose to get off the shuttle and my new very talkative friend tapped him on the back with great love and said, “Son, have a good day at work.” The younger man got off the shuttle and my talkative friend said to me, “You know, they can’t get work out here, these young folks in the city, so I get ’em jobs. I get ’em jobs out here at the airport.” We rode on to the next shuttle stop, and as he prepared himself to get off the shuttle, he turned to me and he said, “God bless you as you go. God bless you as you go.”

How glorious it is to be a witness to the way God is moving in the world beyond this place. God continues to be alive and active in the world. God continues to beckon us forward. God says to us, “Be strong; stand; receive; let my love rain down upon you. Wait and watch. You shall receive the Spirit.” Every thought we have, every word we speak, this whole expansive world and this

present moment, are all in God's hands. Thanks be to God.

*(music)*

*(applause)*

*(prayer)*

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:  
Come on up, Bishops.

*(music)*

*(applause)*

MCFEE: You may be seated. I'm going to ask my co-director, Mark, to come on over. Mark and I have been invited to take this moment to bring before you the team of people without we could not have offered the kind of sensory-rich worship experience that we've had. And as a reminder, you can read more about these folks in the worship book. But, our constant liaison from the General Board of Discipleship's worship division has walked the entire journey with us, encouraging and supporting us; Taylor Burton Edwards, come on out and ask these folks to come out. Creating beauty out of the sand and fissures of exile originating from our Jeremiah theme Scripture as well as the gnarled roots that refuse to let go of our deepest hopes; baptismal bowls, sand sculptures, media graphics, and worship book covers, artists Tadlit and Hadden.

*(applause)*

Bringing each day's theme alive and artful offerings on and around this altar with a vast array of materials from wood to fabric, vine, seeds and seedlings, Doyle Burbank Williams.

*(applause)*

UNKNOWN SPEAKER: Doyle, there's some Nebraskans.

#### *Worship Leaders Recognized*

MCFEE: Our preachers and leaders have been vested in the beautiful

textile artistry of stoles and garments and processional banners by Phillip Cox Johnson.

*(applause)*

I think most of those are now lining the suitcases of the bishops. The indispensable help with endless details of getting things and people where they needed to go, equipped with what they were to say and do from our local team, Yvonne Giller, Louis Worthington, and Robin Stevens.

*(applause)*

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:  
You guys just want to...

MCFEE: And you literally would not have seen or heard anything from us had it not been for the willing and capable partners at Media Shout, United Methodist Communications, *The United Methodist Reporter*, and most especially GNTV led by David Wood and his team on sounds, lights, and media.

*(applause)*

MARK MILLER: The wonderful people who've helped us so much with all the music this week, I want to recognize first Dub Shepherd, a deacon in the Texas Conference, minister of Worship and Fine Arts at Trinity UMC in Arlington, Texas. Thank you, Dub.

*(applause)*

Mr. Greg Shapley, Greg Shapley, minister of Music and Worship at First UMC, Hurst, has also been a great coordinator of the choirs throughout this time.

*(applause)*

And also Rev. Tanya Bennett, an elder from the Greater New Jersey Conference, and director of Religious Life at Drew University; she has been my indispensable help in New Jersey and then coming to Texas and coordinating all the music for me. Tanya?

*(applause)*

These wonderful musicians who have been up on the stage day and night with me, Cassandra Kellum, who was here the first week of General Conference, and led us so well with her voice. I wanted to acknowledge Cassandra today.

*(applause)*

Also Rev. Huiy Kim, a local pastor from Greater New Jersey who's a very talented musician who's been our assistant to the band and you heard him in opening worship as well.

*(applause)*

And on the electric guitar—I'm sure the cameras can get over there—is an ordained elder in The Methodist Church and also Assistant General Secretary for The Advance, Chris Heckart on guitar. Thank you, Chris.

*(applause)*

Mr. Solomon Dorsey, originally from St.—a—I was going to say St. Louis; sorry, Kansas City—Kansas City, Missouri, now in New York City. Just an incredible young bass player and singer and percussionist. Thank you, Solomon.

*(applause)*

Mike Riddleberger from New York City who's been with me playing on the drums since he was about 14 years old and has a huge talent. Thank you, Mike.

*(applause)*

We've been blessed by Danton Bankay, who has been here singing, playing guitar, and has been leading music in The United Methodist Church for years. Danton, come on out.

*(applause)*

And finally, let me recognize DeLynn Selleck, who is worship leader

also throughout our connection. So many gifts and has shared them so freely with us, this—over these last couple weeks. Thank you, DeLynn.

*(applause)*

MCREE: And last but not least are the bishops who comprise the Worship Committee from the Council of Bishops, who looked over early drafts and ideas, thought through important pieces of each service with us, were present one at a time for every early morning rehearsal, and generally gave us so much encouragement that Mark and I truly felt free to create together. I want to ask those folks to, if you're back there, to stand so that we might thank you. Bishop Beverly Shamana is their chairperson.

*(applause)*

Will you join Mark and I in thanking all of these good folks?

*(applause)*

*(music)*

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:

Thank you, guys.

BISHOP THOMAS J. BICKERTON: Good morning, church!

ALL: Good morning.

BISHOP BICKERTON: That was pathetic, let's try it again. Good morning, church!

ALL: Good morning!

BISHOP BICKERTON: It's great to see your faces today. I call this session to order; it's my joy and privilege to be your servant today as we walk through this important morning. As we enter into this last day together, I want to acknowledge with gratitude the way that we have been led by the guidance of the Holy Spirit in the midst of our holy conferencing. I also want to acknowledge today that we are guided by three principles that lead us into our time of holy conferencing given to us from Mr. Wesley. And most, if not everyone in this room, has been fa-

miliarized with this little brown book.

Bishop Rueben Job shares with us today, "Many of us yearn to live just...many of us yearn to live a good and faithful life in Christ. We do want to be faithful to the highest we know. We do want to practice our faith in ways that are healing and life-giving, not destructive and life-denying. Disagreement, dialogue, and debate are not foreign to Christians. We are not strangers to honest conversation, patience, loving acceptance, compromise, and mutual agreement. We're not strangers to forgiveness, conversion, transformation, reconciliation, and new life.

And yet in recent years, it seems that these attributes have not been welcome guests or widely cultivated in our midst. John Wesley anticipated times like these, and he knew that everyone needs help to live a holy and good life in a world like ours. He feared that new converts to Christ would fail to practice their faith and would, in his words, become more of a child of the devil than before their conversion. He was fully aware that one could have all of the structures and systems right but could lose the power of God that translates into a Christlike life; a way of holy living that is constantly reforming and renewing the individual and the community."

It was the three simple rules that transformed and gave new life to women and men of high and low estate, setting them on a path that would become a movement that formed a denomination, and transformed a forming nation in North America. We will find quaint and dated some of the instructions spelling out how the three rules may be practiced, but the three simple rules in themselves are contemporary, and exceptionally well suited to our time, our culture, our needs today, and dare I say, even to this session of the General Conference.

It was also Mr. Wesley who said, in several conversations beginning around 1744, these words, "Be dili-

gent, never be unemployed a moment. Never be triflingly employed. Never while away time. Never"—here's the line—"Never spend any more time at any place than is strictly necessary."

*(laughter)*

Now, if I were to recognize Mr. Wesley this morning on the floor of the General Conference, given those words that he wrote over 200 years ago, I suspect that Mr. Wesley might stand at the mic. today and say, "It's Friday. I've been in Fort Worth for two weeks and I want to go home." But we've got a long way to go. We have a busy day, a full day, and we need to focus ourselves on allowing the spirit of the living Christ to bless our day and give us the opportunity to do the discernment that we need to do.

I would say one final word to you today before we begin: We will meet together this morning for about three and a half hours. In that time, 420 children will die of malaria. Every 30 seconds as we meet going through petitions and agendas, every 30 seconds another child will die. May we remember them as we meet.

May we also remember today that this is a day of transition for some of our friends and colleagues. Last evening, the Angola delegation had to leave us and they are traveling today, and we want to remember our Angolan friends who have left us already, and also those of us who will be departing throughout this day. We've also received one announcement that Wendy Whiteside, staff member of the Commission on Christian Unity and Interreligious Concerns, was hospitalized last night. She's undergoing tests and remains under observation. Let us remember Wendy as well. I have asked my colleague and friend, Bishop Felton May, to come and enter us into a time of prayer as we begin this session. Bishop May?

BISHOP FELTON EDWIN MAY: Good morning. The Lord be with you.

ALL: And also with you.

BISHOP MAY: Let us pray.

*(prayer)*

BISHOP BICKERTON: Thank you, Bishop May. Now, friends, I'd like to give you a brief word about how we're gonna proceed today. Ordinarily the chair allows everyone a chance to speak and we have been guided this week by very gracious presiders who've done an excellent job of being gracious and trying to call on everyone who raises a card. But we are under a special circumstance here on this Friday morning. This is our last day together. And today I would ask us to work together to find a way to get through all that we need to do today. We have to bring and maintain integrity to our process, that's for sure, but we also need to use some discretion in how and when we choose to speak. If it's important to make a substantive amendment and if it's important to raise a question, I don't want to cut that off, and I'll promise you that I'll do my best to try to shepherd our conversation throughout the morning. But I would ask you, in turn, to exercise some self-discipline in our process today. We have a long, long way to go. And I'll try to do the best that I can to get speeches for and against on behalf of us trying to make the best kind of decision that we can make as a body, but I would ask for your help as well in the midst of that process. And I think we can do this together today. And I would just ask for your grace and your cooperation and your prayers as we walk through this day. Can we agree to that?

ALL: Yes!

BISHOP BICKERTON: All right, let's enter into the day the best way we can. I'll call upon the Committee on Agenda and Calendar; Youngsook Kang will come and present to us this morning. Good morning.

YOUNGSOOK C. KANG (Rocky Mountain): Good morning. Thank you, Bishop Bickerton, and

good morning (*unintelligible*) Bishops and delegates and friends. This is the 10th and final day of the conference and, as we have been saying, we have been working hard and many of us are ready to go home, but another full day awaits us.

Today's conference business begins with elections, including central conference elections for the general agencies and commissions, Standing Committee on Central Conference Matters, and Commission on General Conference. Then a report from the General Commission on Finance and Administration will follow. As part of the special orders of the day we will have a celebration of the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Social Principles. Then we will invite Bishop Bickerton to present who has the highest bid to Nothing But Nets. Then we will share highlights of message and day for celebration moment this afternoon. We will continue deliberating calendar items today and, as John Brawn will share, we have 68 calendar items before us. Through the action that the body has taken last night to place some items back on the consent calendars, we reduce calendar items by 19. That helps; anything helps.

And lastly, I take this opportunity to thank you all for your support and kindness in working with me and the committee. It has been my privilege to serve the 2008 General Conference this way as the chair of the Committee on Agenda and Calendar. I thank the committee for their hard work; the committee met every day at 7:00 in the morning and everyone was faithfully present. So now may I ask all the Agenda Committee members to stand where they so that you are recognized?

*(applause)*

Thank you. I also thank presiding bishops and chairpersons of legislative committees who were there to confer with us in ordering calendar items and conference business every morning. I also express my deep appreciation to Susan Brumbaugh and

Randall Partin in ordering calendar items.

The last, but not the least, my thanks go to you all, General Conference delegates. You worked hard and we together helped move things along. Your kindness has been marvelous. I thank everyone for your encouragement and support.

*Conference Votes to Restore Rest on Sunday in 2012*

Now, we have been hearing concerns all along, throughout the General Conference over the last ten days, about the scheduling of the conference, so on behalf of the Committee on Agenda and Calendar, and in consultation with officers of legislative committees, I move that there will be no orders of the day scheduled on Sunday during the 2012 General Conference. If I have a second, I'll speak to it.

*(applause)*

BISHOP BICKERTON: Is there a second? Yes?

KANG: The committee feels that it is a sensitive decision to schedule a day of rest. We worked as hard as we could, my friends, but we feel weary. A day of rest will help, not only our physical health, but mental and emotional health. We also feel that it is important that the General Conference experience the region that the General Conference is held, including attending local church worship services.

*(applause)*

BISHOP BICKERTON: Please, no speeches, no applause, please. Thank you.

KANG: We fully understand financial implications of this motion, however, we hope and ask that the body prayerfully considers this motion for a more wholesome conference.

BISHOP BICKERTON: Motion is properly before you. If you will support the motion, will you show

the hand? Opposed, like sign. And it is approved. Thank you.

KANG: Thank you. Now we will have a monitor's report. I call on Marian McRay and Marion Moore Colgan.

BISHOP BICKERTON: Good morning.

*COSROW/GCORR Make  
Final Report*

MARIAN MCCRAY: Good morning. I'm Marian, with an "a," from Fairview Heights, Illinois, 25 miles east of St. Louis, Missouri, a very diverse community.

MARION MOORE COLGAN: I'm Marion, with an "o," from Plattsburgh, New York, formerly part of a summer camp of my ancestors, the Mohawks.

MCCRAY: Well, we finally made it. It's the last day of General Conference. In a few hours we'll be heading back home.

COLGAN: What a wonderful conference this has been. We've come so far and gained so much. Within our diverse delegation, overall, women's voices were heard 20 percent of the time, youth and young adults participated 13 percent, central conference delegates participated 20 percent of the time, and U.S. racial/ethnic people participated 16 percent of the time. This has been a holy and divinely inclusive event.

MCCRAY: Inclusive? Are those your glasses you're using? Were we in the same sessions?

COLGAN: Well, we heard many different voices speaking to the issues.

MCCRAY: Yeah, but did you notice that you heard more white male voices on most issues? Even those that related specifically to ministries with or by women?

COLGAN: And I guess I did sense a little contention at times in this room.

MCCRAY: A little? We stumbled when funding was sought for

racial/ethnic ministries, even though we say to the world that we have "Open hearts, open minds, and open doors." And we still can't agree on some of the big issues.

COLGAN: But the worship was wonderful and the music joyous. And can our bishops preach! I felt the spirit move as never before.

MCCRAY: Yes, I can agree with you on that. But we didn't always adhere to the word that was preached. Bishop Hee-Soo Jung told us we shouldn't place legislation above people. But in many places we did.

COLGAN: I have to disagree.

MCCRAY: Well, I do agree that there were some good times, but I can still feel the sting from the others.

COLGAN: Like what?

MCCRAY: Like the privilege that some people enjoy and others don't. It's like the day I was walking down the street here in Fort Worth. I was like a salmon swimming upstream. My fellow United Methodists were walking three and four abreast on the sidewalk and there was no room for anyone else. I moved to the curb. How many others are we Christians pushing to the curb?

COLGAN: You know, I still think that we have almost hit the mark.

MCCRAY: You know you are my sister and I think it is time we agree that we don't agree. I think it's all right to say we disagree, don't you?

COLGAN: I've been thinking about our HERO Report. Maybe with what we've learned here, we begin to think of it this way:

COLGAN AND MCCRAY:

HERO: Humans everywhere respecting others.

MCCRAY: Sounds good to me, Marion.

COLGAN: Sounds good to me, too, Marian.

COLGAN AND MCCRAY: Have a safe trip home. The peace of Christ be with you. 'Bye!

*(applause)*

BISHOP BICKERTON: And also with you. Thank you.

*(applause)*

KANG: Now Susan Brumbaugh will make a report on consent calendar items.

BISHOP BICKERTON: Good morning, Susan.

SUSAN BRUMBAUGH: Good morning. Good morning, everyone. This is our last morning together, and I have many consent calendars to share with you. What we are going to do this morning is to vote on the consent calendars printed in yesterday's *DCA*, as we always do; but because today is that last day of the General Conference, we are going to take action on the special consent calendars printed in today's *DCA* that were created as a result of last night's motion to return items to the consent calendar.

First, we turn to the consent calendars printed in yesterday's *DCA*. I invite you turn in your *DCA* to p. 2450, p. 2450, where you will find Consent Calendar A06. Calendar Item 1238, that's 1238, was originally included in Consent Calendar A05 that we voted on yesterday but was corrected and moved here to Consent Calendar A06. As you will recall from yesterday, this item was ruled unconstitutional; but that decision was made after the *DCA* printing deadline. There are, therefore, no items contained in Consent Calendar A06.

Now we will turn to p. 2451, p. 2451, to consider Consent Calendar B06. Two calendar items have been removed from Consent Calendar B06, and I don't know if they will appear on the screen because I only gave them the table about 15 minutes ago. So I'll read them to you. On p. 2451, p. 2451, Calendar Item 1354 was corrected for editorial reasons and is now included in Consent Calendar B07 that we will voting on at the very end of our session here

today—not our session, but my presentation. And then on p. 2453, Calendar Item 1366, was removed by request and is reprinted as a regular calendar item in today's *DCA*. If you will refer to p. 2453, we received a valid request to remove Calendar Item 1361; but it will remain on Consent Calendar B07 as a result of the motion that was passed last night because only 7 percent of the committee votes were in the minority.

Now, if you vote yes on Consent Calendar B06, you will be voting to adopt the calendar items contained therein. Consent Calendar B06 is correct as printed, with the exception of the two items that were removed.

KANG: Bishop, I move that we accept the actions of—on Consent Calendar B06, except for those two items that were removed.

BISHOP BICKERTON: Thank you, Consent Calendar B06 is properly before you. Are you ready to vote? OK, it's our first action of the morning, so before you vote, we've got to warm up our keypads. Just press any key. When you're ready, if you would press—if you would support this motion, press "1." If you do not approve the items on Consent Calendar B06, press "2." You may vote when the clock appears

*(pause)*

*[Yes, 826; No, 26]*

You have approved it 826 to 26.

BRUMBAUGH: Thank you. On p. 2454, you will find Consent Calendar D06. The item contained in this consent calendar was not removed. If you vote yes on Consent Calendar D06, you will be voting to refer this calendar item. Consent Calendar D06 is correct as printed.

KANG: Bishop, I move approval of the action on Consent Calendar D06.

BISHOP BICKERTON: Consent Calendar D06 is properly before you. You ready to vote? If you'd support this motion, will you please

press "1." If you do not approve, press "2." You may vote when the clock appears.

*(pause)*

*[Yes, 836; No, 32]*

And you have approved it.

BRUMBAUGH: OK. Now, we will turn to the special consent calendars printed in today's *DCA*, beginning on p. 2540. These consent calendars, A91, B91, and C91, were created as a result of the motion that was approved last night. These special consent calendars contain items previously removed from consent calendars where less than 10 percent of the committee present voted against the prevailing position. There are three such calendars. These items have all been before in previous consent calendars, and we are within the rules to consider them at this time. On p. 2540, you will find Consent Calendar A91. If you vote yes on Consent Calendar A91, you will be voting to adopt the calendar items it contains. All of the items on Consent Calendar A91 are correct as printed.

KANG: Bishop, I move that we adopt all the action on Consent Calendar A91.

BISHOP BICKERTON: Consent Calendar A91 is properly before you. You ready to vote? We got our keypads awake, but let's use our hands and really get awake this morning. If you would support that, would you show the hand? Opposed, like sign. And it's approved. Thank you.

BRUMBAUGH: Where am I? OK, next please turn to p. 24—2544, p. 2544, where you will find Consent Calendar B91. If you vote yes on Consent Calendar B91, you will be voting to adopt the calendar items it contains. All of the items on Consent Calendar B91 are correct as printed.

KANG: Bishop, I move that we adopt all the action on Consent Calendar B91.

BISHOP BICKERTON: Consent Calendar B91 is properly before you. Yes ma'am? Section A, mic 3.

JIN MING MA (Pacific Northwest): Bishop, good morning. I don't know if this is the proper time to against one of the items from this calendar.

BISHOP BICKERTON: It's not in order at this time. It would have to be removed before we could discuss it.

*China/Taiwan Removed from  
Consent Calendar*

MA: So can I, may I make the motion to remove the one of the item from this calendar?

BISHOP BICKERTON: Yes ma'am, you may.

MA: I'd like to remove the Item No. 879.

BISHOP BICKERTON: Is there a second?

MA: May I speak to it?

BISHOP BICKERTON: Yes, ma'am.

MA: As a survivor from the Tiananmen Square movement, I truly understand what the human rights is. I thank you for your support of Taiwan in spirit, but currently the relationship between Taiwan and China is stable. Most of all, China and Taiwan does have right to self-determination. This petition, if passed, is only can cause the heighten upsetting relationship between the China and Taiwan. Particularly the new president from Taiwan said very clearly, "We want peace, we do not want war." Thank you.

BISHOP BICKERTON: Yes, ma'am. Thank you. We need to wait until we see whether or not we remove it before we discuss it. It's properly before you. The motion's been made to remove Calendar Item No. 879. If you would remove this item, would you press "1" on your keypad? If you would choose not to remove this item, would you please press "2." Please vote when the clock appears.

(pause)

BISHOP BICKERTON: [*Yes, 504; No, 375*] And you have removed that from the consent calendar. B91 is now before you. If you would support Consent Calendar B91 with the change made, would you show the hand? Opposed, like sign. And it is approved.

BRUMBAUGH: Our third special consent calendar appears on this same p., which is 2544. This is Consent Calendar C91. If you vote yes on Consent Calendar C91, you will be voting to reject the calendar items it contains. All of the items on Consent Calendar C91 are correct as printed.

KANG: Bishop, I move approval of all the action on Consent Calendar C91.

BISHOP BICKERTON: Consent Calendar C91 is properly before you. If you would support this motion, would you show the hand? Opposed, like sign. And it is approved. Thank you.

BRUMBAUGH: And, finally, our very last consent calendar for this General Conference. If you will look over to the next page, p. 2545, p. 2545, you will find Consent Calendar B07, B07. If you vote yes on Consent Calendar B07, you will be voting to adopt the calendar items it contains. Both items on Consent Calendar B07 are correct as printed.

KANG: Bishop, I move that we adopt all the action on Consent Calendar B07.

BISHOP BICKERTON: Consent Calendar B07 is properly before you. If you would support this motion, would you show the hand? Opposed, like sign. And it is approved. Thank you.

KANG: Now I'd like to invite John Brawn, who is Legislative Activity Coordinator, for his report.

JOHN BRAUN: Good morning.

BISHOP BICKERTON: Good morning, John.

BRAUN: Depending on how long you run, this may well be my last report.

(laughter)

But before I do that, I, I'm actually going off script for a minute and ask for your help. There are a lot of activities that happen in the secretary of the conference's office that happen at night; from the time that you finish at night until those first committees meet at seven o'clock in the morning. There are reports that have to be compiled; there're statistics that go together so that we can show you how much stuff is left. There's graphics that happen; there's slides that are created, there's videos that are created. And if any of you know somebody who would like to work the graveyard shift at the 2012 General Conference who has those kinds of skills—statistician, graphics artist, computer, computer-based video editor—I would really like to talk with you about that before you leave. And I'll be here for another couple days yet.

I wanna thank so many of you for your kind words of encouragement these last several days. You've certainly made me feel appreciated; but one comment in particular stands out in my mind. I was leaving the stage on Wednesday morning, after announcing here my currently-stalled candidacy for lay bishop—

(laughter)

—and I received a phone call. It was my daughter. My kids had thought it was pretty neat to be able to see me on the computer all the way from California. And they just learned this week that they have another connection to the General Conference. Their grandfather was a delegate 40 years ago to the 1968 General Conference. He voted for union between my Evangelical United Brethren Church and you Methodists.

(laughter)

In fact, he's attended every General Conference from 1968 until four years ago. Now, I've never been a delegate; but perhaps the delegate gene is recessive and will simply skip my generation. So maybe 40 years from now, one of my children will be a delegate to General Conference and will finally get to hear the last of the reports from the various episcopal area-study groups that you kicked off this week.

(laughter)

(applause)

In the meantime, my children are young; and they don't understand why I choose to volunteer at the General Conference. I was wishing that they could be here to meet you, and then I realized they don't have to be here to meet you; I can use my video camera, and I can take home a clip of the people of the General Conference—except that my battery's dead.

(laughter)

So in situations like this, it's good to go back to first principles. And one of my personal beliefs is that it is better to ask forgiveness than permission, and I think this is biblical. And that's based on the number of times in the concordance that it has entries for *forgiveness* versus the number of times it has entries for *permission*.

(laughter)

So with that in mind, I'm gonna borrow a camera, ready to take five? Take five. There, kids, these are the people of the General Conference.

(laughter)

And, people of the General Conference, I appreciate you waving. There's probably a lot of people out there who'd like to see you.

(laughter)

Ready to take two? Take camera two. Hey, it worked. You, you know, I—it just occurred to me, I’ve just done something that every cameraman dreams of; the trailer can hear me, but I can’t hear them; and that director back there had to do what I said.

*(laughter)*

*(applause)*

Now, I’m gonna give you your instructions and see if you can do what I say. Let’s start the video, please. The blue squares on the screen represent calendar items; specifically they represent calendar items that you have already acted on when you voted to approve the various consent calendars over the last seven days. There have been 1,214 of these, and you have followed the legislative committee’s recommendation in every single case. You’ve also voted individually on 71 calendar items where you *eventually* followed the committee’s recommendation.

*(laughter)*

These are marked in green. There have been 14 calendar items so far where you amended the committee’s recommendation before you adopted it. I’ve marked these in orange. There was one calendar item that you referred contrary to the recommendation of the committee; I’ve marked this one in yellow. And there were exactly three calendar items, so far, where you voted the opposite of the legislative committee’s recommendation; these are marked in red for historical reasons. The color coding isn’t disciplinary yet, but it’s only a matter of time.

*(laughter)*

I’d like you to consider the big picture here for a minute. You’ve now voted on 1,303 calendar items, and you’ve done something different than the committee’s recommendation only 18 times, or 1.4 percent of the time. Let’s see, 1.4, so that

means that the legislative committees got it right 98.6 percent of the time.

*(applause)*

So I guess 98.6 is normal.

*(laughter)*

You’re slow on that one.

*(laughter)*

There’s a group of calendar items I haven’t mentioned yet. These 68 items are still waiting for your action. If these were average calendar items and if our corporate temperature stayed at 98.6, then it would be reasonable to guess that only one or perhaps two of the items before you today would end up with a different outcome than the legislative committee recommended. If so, we could be out of here by lunch.

*(laughter)*

*(applause)*

It’s going to be a pretty afternoon, and I hear that Fort Worth has a very nice zoo.

*(laughter)*

But I’m guessing that any zoo I find myself in today won’t have very many furry animals.

*(laughter)*

You’ve got 68 items to tackle, and you’ve got 480 minutes to spend. If you spend seven minutes and three seconds on each one, you’ll get done by 11 P.M. tonight on the nose.

BISHOP BICKERTON: All right!

BRAWN: You hold my bedtime in your hands.

*(laughter)*

Whenever we finish, we’re headed home. Our local churches are calling us; the Lord’s work is ahead of us; and if I had another sec-

ond, I’d speak to that.

*(laughter)*

Thank you.

*[John Brawn Receives Standing Ovation]*

BISHOP BICKERTON: Gere, if we could publish the schedule of where John will be appearing next week, it would be really great for us to see that. You’ve been great. He’s going to the Presbyterians next, I hear in the back.

*(laughter)*

You know, a week ago when I stood at the table and you gave an offering, I called my wife who was home—talk about this video streaming thing—I called my wife at home and I said, “How’d it go?” And she said, “Oh, you messed up.” And I said, “What do you mean I messed up?” And she said, “Oh, at the very end you should have said ‘and for those watching on video streaming, get on [www.nothingbutnets.net](http://www.nothingbutnets.net).’” I missed my opportunity, but I made up for it today. Good morning, everyone across the world. Thank you for your thoughts and prayers; and good morning, Sally, I know you’re watching, too.

*(laughter)*

*(phone ringing)*

She just called.

*(laughter)*

Yes, ma’am.

*Commission on General Conference Is Elected*

KANG: Bishop Thomas Bickerton, I have one more item; and then I will sit down. I move to suspend rules in order for elections of the Commission of the General Conference to occur. Our rules require nominations to be printed 48 hours prior to elections on the DCA; however, those names are printed in

today's *DCA* found on p. 2480. There were some changes made on the list of nominations, so we needed to print the correct list on today's *DCA*. So I move.

BISHOP BICKERTON: Motion to suspend the rules is properly before us. It is not debatable; it requires a 2/3 vote. If you will support it, will you show the hand? Opposed, like sign. [*Passes by hand vote*] And the rules are suspended.

KANG: Thank you, my friends. May our actions today be a reflection of God's loving Spirit among us. Thank you.

(*applause*)

BISHOP BICKERTON: We do move to elections. Who'll be presenting for us? Me. I'm up. If you'll turn to p. 2068 in your *DCA* and p. 2480. We just suspended the rules to consider that page. That is a substitute for the Commission on the General Conference; it's found on p. 2070. Those nominations are properly before you. Is there any discussion? If you will elect these persons, will you show the hand? Opposed, like sign. And they are elected. Thank you. [*Motion passes by hand vote*] Friends, we now move into our Order of the Day. Oh, yes, Gere, thank you. I want to do some introductions.

FITZGERALD REIST: It feels so nice to get up out of the chair and walk. I have the privilege—

BISHOP BICKERTON: You know, before he starts—and I know what he's going to do—but isn't this man marvelous, and doesn't he do a wonderful job of shepherding this place.

(*applause*)

#### *Reist Pays Tribute to Marshall*

REIST: Friends, I want to begin with some thanks. And the first person I would like to thank is sitting out here, and I would like Carolyn Marshall to please stand up for a moment.

(*applause*)

Carolyn was my predecessor in this position, and she pulled together many of the staff people who's work you have so much appreciated.

I want to begin with thanks and continue with thanks for a while because in the last four years I have received tremendous amounts of help from various agencies of our church. Tremendous staff support from GCFA. Tremendous support in doing training in Central Conferences from the General Board of Global Ministries and the General Board of Church and Society, who completely funded the training experiences because the General Conference in its infinite wisdom doesn't budget any money for that responsibility of the secretary of the General Conference. But GBGM and GBCS collectively pooled resources to allow me to be twice in Africa, once in the Philippines, and once in Europe; and I very much appreciate that opportunity. I also want to say thank you to the Central Pennsylvania Conference of United Methodist Church Board of Ordained Ministry who provided sabbatical support for me this past year so that I could devote myself full-time to this work. I just didn't think any church wanted a preacher who was going to be gone for five months.

#### *CALMS Managers Recognized*

I'd like to ask Mike Cunningham, Brian McCord, and Eric Sykes to stand up. We depend a lot on software, and these folks keep the software running. When you made the change in the rules in how we voted on things, they stayed up all night to get the work done so we could have the system back up; and I think we owe them appreciation.

(*applause*)

I'd like to call on Marvin Cropsey to introduce some of his staff.

#### *DCA Staff Recognized*

MARVIN CROPSEY: Thank you, Gere. I am Marvin Cropsey, editor of the *DCA*.

(*applause*)

Thank you. I accept that on behalf of the wonderful staff that I have. And I want to tell you how gratifying it is to hear the words, or the letters, *DCA* repeated more than any other words that you ever say.

(*laughter*)

We will record somewhere close to 800,000 words spoken during this conference; and I have a staff that will capture all of them, and I think that my staff is exemplary. I have 18 regular assistants that I would call and also 28 volunteers from all over the country but primarily from Texas. And I am so grateful for the way Texans have come to our aid. I would like for—

(*applause*)

Thank you. I would like for you to greet my daily edition associate editor, Barbara Dunlap Berg, who's regular editorial assignment is at UMCOM. Barbara?

(*applause*)

Daily edition assistant editor, Ann Whiting, who is the editor of the *Michigan Christian Advocate*.

(*applause*)

And there are several people who are at this very minute working very, very hard just behind this platform in order to keep the work of the conference going; but I want to name them. Composition editor, Shirley Shelton. Audio and transcription manager, George Dunn. Transcription/editorial supervisor, Tonya Williams. Also, our daily edition designer, Kate Thomas, who is on loan to us from the Baltimore-Washington Conference. And I want to say a word about the dedication that people have to the *Daily Christian Advocate*. Kate came to us and began her work; and she lost two grandparents this week, and she stayed until yesterday morning. And I am so

very, very grateful. Also, production managers Jerry Fink and Marcia Murphy. And, finally, I need to say a word for Angie James at UMR and the wonderful staff that have been printing all night long and binding and folding and stapling. Those are the people, and also their helpers at Broadmax Printing, who one day last week created those marvelous heirloom handmade *Daily Christian Advocates*. I am so pleased with all that we are able to do for you. Thank you.

[*Editor's note: Norma Bates is Assistant Editor for DCA Advance Editions.*]

(*applause*)

REIST: And now I would like to invite our interpreter coordinators to come forward. Nilda Ferrari and Don Reasoner. Where are they? Here they come. While they're coming, let me make a comment. I occasionally hear someone saying that we have interpreters to help the central conferences. That's not true. We have interpreters to help us language-challenged Americans hear the world.

(*applause*)

(*greetings in several languages*)

#### *Translators Recognized*

NILDA FERRARI: What you've just heard is "good morning" in the nine languages we are interpreting during this General Conference, and they are: American Sign Language, French, German, Korean, Mandarin Chinese, Portuguese, Russian, Spanish, and Swahili. My name is Nilda Ferrari and I am the director of the language interpretation services at this General Conference. I am also a staff of the General Board of Global Ministries that has a department of multilingual resources to... services that serve The United Methodist Church in languages other than English.

DONALD REASONER: I'm Don Reasoner, associate director for this

language interpretation service and helping to coordinate with some of the equipment, and I would like you to—if you are willing—to give a greeting to our interpreters that are up by the booth, in appreciation for all the hard work that they have done.

(*applause*)

FERRARI: We have 145 language interpreters that were divided in 55 teams to cover the language interpretation during the plenary and Legislative Committee sessions. Language interpretation at General Conference secures the full participation of all our international delegates, and we are grateful for the ministry in the life of our church. Thank you.

(*applause*)

REIST: All the people that have been introduced so far are part of the staff of the secretary of the General Conference, extended staff, but the people I work with most closely are the ones I want to introduce next, except that I forgot to thank some—a group—and that was United Methodist Communications. Did any of you get the DVD? You know the orientation DVD for General Conference?

(*applause*)

We asked them if they would do that; they did it. I think that shows the cooperation that we have across the church.

#### *GC Secretary's Staff Recognized*

Now, I'm just going to read these names in alphabetical order and ask them to stand up so that you can see them. Bill Barney, Jennifer—

(*applause*)

hold your applause for a moment because I know you're gonna erupt into applause at some point or want to, but just, just hold it, 'cause a team is a team, and frankly, every-

thing that has happened has happened not because of what any one person has done, but because of what the team has done—Jennifer Batiste. I'm sorry, Jennifer—over here. John Braun. And by the way, John was up all night preparing for this and when we finish these introductions, he's going back to get some sleep. Susan Brumbaugh, Dalila Cruz, Gary Graves, Sherry Hiller has gone home, Gloria Kymn, Jerry Mahle, Katie Mapes has gone home, Randell Partin. I gotta tell you a funny story. Randell Partin and Susan Brumbaugh are married, but when they sent in their registrations it didn't get noticed right away, so they were put in separate rooms. We had to correct that.

(*laughter*)

Preston Price, Janie Sweigert, Kelly Seigler, Janet Stephenson, Darryl Tate, Marie Sol Villalon, and Steve Zekoff. Would you give these friends of mine a round of applause?

(*applause*)

I'm ever so grateful for all that you have done and for all that the staff has done. Thank you so very much.

BISHOP BICKERTON: Thank you, Gere. All right, friends, we are now going to move into our order-of-the-day presentation from the General Council on Finance and Administration and the Connectional Table, if those folks would come forward.

(*pause*)

BISHOP BICKERTON: And I'll recognize Bishop Mary Ann Swenson.

(*pause*)

#### *GCFA Gives Final Report*

BISHOP MARY ANN SWENSON: Thank you, Bishop Bickerton, and I would request permission for representatives of the General Coun-

cil on Finance and Administration and the Connectional Table to be present here in order to give the reports regarding the budget and financial administration.

**BISHOP BICKERTON:** Would the house grant that request? Show the hand. All right, I think so.

**BISHOP SWENSON:** Thank you, and greetings to all of you in the name of the One who calls us into mission and ministry with our global community to be witnesses of the ascended Christ that God reigns in every place. The General Conference has given the General Council on Finance and Administration, in collaboration with the Connectional Table, the responsibility and the privilege to present to you the budget for the next four years. We've been at this place before, to be the voice of The United Methodist Church. Today, once again, we have the opportunity to celebrate the abundance that God has poured out for God's mission in the world. Gathered here at this time, in this place, we are the vessel—we are the cup—from which ministry will flow. Consider the cup. When it's empty, its purpose is to be filled. When it's full, its purpose is to be emptied. It gives what it receives. It receives so that it can pour out. As the people of faith, we have been given this most precious cup. It is the cup, the vessel of the church, the body of Christ. We not only lift the cup; we are the cup. Our purpose is to have God's life-giving abundance flow through us, pouring out into the world, running over the four corners of the world, transforming the world.

*(applause)*

If we do this, we can move beyond the myth of scarcity; we can move into the reality of God's abundance—nearly 14 million faithful disciples; 48,000 worshiping congregations; a richly dense, worldwide network of compassionate, justice-seeking leadership; and literally billions of dollars with which to transform the world through our

service. God has poured out everything needed for ministry in this time, in this global place, around the world, and for all the people of God. Let us be the cup overflowing in a thirsty world. Say it with me, say it with me, everyone:

**ALL:** Let us be the cup overflowing in a thirsty world.

**BISHOP SWENSON:** Amen.

*(applause)*

**BISHOP HOPKINS:** See what the Holy Spirit can do?

*(laughter)*

It's up to us. We are the cup from which will flow the funds to continue the mission and ministry of The United Methodist Church. I'm Bishop John Hopkins, the chairperson of the Connectional Table. And in 2004, this General Conference asked us to bring vision, mission, and money together at the same table and come back, and we have done it. We have done it. As we consider our purpose here to accept the proposed budget, shown on pp. 638 and 666 or 660 of the *Advanced* edition of the *Daily Christian Advocate*, I want you to know that there has been much prayerful consideration of these proposals. The General Council on Finance and Administration and the Connectional Table have sought to carefully balance the needs of our congregations and annual conferences with a calling that God is making to our denomination to be out in the world.

**BISHOP SWENSON:** We've been journeying together with the general agencies of the church to develop this budget that's before you. The budget defines who we are and what we believe. It is our mission statement of what God is calling us as the people of The United Methodist Church to be about in the world. It is centered on those four areas of focus: on developing leaders, on creating new places for new people and renewed ministries, on engaging in ministry with the poor,

and improving health globally. It moves the general church toward an outcome-based budget. And more importantly, it gives us resources to be the cup overflowing in a thirsty world. We invite you to journey with us today as we complete the budget process and as we leave here ready to focus our efforts on making disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world. Pray with me.

*(prayer)*

**BISHOP HOPKINS:** Working together, the Connectional Table in consultation with the Council of Bishops, the General Council on Finance and Administration, and the general agencies have worked diligently with the intent to prepare a 2009 to 2012 budget. The reports before you are a single and integrated budget for the general church. Working together and with purpose, interest and concerns of the whole church have been considered, deliberated, debated, and carefully constructed to be in support of the mission and ministry of the church.

**BISHOP SWENSON:** The recommended budget of \$642 million dollars is an approximate 4.8 percent increase over the last four years and will be about 1.2 percent per year. This was developed in collaboration with the Connectional Table and the general agencies who have worked to put forth a budget that will continue our mission. So John, how do we get this \$642 million dollar budget? I think that Don House can help us answer the question. As Don comes to share, let me tell you that he is a member of our Council on Finance and Administration and he's an experienced economist. He's provided valuable assistance to us as we have collectively discerned a budget that will move us forward while balancing the needs of the congregations and the annual conferences. Don, would you share with us?

**DONALD HOUSE (Texas):** Thank you. I will be brief, but what I'm going to try to do is teach you how we built the budget. I used to

teach economics and I'm going to try it here. There won't be a test at the end but I do hope you absorb it. I want to start by looking at your work in 2004. This is the budget and the way in which the apportionment formula uses the budget in 2004. I want you to take, pay attention really, to three things in this particular slide. The net expenditures of 15.4 billion dollars in the United States is one of the things we did in 2004 to generate the budget. In the fourth column, the total of 612.5 million was the budget we adopted in 2004. There's a base percentage of 3.972 percent. That is the number that we wrote on a stone tablet as we left in 2004. That is the number that is the percentage of the total net spending of 15.4 billion that is reflected in the 612.5 million. It's fairly simple. If you take 3.972 percent, multiply it times 15.4 billion, you get exactly 612.5 million. That's what we did in 2004.

Now our steps for this quadrennium is first to determine how we construct the bottom line. There are several steps that we went through. First, we had to project membership over the next quadrennium. We assumed that the decline in membership would be in keeping with what we've seen in recent years—a decline of 0.8 percent per year in the jurisdictional conferences or in the United States. We have to project per capita income in real terms in the United States. We have to project giving per member. This is a reflection of the generosity of our members. If income goes up by 10 percent, what will giving to our churches go up by? It's called an expenditure elasticity; we have to specify that. Then we calculate the total expenditures given in the collection plate among our 37,000 churches. That's fairly simple. All it is, is multiply giving per member times the number of members. That gives us an estimate of the total expenditures of the total dollars to be received in our collection plates. Then we calculate net expenditures. That is, there are some deductible

categories. There's debt service, apportionment payments, contribution to buildings that is nondebt financed, and remaining benevolences, and in fact the monies that you spent to buy basketballs would be in that category. From that we then establish the base percentage, which was that base percentage that you saw in the 2004 report. To get there, we have to understand where we might be over the next quadrennium and we make some foundational assumptions to get to the number. The key assumptions are these: we assume that membership growth will decline at 0.8 percent per year over the next quadrennium; inflation will be 2.5 percent; the giving elasticity, meaning when we have a 10 percent increase in family income we expect a 10 percent increase in giving to the church. We believe that the ratio of net spending to total spending will be 70 percent, or about 30 percent of the expenditures in the local church will be in those deductible categories.

Now we're building our report based upon those foundational assumptions. We believe over the next quadrennium in our local churches, the 37,000 local churches, we will collect almost 18 billion dollars in the collection plate. That's with a "B." So, now that we have our net expenditures projection, the next step is to look at the base percentage in the budget itself. Now calculating the base percentage, this is where we strike that balance between the monies available in the annual conferences and local churches and the monies that we share with the connection to the general church funds. That is part of our job, to strike that right balance. If you look at that base percentage which is striking that balance, you can see that that base percentage from quadrennium 1993 to 1996 to the quadrennium 2005–2008, which is where we're finishing, has decreased. Note the original percentage from 1993 to '96 was 5.4 percent. In 2005 to 2008 it had dropped to 3.972 percent. What that simply means is this: that the

share of the pie that has been given to the general church funds has been declining. That is, in relative terms, the general church is getting smaller. We project that the tolerance or the right balance of the funds to be spent in the local church in the annual conference and at the general church would be best positioned with a decline in that base percentage of 0.4 percent. Note that that is just about the same percentage decline that we adopted from 2001 to 2004 quadrennium, to the 2005–2008 quadrennium. If we adopt that 0.4 percent, our new percentage for the next quadrennium would be 3.572 percent. That is the number we're proposing to write on that stone tablet for the next quadrennium. If we want to see a graphic presentation of that, we can see the decline in where we're establishing the new base percentage of 3.572 percent. Note: we are projecting a continuing decline in the same trend that we've seen over the previous quadrennium, meaning that the share of the dollar going to the general church will continue to decline. If we simply take that new base percentage of 3.572 percent, multiply it times the 18 billion dollars that we believe will be collected in the collection plates over the next quadrennium, we come to our bottom line—641.897 million dollars.

That is what we refer to as the 642. Now, how do we determine the extent to which we have the right number? If you look at the pattern of payouts to the general church apportionments, you can see that it has gone through some cycles. We have had periods of time where the payout, the percentage paid of general church funds, has been on the decline, reached a bottom around 1994, and then it rose and peaked around 2001 at around—a little above 90 percent, declined again, and now it's on the upturn again. That is, it has cycled; and that is something that we need to watch very carefully because the percentage payout to the general funds is a pretty good predictor of the payout to annual conference apportion-

ments. So if we are to strike the right balance—that is, the share that goes to the general church and the share to be retained in the local churches and the annual conferences—we need to pay attention to this.

Now, even though it has cycled, we think we have a pretty good idea of what determines the payout. You can see that—I don't know if you can tell the colors that well—but one of those curves is the actual payout. The other curve that looks like it's right on top of it, is what we would have predicted it to be. So we think we have a pretty good handle, and when we choose that base percentage and the 642, we need to measure what that impact is going to have on the annual conferences.

If we go to the next slide, we can see our projection. If, in fact, things turn out as we expect, we believe the payout rate to the general church apportionments will continue to improve; and, in fact, over the next quadrennium we believe the payout will increase from 88 percent payout of general church funds to 90 percent payout of general church funds over the next quadrennium. What this does is reestablish some better financial health in our annual conferences and our local churches but still have the sufficient funding to fund the mission and ministry at the general church.

If we look at what that looks like over the quadrennium that is, indeed, an increase in the dollars available to the general church. That is in nominal dollars; but if we adjust for inflation—I want you to pay attention to this because the 642, even though it is increasing the nominal dollars, it doesn't buy quite as many loaves of bread as it bought in the previous quadrennium. That is, to strike that balance we have projected a budget that is going to be fewer loaves of bread for the general church, more loaves of bread for the annual conferences and local churches over the next quadrennium. Now this—don't be startled, the axis on this is not zero; that is, we have

blown this up just to show the proportions. If you had zero on the X-axis, you wouldn't detect very much movement. I've blown this up so you can really see that what we have here in terms of loaves of bread that this budget will buy is about the same as what we had in 1985 to '88 quadrennium. That is, we're projecting a decline in the available dollars or the loaves of bread that it will buy.

So basically what we have here is with this work we have constructed a bottom line of \$642 million that we believe will be the right balance of the dollars that are shared by the general church, the annual conference, and the local church. We believe that it is sufficient to fund the mission and ministry of the general church, and this is how we got there; it wasn't pulled out of the air. Thank you.

BISHOP HOPKINS: This is an historic moment in the life of our denomination. The budget before you is an integrated plan that moves our mission and ministry into a future with hope. It is a budget that has focused on four areas of ministry and moves towards measurable goals. It is a budget that has been developed in collaboration with the General Council on Finance and Administration, the Connectional Table, the general program agencies, and the Council of Bishops—and most important, the collaboration with you the delegates of this General Conference.

You have sought to allow the Holy Spirit to direct your work while at the same time carefully deliberating about potential increases to this budget. For this work we are grateful, and we praise God for your dedication and commitment to our budget-building process. Your encouragement to stay within the proposed bottom line was a significant influence as we worked to address the referrals we received with financial implications. You will find as we go forward with these reports that we have honored this commitment

and will present a budget within the \$642 million proposal.

*(applause)*

BISHOP BICKERTON: Friends, we are at break time, and I think it's a good time for us to take a break as we move into some of the petitions following break. I have just about 20 minutes 'til 11. We're gonna be in recess for 15 minutes. I'd like for us to be prompt—back in our seats at five minutes until 11. Now, yes, I recognize in section D, mic. 9; excuse me, mic. 12.

GEORGE G. HOWARD (West Ohio): The West Ohio Conference—a moment of privilege.

BISHOP BICKERTON: Yes, sir.

HOWARD: The West Ohio Conference has received a basketball because of our \$2,000 commitment to Nothing But Nets to save lives. We would like to trade this basketball for the one you used in your report. We offer \$80,000 to make that happen. We desire to touch 8,000 lives.

*(applause)*

BISHOP BICKERTON: Thank you. George, I can't guarantee that until after 11 o'clock, but that bid has been registered. The bidding closes at 11. We are in recess until five minutes 'til 11. I'll see you back promptly then. Thank you.

*(music)*

BISHOP BICKERTON: Let's take our seats please.

UNIDENTIFIED MALE SPEAKER: Thank you, Eric.

BISHOP BICKERTON: Let's be back in order. Let's come as quickly as we can, please.

If you'll come quietly to your seats. Back in place. All right, I'll still remind you that we are still under the Order of the Day, so I'm going to turn to Marilyn Moore and Jonathan Holston to continue the GCEA report. So let's be in place and give our attention.

MARILYN S. MOORE (Nebraska): Thank you, Bishop.

BISHOP BICKERTON: Good morning.

MOORE: Good morning. I'm Marilyn Moore, a reserve delegate from Nebraska and a member of the General Council on Finance and Administration. With me this morning is Jonathan Holston, member of the North Georgia Conference. Jonathan chaired the Financial Administration Legislative Committee. I'll be presenting to you several reports from the council to the General Conference for your consideration. The first reports that I will bring to your attention are informational reports and they require no action.

*Report of the Audit and Review Committee*

The first is Report No. 10, the report of the Audit and Review Committee found on pp. 655 and 666 of the *Advance* edition of the *Daily Christian Advocate*. General agencies, an important part of our common ministry, are fiscally accountable to the entire connection through the General Council on Finance and Administration. This report offers the findings of the Audit and Review Committee for your information.

The second information report is Report No. 17, the Report of The United Methodist Church Foundation. It is found on pp. 678 and 679 of the *Advance* edition of the *Daily Christian Advocate*. The General Council on Finance and Administration through the foundation encourages United Methodists to provide for their continued participation in world service agencies or in other general church benevolence funds of interest, through current and planned giving, including wills and trusts. This report outlines the activities of the foundation.

The third information report is Report No. 18, the Report of the United Methodist Property and Casualty Trust. It is found on pp. 680-

83 of the *Advance* edition of the *Daily Christian Advocate*. The council fulfills its disciplinary responsibilities to institute, manage, and maintain an insurance program available to the denomination through the United Methodist Property and Casualty Trust. Report 18 contains a review of activity of the trust.

Next I would present Report No. 9, Sundays with Special Church Offerings, located on p. 663 of the *Advance* Edition of the *DCA*. This report contains information regarding Native American Ministries Sunday, Human Relations Day, One Great Hour of Sharing, United Methodist Student Day, World Communion Sunday, and Peace with Justice Sunday. This report, recommending no changes to the Sundays with special church offerings, is presented for acceptance by the General Conference.

BISHOP BICKERTON: It is properly before you. Report No. 9. Jonathan?

*Report on Sundays with Special Offerings*

L. JONATHAN HOLSTON (North Georgia): My name is Jonathan Holston, North Georgia, clergy, and chair of the Financial Administration Committee. If you will turn to p. 2049 in the *DCA*, Calendar No. 161. This is Petition No. 81572. It's also located, it's been said, on p. 663 of the *Advance* edition of the *Daily Christian Advocate*. The committee recommends the adoption of report No. 9 entitled "Sundays with Special Church Offerings." It was a unanimous vote in our committee.

BISHOP BICKERTON: It is properly before you. Ready to vote? If you will support it, let's activate our keypads again. If you would support report No. 9, enter "1" for yes, "2" for no. Please vote when the clock appears.

(pause)

BISHOP BICKERTON: You've approved it 536 to 10. [Yes, 536; No, 10]

Jonathan? Marilyn?

*Report on Pay Equity of the General Agencies*

MOORE: The next report is Report No. 12, Pay Equity of the General Agencies of The United Methodist Church, located on pp. 670 and 671 in the *Advance Edition of the Daily Christian Advocate*. The 1988 General Conference approved a request from the Women's Division of the General Board of Global Ministries and the General Commission on the Status and Role of Women to evaluate pay equity in the general agencies of The United Methodist Church. The General Council on Finance and Administration was charged with evaluating internal wage structures and practices in regard to pay equity and to include this assessment in its regular monitoring of equal employment opportunity compliance. This report recommends reaffirmation of the church's commitment to pay equity and calls for collaborative effort by general agencies to assure achievement of this goal. The report is presented for your consideration.

HOLSTON: Again, if you'll turn to p. 2049 in the *DCA*, p. 2049 in the *DCA*, Calendar Item No. 163, Petition No. 81574, located on pp. 670 and 671 in the *Advance Edition of the Daily Christian Advocate*, the committee recommends the adoption of Report No. 12, Pay Equity in the General Agencies of The United Methodist Church. It was a unanimous vote in our committee.

BISHOP BICKERTON: Calendar Item 163 is properly before you, Report No. 12. If you will support it press "1" on your keypad; if you would not support it press "2." Please vote when the clock appears. [Yes, 623; No, 16]

(pause)

BISHOP BICKERTON: You've approved it 623 to 16.

*Finance References from Previous General Conferences*

MOORE: Our next report is Report No. 13, References from Previous General Conferences, located on pp. 671-73 of the *Advance Edition of the Daily Christian Advocate*. These reports are results of matters referred to the General Council on Finance and Administration from the 2000 and 2004 General Conferences. Part 1 of this report deals with allocation of the balance of funds in the Methodist Corporation Trust Fund. We recommend that \$290,000 be used to fund the balance of the cost of the Council of Bishops Task Force, updated the *In Defense of Creation* document. The balance of the principal and accumulated interest of the fund would be transferred to the Permanent Fund for the designated purposes consistent with the original purpose of this fund.

Part 2 dealt with a name change to "Incapacity leave for clergy" described in paragraph 358 of the *Book of Discipline*. After consultation with the General Board of Higher Education and Ministry, and the General Board of Pension and Health Benefits, we recommend that the proposed name change not be approved.

Part 3 is a recommendation that the Immigration Task Force, convened by the General Council on Finance and Administration, be discontinued with general agency staff continuing to cooperate on work in this important area. Please note that another immigration task force coordinated by members of the Council of Bishops and several general program agencies continues to work on policy issues in this area.

HOLSTON: This item is located on p. 2049, 2049 in the *DCA*, Calendar No. 164, Petition No. 81575. It is located on pp. 671-73 of the *Advance Edition of the Daily Christian Advocate*. The committee recommends the adoption of Report No. 13 that is presently before us.

BISHOP BICKERTON: It's properly before you, Calendar Item 164,

Report No. 14. If you'll support it will you press "1" on your keypad; if you would not support it, press "2." Please vote when the clock appears. [*Yes, 662; No, 18*]

(pause)

BISHOP BICKERTON: You've approved it 662 to 18. Continue.

*GCFA Budget for 2009–2012*

MOORE: The next report is Report No. 14, The Budget of the General Council on Finance and Administration. It's located on pp. 673-75 of the *Advance Edition of the Daily Christian Advocate*. The 2009–2012 quadrennium budget for the General Council on Finance and Administration has increased by 2.5 percent over the previous quadrennium at \$26,936,000. All of the council's spending supports the fulfillment of its disciplinary responsibilities regarding the legal interests and protection of intellectual property of the denomination, performing internal audit functions of general church agencies, various fiscal responsibilities such as accounting for the general funds, overseeing an insurance program for the denomination, administering the collection and distribution of apportionments, serving as the custodial trustee of the denomination, and assisting in preparation for and management of General Conference. We present this budget which continues to support and affirm the ministry of administration.

HOLSTON: Also on p. 2049 of you *DCA*, Calendar Item No. 165, Calendar No. 165, Petition No. 81576, located on pp. 673–75 of the *Advance Edition of the Daily Christian Advocate*. The committee recommends the adoption of Report No. 14. This was done unanimously in our committee.

BISHOP BICKERTON: Calendar Item 165, Report No. 14 is before you. If you will support it, will you show the hand? Opposed, like sign? And it is approved.

*Budget for Board of Trustees and Permanent Fund*

MOORE: The next report is Report No. 15, Income from the Board of Trustees and the Permanent Fund, located on p. 676 of the *Advance Edition of the Daily Christian Advocate*. In the capacity as the Board of Trustees of The United Methodist Church, the General Council on Finance and Administration provides for the management of assets given to The United Methodist Church as a part of the Permanent Fund. The income from these assets has supported missions and ministries of The United Methodist Church through the World Service Fund. From 2004 to 2007, \$1,431,000 has flowed to World Service from the Permanent Fund. This report is submitted to the General Conference for review and approval of the recommendation to continue distributing income from the Permanent Fund to the World Service Fund.

HOLSTON: On p. 2049 of your *DCA*, Calendar No. 167, Calendar No. 167, Petition No. 81577, located on p. 676 of the *Advance Edition of the Daily Christian Advocate*. The committee recommends the adoption of Report No. 15, with a majority vote.

BISHOP BICKERTON: Report No. 15 is before you, Calendar Item 167. If you will support it, will you show the hand? Oppose, like sign? And it is approved. Thank you.

*World Service Special Gifts Report*

MOORE: Next is Report No. 19, World Service Special Gifts, located on pp. 684–86 of the *Advance Edition of the Daily Christian Advocate*. This report describes the definition and administration of the World Service Special Gifts Program, as well as the activity within the program for the past several quadrennia. It also includes the guidelines for operating the program which must be adopted by this body. This report then is submitted to General Conference for review and approval.

HOLSTON: Bishop Bickerton, I move the suspension of the Rule 31C.3 to consider this item before us.

BISHOP BICKERTON: Motion to suspend the rules is before us. If you will suspend the rules, will you show the hand? Opposed, like sign? And they are suspended. Jonathan?

HOLSTON: On p. 2546 in the *DCA*, 2546 in the *DCA*, Calendar No. 1371, Calendar No. 1371, Petition No. 81581, located on pp. 684–86 of the *Advance Edition of the Daily Christian Advocate*. The committee recommends the adoption of Report No. 19, with a unanimous vote in the committee.

BISHOP BICKERTON: Calendar Item 1371 is before you, Report No. 19. If you will support it, will you show the hand? Opposed, like sign? And it is approved. Thank you.

MOORE: The General Council on Finance and Administration, in partnership and collaboration with the Connectional Table, has faithfully labored to present to the General Conference Reports No. 1–7 of the *Advance Edition of the Daily Christian Advocate*, found on pp. 640–60 as the budgets for the ministry of the general church. These reports are before you for consideration.

HOLSTON: This report, located on p. 2048 of your *DCA*, Calendar No. 159, Petition No. 815070, pp. 640–60 of the *Advance DCA*. I ask at this time Larry Hormitsky who was the subcommittee chair to present this report.

LARRY P. HOMITSKY (Western Pennsylvania): Thank you, Jonathan, Bishop and Delegates, it was the honor of our group to review each of these reports in detail. We spent the first 60 minutes of our time hearing reports from GCF&A and, by the way, if you wish to use some of that information that Jon shared with you, you can go to [www.GCFA.org](http://www.GCFA.org) and you are going to find in a number of ways that information to be used to be shared with your local churches.

After that review we definitely were thankful for the collaboration that had been presented from both the Connectional Table and GCF&A. We believe that collaboration has provided a tremendous opportunity for mission and ministry in ways that in the past we've not always seen. We also believe that this is a very reasonable increase for the cost related to those ministries and mission.

There was some discussion on Report 5. I need to inform you that we requested information from all of our sources—general secretaries and general agencies—concerning Report 5, the episcopal file. If you look on p. 646 you are going to see that report. However, after discussion where we learned that there were only 4 percent increases over the quadrennium; 10 percent–13 percent healthcare cost increases for 69 active episcopal leaders, for 95 retired bishops, and also for 34 surviving spouses, and the cost when there is elections held in that transition time period, there was no question in our minds and that is why we present this budget today unanimously approved by the subgroup for adoption. But Bishop, I also have learned that the commodity, U.S. dollar, is not as strong as some other commodities. For instance, you may want to look at this budget in another perspective. It is equal to 8,571 signed basketballs. You may want to consider from that perspective, but the subgroup definitely and unanimously hopes that you would adopt this petition.

BISHOP BICKERTON: Is that a moment for purchase?

HOMITSKY: Sir, I am from western Pennsylvania. Perhaps you've heard of that place and, as you already know, we've given quite a bit in your honor, Bishop. Hear, Hear.

BISHOP BICKERTON: Well noted. Thank you.

MARY BROOKE CASAD (North Texas): This is Carl Schenck, a member of the Connectional Table

and reserve clergy delegate from Missouri who was part of the collaborative team that cared for referrals with financial implications. He will take you through this report, Report No. 20, beginning on p. 2483 of the *Daily Christian Advocate*.

#### *Report from Connectional Table*

CARL SCHENCK (Missouri): Good Morning. The General Council on Finance and Administration and the Connectional Table worked diligently to determine funding sources and levels for all items referred to us. We used a series of criteria to develop our recommendations. Most importantly, we ensured that the funding level identified was sufficient for the work. We also assessed the value of the work through the lands of the Four Focus Areas, the importance of the work to this body, and the ability to integrate the work into or alongside of the work of the general church. We also placed a high value on maintaining the proposed apportioned budget amount. The results of this work are summarized on the slide before you and detailed in Report No. 20, found in today's *DCA*.

The total amount of referrals that were not contained in the budgets of the General Agencies was \$3,705,000. Through collaboration with the general agencies and in some cases other partners, the funding for these referrals was found through budget adjustments and reallocation of resources resulting and maintaining the original proposed General Church Apportioned Budget. Let me take you through these referrals. Items 10–36, while referred to the Council and Table, were determined to already be included in the budgets of the various general agencies. Many of these petitions were for new work that this body needed to approve but that had been anticipated within the proposed budgets.

Items 1–9 were not included in any budgets and therefore need to be addressed. These are listed on

p. 2483 of the *DCA* with appropriate petition and page references. I will review the results of our work on each item.

#### *Sand Creek National Historic Site*

Item No. 1, the Sand Creek Massacre National Historic site: We recommend that \$50,000 be funded from the existing General Council and Finance and Administration Budget, on behalf of the people of The United Methodist Church

No. 2, the Committee on Faith and Order: We recommend the following funding plan for the Committee on Faith and Order. The following agencies or entities have agreed to provide funding totaling \$300,000 within their existing budget request. The General Commission on Christian Unity and Interreligious Concerns: \$50,000; The Council of Bishops: \$125,000; The General Board of Higher Education and Ministry: \$75,000; and, the Association of United Methodist Theological Schools: \$50,000.

Item No. 3, the Committee on Central Conference Affairs: We recommend that \$100,000 be moved from the proposed General Conference 2009–2012 apportionment, and that \$190,000 be moved from the proposed GCFA 2009–2012 apportionment to the Committee on Central Conference Affairs as indicated on the Revised Report No. 6, General Administration Fund.

The fourth one, The Judicial Council: We recommend that \$115,000 be moved from the proposed General Council on Finance and Administration's 2009 to 2012 apportionment to the Judicial Council 2009 to 2012 apportionment line item as indicated in the Revised Report No. 6, General Administration Fund, located on p. 2482 in the *DCA*.

#### *Abolition of Sex Trafficking*

Abolition of Sex Trafficking: This petition was approved by the General Conference on Consent Calen-

dar B01. The petition was for an expansion of an existing program at the request of the General Board of Church and Society and in keeping with the budgetary process, no additional funds have been appropriated.

#### *Worldwide Nature Funding*

No. 6: The Worldwide Nature of The United Methodist Church: We estimate the cost of this study is approximately \$600,000. The projected funding allocation will be shared by the General Council on Finance and Administration, the Connectional Table, and the Council on Bishops—the Council of Bishops—in the amount of \$200,000 each.

African Methodist—African American Methodists Heritage Center: We recommend funding this petition at the requested amount from reserves in the following method: General Commission on Archives and History, \$40,000; General Council on Finance and Administration, \$360,000.

No. 8, Support of Theological Education in Africa: We recommend funding this petition at the requested amount from reserves or proposed spending in the following method: General Board of Higher Education in Ministry, \$1,400,000; General Board of Global Ministry, \$400,000; United Methodist Communication, \$200,000.

No. 9: And finally for me, we have evaluated the Petition on General Agencies and have determined that any cost related to changes in central conference membership of the general agencies can be funded within the existing budget.

CASAD: There is an addition of a referral found on p. 2178, Calendar Item 780, Petition 81579, p. 1188 in the *Advance Daily Christian Advocate*. This is for the Study Committee on Latin America and the Caribbean.

Funds are contained within the budget of the General Board of Global Ministries. Bishop Bickerton,

I recommend adoption of Report 20, found in the *Daily Christian Advocate* on p. 2483.

BISHOP BICKERTON: All right, let me see if we understand where we are. We are on p. 2483. This is a motion to accept the referrals that the committee has been working on with the addition of Calendar Item No. 780, found on 2178. We will deal with the referrals and then we will go back to Reports 1-7, but we need to approve the referrals before we can approve the Reports 1-7. So Report No. 20, with the addition of Calendar Item No. 780, is in front of you. If you will support that report of the referrals, will you show the hand? Opposed, like sign. And it is done. *[Approved by hand vote.]* Now we go back to Reports 1-7 and they are properly before you. Calendar Item 159. Larry?

HOMITSKY: Bishop, let's review just for a moment. It is Calendar No. 159. It is found on page 2048 and in the *Advanced Advocate*, it is also found on pp. 638-660. Once again, the budget subcommittee and the legislative committee moved adoption unanimously.

BISHOP BICKERTON: It is properly before you. Yes, section D, mic.8.

THOMAS W. EBLEN (Kentucky): Did you say Report No. 5 is before us now?

BISHOP BICKERTON: Reports 1-7 are before us now.

EBLEN: Yes, sir, I have a motion to make in regarding to Report No. 5 on the episcopacy, if that is in order.

BISHOP BICKERTON: Yes, sir.

EBLEN: I move that the General Board of Pensions and the General Council on Finance and Administration continue to study the pension and health benefits for the bishops to explore all options for future plan savings and to report their findings and recommendations to the 2012 General Conference. And I would like to speak briefly to it.

BISHOP BICKERTON: Is there a second? There is a second. Yes, sir.

EBLEN: This will be another follow through item that the task force that studied episcopacy brought to our attention. On two or three of their lists, they said they wanted to look more at pension and health benefits but I suppose they had so many other things to do and, that that would be continued. Also, in light of the fact that we have received the report that this particular item continues to escalate much more quickly in increase than any of the other items, I'd like to see our two general agencies continue the work of that task force. I don't think additional money would be necessary. I assume our agencies are always looking at how we can be more economical in our operation and knowing health and pension is going to continue to be a concern for the future, I'd like for the 2012 conference to receive this specific report back.

BISHOP BICKERTON: Thank you very much. That is a speech in favor. Is there a speech against? Question, mic.4, section B. I think you are on.

ANNE S. TRAVIS (Holston): Bishop Bickerton, for purposes of the *Journal*, we need the maker of the motion to please identify himself.

BISHOP BICKERTON: Oh, thank you. That's my mistake. Who are you and where did you come from?

EBLEN: I am a member of the shuttle crew of delegates that shuttle every day. Tom Eblen, Kentucky Conference.

BISHOP BICKERTON: Tom, it is nice to see you today. Thank you for identifying yourself. Thank you for that correction. Think you are ready to go? If you will approve that amendment, would you show the hand? Opposed, like sign. And the amendment is approved. [*Approval by hand vote.*] Reports 1-7 are before us. Yes, section B, mic.5.

BONNIE L. MARDEN (New England): I just have a question for the committee. There was an amendment to this report that was talked about in committee and I'm not sure

whether that has been presented to the body or whether it has been withdrawn.

HOMITSKY: I am not sure what your point is. We reviewed the seven. You may be talking about Calendar Item 160 which is just below this where there was an amendment. But in the Reports 1-7, there was a lot of discussion but there were no amendments.

ARDEN: There was a proposal to change the funding designation for the Episcopal Funds.

HOMITSKY: I believe that is part of Calendar 160.

MARDEN: Thank you.

HOMITSKY: You can see it just below this and we will be getting there next I believe.

BISHOP BICKERTON: OK, thank you. Yes, section D, mic.8 or mic.11.

JOE W. KILPATRICK (North Georgia): Morning. The Report No. 1 which encompasses the budget of the UM Communications. I would like to make a motion.

BISHOP BICKERTON: Yes sir.

#### *Media Purchases in Africa*

KILPATRICK: I move that 33 percent of the Media Purchases budget of UM Communications be specifically allocated to radio ministry in Africa. If there is a second, I'll speak to it.

BISHOP BICKERTON: Is there a second? It is properly before you. Joe,

KILPATRICK: Friends, all across Africa young people are getting cheap radios and plugging in their earphones. I believe that we can reach 1 million youth within, with the gospel of Jesus Christ during the next 10 years and save them from Islam and paganism. Our church's radio stations in Africa were destroyed by war, theft and have lacked support for training and compensation for quality staff. The station in Liberia, I understand, has recently been rebuilt and is restart-

ing. The funds are miniscule to our U.S. expenditures. Radio ministry can be a vital part of health education, helping us in the distribution of nets, fighting AIDS, and teaching much that many illiterate people need to know.

BISHOP BICKERTON: Joe, your time is up.

KILPATRICK: Whoa, I am just, I just got a few more sentences. May I?

BISHOP BICKERTON: How about giving me one more sentence and I'll compromise with you.

KILPATRICK: I think that UM Communications has staff that understand radio ministry. The Board of Discipleship has identified the possibilities to reach Africa's youth. We have 33 percent of our members...

BISHOP BICKERTON: OK, that's it. That was one sentence, Joe. Thank you. Thank you. Section D, section C, mic.9, red card, speech against.

VICTORIA A. REBECK (Minnesota): The budget already includes \$4.1 million for this. I don't think this is necessary. Thank you.

BISHOP BICKERTON: Thank you. Is there a speech for? Point of order. Yes, mic.2.

DANIEL A. IVEY-SOTO (New Mexico): Bishop, I am looking on p. 1911 of the *DCA*, p. 1911. Our rules, Roman numeral VIII, ff B, which states any action proposed to the general conference plenary (which would be us) that involves the expenditure of funds, (which would be this amendment) shall be referred to the General Council on Finance and Administration and the Connectional Table, or their Executive Committees, or their expenditure review groups, for advice and recommendation before final action is taken. I don't believe that is appropriate at this time. Thank you.

BISHOP BICKERTON: Thank you. I, I think we are going to go ahead and deal with it. I think the budget is before this body and I

think we will deal with it given the day that we are in. So let's continue to see how we go with this. I need a speech in favor.

Yes, mic. D, Section D, mic.8, or mic.10, wherever you want to go. There we go. Let's go to 11. It's hard, hard to see all those cards. Just pick a mic, anyone will do. No.11.

MATHEW A. PINSON (North Georgia): Bishop Bickerton, If it would be in order I would motion that we refer this matter to the CT moving into the next quadrennium to review it more carefully.

BISHOP BICKERTON: OK, the motion to refer is in order. Is there a second? Is there discussion about it? If you will refer the item, will you show the hand? Opposed, like sign. [*hand vote, approved*] And it is referred. We're back to reports 1 through 7. Yes, Section D, mic 7.

LENORA THOMPSON (Eastern Pennsylvania): Good morning, Bishop. Bishop, I rise to ask that we be careful of the language that we use to describe anything. Even though I'm speaking for myself, I know I'm speaking for some of my colleagues sitting around me. I don't wish for us to use language describing people from the Central Conference, but no matter what the reasons we want to do. And I, we've had plenty of services, we've listened to worship, we've talked about being one in the body of Christ, and words like *illiterate*!? I'm beside myself. So I would ask that we be mindful of who we are, who we're talking to and others in this room. Thank you.

BISHOP BICKERTON: Thank you very much. I would just ask the body to listen carefully to what has just been said and let's just be in a moment of silence and reflect upon what's just been said that we might be sensitive to all of God's children today in our conversations.

(*pause, moment of silence*)

Create within us the heart of Christ today, O God, in all that we do. Bless us as we continue our

work. In the name of Christ, Amen. Thank you. Report 1 through 7 is still before you. Yes, in the back, Section D, mic 11.

KILPATRICK: Thank you, Bishop, I just want to explain if I might that

BISHOP BICKERTON: I...

KILPATRICK: the President of Liberia addressed us and reported that within her country she was struggling with a 60 percent illiteracy rate and ...

BISHOP BICKERTON: OK, I appreciate that Joe, thank you, thank you. Report 1 through 7 is before us. Are you ready to vote? Closing words, Larry?

HOMITSKY: As I mentioned previously after a lengthy discussion, longer than what's even been here, our sub-group and also our legislative committee was in full support of the work that had been done by GCF&A and also by the Connectional Table. It is a very reasonable increase and it continues to provide the type of resources needed for the ministry and mission of this great United Methodist Church.

BISHOP BICKERTON: Calendar Item 159 is before you. If you will support Calendar Item 159 will you press "1" on your keypad. If you will not support it, press "2." Vote when the clock appears. Petition 81570.

(*pause*)

[*Yes, 750; No, 28*]

You have approved the budget by a 96 percent vote: 750 for, 28 opposed. We have approved our budget!

(*applause*)

Thank you. Marilyn.

MOORE: Next we present to report 11 Directives for the Administration of the General Funds located on pp. 667 through 669 of the *Advanced Edition of the Daily Christian Advocate*. This report provides

guidance to the General Council on Finance and Administration for conducting its administrative and fiduciary responsibilities in the interim between General Conferences and directs certain aspects of the business activities involving the general funds of The United Methodist Church. The report is presented for your consideration and approval.

HOLSTON: On p. 2049, Calendar Item No. 162, Petition No. 81573, located on pp. 667 through 669 of the *Advanced Edition of the Daily Christian Advocate*. The committee recommends adoption of Report No. 11 unanimously.

BISHOP BICKERTON: Calendar Item 162 is before you. Report No. 11. If you will support it, will you show the hand? Opposed like sign. [*hand vote, approved*] And it is approved. Thank you.

MOORE: The final report is Report No. 8, Apportionment Formula, located on pp. 661 through 663 of the *Advanced Edition of the Daily Christian Advocate*. This report establishes the base percentage in the formula for the apportionment of the general funds to the annual conferences in the church. I present it for your consideration.

HOLSTON: On p. 2048 in the *DCA*, Calendar No. 160, Petition No. 81571, pp. 661 through 663 of the *Advanced Edition the Daily Christian Advocate*. I turn now to Larry Homitsky, our sub-committee chair and Don House to share our amendment to this item.

HOMITSKY: Thanks again, Jonathan, our committee reviewed the apportionment formula petition and we learned quite a bit once again at the beginning of our session that day concerning how this formula is created. It included not only the financial data, some of which Don has already shared about the patterns of our gifting, but it also involved the cultural, if you will, influences. The Dow and other items in that formula were taken into consideration. It seemed to us to be a very reasonable amount and the way

that it was approached and reached was as well very logical and reasonable. So there was a move for adoption. But then, there was an amendment that was moved as part of this formula creation. You'll see it is printed there on p. 2048 and I'm going to ask Don to help explain that formula for he was the bringer of the motion in detail. Don?

#### *Discussion of Episcopal Fund*

DONALD (DON) R. HOUSE (Texas): I'm gonna put on a different hat, my hat now is representing the Legislative Committee. Let me give you some observations that can help explain the rationale behind this amendment. You have heard some of these, but I'd like to repeat it. From 1975 to the year 2005 in the United States, membership in The United Methodist Church dropped 18.9 percent. The number of our churches decreased by 11.2 percent. The number of annual conferences decreased by 13.7 percent. The number of districts decreased by 10.1 percent. And over this period the number of active bishops *increased* 11.1 percent. We increased the number of active bishops from 46 to 50. What we're proposing is a two-step process to try to get better control of the costs of the Episcopal Fund. The first action that you adopted was the recommendation, amended, from the study of the episcopacy. There, what you addressed was the number of bishops *entitled* by each jurisdiction. In short, that is the maximum number of bishops that a jurisdiction can deploy. In the Southeast Jurisdiction, for instance, they have deployed one less than the maximum that is the number entitled. The second step is to address the incentives within a jurisdiction. That is a jurisdiction can choose the number of bishops, any number below the amount entitled or that maximum. To review the Episcopal Fund: from 1989, the 1989 to 1992 quadrennium up to the proposed budget that you just accepted—the

general church apportionments increased 63 percent over that period. 1989 to, to 2009 quadrennium. The Episcopal Fund in contrast to the 63 percent increase in the general budget increased 119 percent. The Episcopal Fund was 11 percent of the total apportionments, today it is 15 percent of the total apportionments. What we're addressing is the incentives within a jurisdiction. The way it is now apportioned, if a jurisdiction chooses to reduce the number of bishops within that jurisdiction, the decrease in apportionments are shared across all the jurisdictions. That is, the incentive is wrong. If a jurisdiction reduces the number of bishops, they don't get the savings from the reduction in the Episcopal Fund. That is untrue of local churches that choose the number of clergy that serve them. It is untrue of the annual conference that chooses the number of district superintendents to serve them. What does this legislation not do? It does not reduce funding to the Episcopal Fund, all it does is change the way in which the Episcopal Fund is apportioned. It does not change the duties of the jurisdiction. This only addresses the way the apportionments are assigned. It does not change the relationship between a bishop and the, and, and the church. It does impact central conference funding of bishops at all. What it does do, is it establishes the right incentives. If a jurisdiction chooses to reduce the number of bishops below the amount entitled, *its* apportionments will decrease by about 1.2 million so they have now the financial incentive to reduce the number of bishops below the maximum if they believe that the 1.2 million is to be deployed in other ways. If they choose not to, they don't. We recommend that you vote yes which is the recommendation of the Legislative Committee.

BISHOP BICKERTON: All right, now let me walk us through this a little bit. This is a little bit of a different situation.

Calendar Item 160 is—there—what Donna's just shared with you is not a Minority Report. It is an amen—it is to adopt the report as amended. Now, this General Conference cannot leave here tonight without having an apportionment formula; and so the way I'd like to treat this is I'd like for us to treat this as an amendment to Report No. 8. That way if it is approved, it becomes a part of Report No. 8; if it's not approved, we still have Report No. 8 before us. Does that make sense? You OK with me on that? So we're gonna treat this as an amendment, so the amendment that is before you on p. 2048, Calendar 160, is before us. Is there a speech against? Yes, section D, mic.10.

KEVIN GOODWIN (Peninsula-Delaware): Bishop, you also forgot to sign our basketball. We expect you to do that.

BISHOP BICKERTON: I'm happy to do that.

GOODWIN: If we base the Episcopal Fund based on the location of our bishop, then what's next? The MEF Fund based on seminary locations? The Black College Fund based on their locations? Such an approach could lead to the financial ruin of these schools if their jurisdictions were unable to raise those funds. I beg us not to start down the road where we start regionalizing our apportionment formulas. I vote against this aprosal. [*sic*]

BISHOP BICKERTON: All right, that's a speech against. I need a speech for. Section A, person in the green, behind the red card. You had a yellow card up? Yes, right there. Yellow card, OK, I need a green card. Did you have a question or point of order? OK, let's take a green card; and then I'll come to you. Green card. OK, let's go then to the yellow card, section A. OK. The person who just had the yellow card up, you wanna speak? Thank you. There you go. (*laugh*) Hey, get outta the way buddy; she's trying to get through.

(laughter)

Give us your name, and where are you from? (laugh)

(laughter)

MARGARET M. NOVAK (Yellowstone): Thank you.

BISHOP BICKERTON: We, we love you today. I'm sorry.

NOVAK: Thank you, page, for your faithful service. Bishop, I ask that we refer this whole matter to the Connectional Table and the Council of Bishops for the following reasons: We—

BISHOP BICKERTON: Let's get a second, first, Margaret. Is there a second?

#### *Reduction of Western Jurisdiction Bishops*

NOVAK: We in the West see our bishops not as rewards for the past but as catalysts for our future. We believe that this motion as it now stands would have a radical and harmful effect on a jurisdiction within the least-churched portion of the United States. That is, the area of the United States most ripe for disciple-making. If passed, this radically changes the ways in which our bishops will be able to function. I move to refer this so that the bishops in the Western Jurisdiction can remain as bishops of the whole church.

BISHOP BICKERTON: OK, the motion to refer is properly before us. It is debatable. Yes, section B, the person in the red, mic.1.

BETH ANN COOK (South Indiana): I just wanna make sure I'm clear. My question is—just to be clear—is it the jurisdiction's choice of whether or not to reduce? So we're not talking about anybody else telling my jurisdiction to reduce; it would have to be our jurisdictional conference.

HOMITSKY: That is correct. The jurisdiction would own the authority to reduce below the entitlement. Correct.

COOK: OK, I just wanted to make sure 'cause that would change how I would do it.

BISHOP BICKERTON: Thank you for that question. The motion to refer, I need a speech against. I have a speech for; I need a speech against. Section D, Mic.11.

CLEFTON D. VAUGHAN (Arkansas): Bishop, my sister in Christ, Margaret, and I both served on Financial Administration together. I would urge us not to refer this matter. It was fully discussed within the committee, and the proposal is one of fairness between each jurisdiction; and I would urge you to not refer.

BISHOP BICKERTON: All right. That's a speech against. I need a speech for. Section A, mic.2 or 3. I'm sorry.

ELAINE J.W. STANOVSKY (Pacific Northwest): Bishop, I'm a little—I wanna speak against it, but I also have several questions 'cause there's some things that are not clear.

BISHOP BICKERTON: Speaking for the referral?

STANOVSKY: May I ask those? For the referral—

BISHOP BICKERTON: Yes, OK.

STANOVSKY: But may I ask a couple of questions?

BISHOP BICKERTON: Yes.

STANOVSKY: Is it, is it clear what the effective date of this petition would be if it were enacted?

HOUSE : The effective date would begin in 2009.

STANOVSKY: OK.

BISHOP BICKERTON: OK?

STANOVSKY: And is it clear, with the current funding levels from each jurisdiction, how many bishops would be affordable across the jurisdictions?

#### *Financing the Episcopal Support*

HOUSE: It's a good question. It's something that we took into account. In looking at the size of the appor-

tionments to the jurisdictions, this would increase the total general church apportionments to the Western Jurisdiction by about 10 percent; but, remember, the general church apportionments to the annual conferences on average works out to be about 23 percent. So the, the annual conference impact of this in, within that jurisdiction would have an estimated maximum effect of three percent increase in apportionments to the local churches, if you follow me.

STANOVSKY: I, I don't follow at all. Can you tell me how many bishops are affordable at the current funding levels in the five jurisdictions?

HOUSE: Well, I, I don't know how to answer the question *affordable*. That really is governed by the allocation of the dollars within the jurisdiction of how much they put in leadership and how much they put in mission and ministry. So I, I'd like to answer your question, but I'm, I'm not clear on how to answer it.

STANOVSKY: You don't know how many bishops are affordable at the current funding levels by the jurisdictions?

HOUSE: Well, they're all affordable. We're funding them all.

STANOVSKY: At the current funding levels?

HOUSE: At the current funding levels. We're paying all of the salaries, all of the benefits for both the active and retired, so I'm, I'm struggling with the question.

STANOVSKY: OK.

BISHOP BICKERTON: Elaine, I'd like to—

STANOVSKY: May I, may I speak?

BISHOP BICKERTON: Yeah, you, you've—

HOUSE: Bishop?

BISHOP BICKERTON: —really, yours was a question; and I'm gonna go to someone to speak for it, just to give opportunity for everyone. Let's go back, section C, right on the aisle. Right on the aisle, mic.11, in

the purple. That's correct. In the purple, mic. 8, mic. 8.

JESSICA H. VARGO (East Ohio): I speak for the referral. Although I appreciate the intent, without seeing any financial ramifications and having an implementation date of January 1<sup>st</sup> of 2009, it is not reasonable to expect that annual conferences can adjust, adapt, respond to this kind of formula change. I think there's also other things to take a look at in terms of, for without the adjustment time, there will be many conferences that actually might experience a reduction in the amount of monies that they can pay to other general church funds. We also need to look at how this will affect the relationship between the episcopacy and the connection. I'm strongly in favor of referral.

BISHOP BICKERTON: OK, it's a speech in favor of referral. I need one more speech against. Is there a speech against referral? Yes, red card, section B, in the back, mic.5.

BISHOP BICKERTON: I need one more speech against. Is there a speech against referral? Yes, red card, section B, in the back, mic. 5.

DEBORAH A. MCLEOD (Florida): I come from the Annual Conference that pays the most into the Episcopal Fund, and we do that because we are blessed. I want to speak against referral. We pay in our jurisdiction 60 percent of the cost of central conference bishops, and we want to continue to do that. But I think that when we're talking about the jurisdictions in the United States, it's a matter of fairness that we as middle-class United States Christians predominately pay for the cost of our own bishops within our jurisdictions, and I think this has been well thought out in the committee, and I would speak against referral.

BISHOP BICKERTON: OK. We've had two speeches for and two against. We're ready to vote. Is there a question, yes? Let's go to section A, mic. 6— or 3. Mic. 3.

JACK RYDER (Northern Illinois): Thank you, Bishop. I've heard questions about the number of bishops and I'm wondering, when we talk about bishops and we talk about the costs and the Episcopal Fund, my question is retired bishops, are they...does that count by jurisdiction? And if some of our bishops have been...ultimately die, does that help that jurisdiction?

*(laughter)*

Sorry, that's a poor way to put it but...

HOUSE: It's a—

BISHOP BICKERTON: Can't wait to hear this answer.

*(laughter)*

HOUSE: It's a good point and one that we thought about; I've been working on my language too. The way I had put it was we think they all go on to glory; it just takes some a long time to get there. It is true—the driver on the Episcopal Fund is the number of bishops. In the United States we have 50 active bishops and we have almost 100 retired bishops. We have to control the costs, the rising cost of the Episcopal Fund. We have to control the number of bishops. And in terms of the apportionment, the way it would be deployed is to look at the cost of the active bishops and proportion those across the jurisdiction on the *active* bishops. We would no want to do it on the basis of retired bishops because they don't move. And that's not a subject of the choice of the jurisdiction. The point is to put it in the hands of the jurisdiction.

BISHOP BICKERTON: Very good, I'm going to take one more question or inquiry and then we're going to move to final speeches. Let's go to section B, mic. 5, right here. Yes.

STEVEN R. JONES (Virginia): I would like to amend the motion to refer. I believe the motion to refer referred this matter for study to the

CT and the Council of Bishops. I would like to offer an amendment; I think it's more appropriate that it go to the CT and GCFA.

BISHOP BICKERTON: Is there a second?

FLOOR: Second.

BISHOP BICKERTON: There is a second. You want to speak to it?

JONES: Well, GCF& A is responsible for the apportionment formula. I don't believe there is any connection of the Council of Bishops with the apportionment formulas, so I think that, properly, this is a matter to be reviewed and thought through carefully over the next quadrennium, and the appropriate people would be GCFA along with the CT.

BISHOP BICKERTON: Is there a speech against the amendment to the amendment? OK, it's accepted as a friendly amendment so we're back on the amendment. Let's go to final speeches. Don? We're going to have two today because we had two committees in front of us, so, speaking on behalf of the committee, Don, would you like some final thoughts?

HOUSE: I think in general there is some impatience about moving to the right places. Delay of four years would delay us further. The economic impact or the financial impact on the annual conferences that would be most affected is only a 3 percent increase in the apportionments to the local churches, and I believe that we need to quickly put the decision making in the hands of the jurisdictional conferences so that if, in fact, they choose to deploy their resources in other ways, that is, move money from the Episcopal Fund into mission and ministry in other ways, we need to get at it quickly.

BISHOP BICKERTON: Someone from GCFA want to speak? Bishop Davis?

BISHOP G. LINDSEY DAVIS: The change in the formula may work just fine; it may also create some problems and GCFA has not had an opportunity to evaluate the impact of

this proposed change to our apportionment formula. We've not been able to evaluate the impact that it might have on the Episcopal Fund or, more importantly, its impact upon annual conferences. It would be our position that we would like to have an opportunity to study the proposal and report back to the 2012 General Conference.

*Episcopal Finance Referred*

BISHOP BICKERTON: OK, the motion to refer to the Connectional Table and GCFA is properly before us. If you would support the motion to refer, would you press "1" on your keypad? If you're against the motion to refer, please press "2" when the clock appears. Please vote now. [*Yes, 464; No, 375*]

You have referred this item to the Connectional Table and GCFA. That means that Report No. 8 is now before us, and it's found on p. 661. Are you ready to vote? Larry, final word?

LARRY P. HOMITSKY (Western Pennsylvania): No, I believe the group has gone over much of the same material and ground that we did in the subgroup and also in the Legislative Committee. So it is properly before us, and therefore it is up to those who are voting.

BISHOP BICKERTON: All right; if you would approve Report No. 8, would you please press "1" on your keypad? If you do not approve, please press "2." Please vote when the clock appears. We have approved Report No. 8. Thank you. Jonathan? [*Yes, 770; No, 67*]

L JONATHAN HOLSTON (North Georgia): Bishop Bickerton, if I may have a moment of personal privilege.

BISHOP BICKERTON: Yes, sir.

HOLSTON: While we have miles to go in our work, I want to thank the officers of the persons that served on the Financial Administration Committee. I would ask for them to come and for you to show your appreciation. Gary George, our

vice-chair; Mary White, our secretary; our subcommittee chairs Larry Homitsky, Jim Burner, and Byrd Bonner.

*(applause)*

Bishop, we're also grateful for those persons who serve on the Financial Administration Committee, and if there are any persons who are here I'll ask for them to stand and for you to show them your courtesy as well.

*(applause)*

BISHOP BICKERTON: Very good.

HOLSTON: And we also thank the GCFA and CT for their collaborative effort together. We have done good work and we're proud of it.

*(applause)*

*Celebrating 100th Anniversary of Social Creed*

BISHOP BICKERTON: Absolutely. My friends, were right on time we're going to move to the celebration moment of the 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Social Principles. And I'll call upon those who are going to share that celebration moment.

*(pause)*

BISHOP SHAMANA: Beloved of God, this is a very special day and the life of our denomination. It is the day of celebration, where we are going to recognize the 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Social Creed of the United Methodist Church. That's an invitation to applause and rejoicing.

*(applause)*

Woo! Our Social Creed has been a strong influence in our culture since it's beginning in 1908. Our Social Creed has influenced many denominational statements of social

witness and was adopted by the Federal Council of Churches, which was the predecessor to the National Council of Churches. The Social Creed was revolutionary when it was established in 1908. It addressed the singular issue of economic justice, and out of that was birthed the 1972 Social Creed that reflects our relationship to the social, economic, political, and cultural issues of our day and the commitment of God's people to all of God's world.

*(pause)*

JAMES F. WINKLER (East Ohio): The Social Creed tradition of The United Methodist Church represents several broad streams of social concerns, embodied today, for example in the General Board of Church and Society. The original creed adopted 100 years ago expressed deep and powerful distress over the plight of poor and working people, and insistence on the rights of laborers, the need for improved working conditions; and a call for the abolition of child labor was sent forth by the General Conference. The 1908 Creed affirmed the mind of Christ as the sure remedy of all social ills. At the same time, Methodists were passionately focused on the abuse of alcohol. Efforts were geared toward outlawing the production and sale of alcohol, and this resulted in the Prohibition Amendment to the United States Constitution. While prohibition is no longer the law of the land, our church and the board continue to hold firm against the abuse of alcohol and to predatory enterprises that destroy the lives of millions upon millions of people each year. We work for a ban on the advertising of alcohol, for the maintaining of the beer tax, and to strengthen laws and regulations on alcohol. We lead workshops, seminars and training events to make our youth aware of the negative effect alcohol advertising has on children and teenagers, and we engage in prevention efforts against alcohol use.

A third stream of United Methodist social concerns is that of world peace. Ninety years ago the war to end all wars came to its conclusion. Sadly, the 20<sup>th</sup> century proved to be the bloodiest and most violent era in human history. Mr. Wesley said, “War is a horrid reproach to the Christian name, yea, to the name of man, to all reason and humanity. So long as this monster stalks uncontrolled, where is reason, humanity, virtue? They are utterly excluded.”

Each of these streams of social concerns has been joined together in a mighty river of justice. Personal and social holiness are linked in The United Methodist Church. We United Methodists have been and will continue to be present at the tables of the great movements for civil rights and for the rights of women, and for peace and environmental justice. We take seriously the scriptural mandate to care for the sojourner, the weak, the orphaned. We believe God wants us to work for a better world that it may be on the earth as it is in heaven. Let us not be mistaken; the years ahead are perilous. Global warming, the diseases of poverty, environmental degradation, religious conflict, the growing gap between the rich and the poor, and the spread of nuclear weapons threaten God’s very creation. We see, though, a future with hope. Let us do justice, love mercy, and walk humbly with God.

(pause)

KATHRYN JOHNSON: The story of the Social Creed began with discussions among five Methodist Episcopal clergymen who believed the denomination required an organization to lead it into social ministry. The five included New York urban evangelism executive Frank Mason North, Ohio Wesleyan University president and later bishop Herbert Welch, church editor Elbert Robb Zaring, Cleveland pastor Worth Tippy, and Chicago pastor Harry F.

Ward. As director of the settlement house Mr. Ward had become friends with pioneer social workers Jane Adams and Mary McDowell; later, while serving as pastor in the stockyards district, he conducted funerals for packing house workers killed in frequent factory accidents. Moved by their oppression, Mr. Ward strongly supported the workers’ drive to form a union to improve their conditions.

Inspired by the organization in England of the Wesleyan Methodist Union for Social Service, these five leaders organized a meeting in Washington, D.C. on December 3 and 4, 1907, during which the Methodist Federation for Social Service, now the Methodist Federation for Social Action, was formed. At the conclusion of this historic meeting the whole group was received at the White House by President Theodore Roosevelt and Vice-president Charles W. Fairbanks. The Methodist Federation for Social Service immediately took up the challenge of getting the 1908 General Conference to address the social crisis. The key strategy was to secure adoption of a statement on the church and social problems. The Methodist Federation leadership, especially Mr. Welch and Mr. Ward, worked closely with the General Conference Legislative Committee in writing this report. One evening, as federation leaders met in a back room of a Western Union Telegraph office, Mr. Ward suggested that the wordy report needed a succinct “what we stand for” platform to summarize its main points; so on the back of telegraph blanks Mr. Ward wrote out a list of 11 social reforms the group believed the church should champion, including the abolition of child labor and end to the sweatshop system. One-fourth of the Episcopal address to the 1908 General Conference was devoted to social issues, especially those involving child labor and the union movement.

(pause)

Finally on May 30 the 1908 General Conference in Baltimore enthusiastically adopted the entire report, including the 11-point platform of social reform composed by Harry F. Ward. Within the next eight years the original creed, or a slightly-modified version of it, was approved by The Methodist Episcopal Church South, The Methodist Protestant Church, and The United Brethren Church. During the ensuing years the creed underwent various modifications in the different branches of Methodism until the Uniting Conference of 1938 when the various versions were harmonized. By 1968 the creed had grown to the initial 11 lines to a point where it occupied eight pages of the *Discipline*. Also included in the 1968 *Discipline* was a statement of basic beliefs regarding social issues and moral standards from The Evangelical United Brethren Church. It was this latter statement that provided the framework for a major overhaul of the creed in 1972.

(pause)

BISHOP JANE ALLEN MIDDLETON: You have heard from Bishop Beverly Shamana, who is president of the General Board of Church and Society; from Jim Winkler, who is general secretary of the Board; and from Kathryn Johnson, who is executive director of the Methodist Federation of Social Action; and I am Bishop Jane Allen Middleton. I have served as a chairperson of the task force to develop a new Social Creed.

So now we come to the point of truly celebrating our action—your action—by reciting what we are now calling the Litany of the Social Creed. We will use it as well in a musical setting, and in a moment I’ll invite Grace Cajiua to lead you in that. This companion Litany for the Social Creed is a gift of witness of hope to the worldwide United Methodist Church in a variety of ways.

The proclamation of our church's commitment to the whole gospel is held together in this creedal statement. It's a reminder to us that we are highly individualistic in our relationship with God, and yet the acting out of our faith requires us to act corporately, to act in specific ways as we interact with God's creation and with those who creature that creation. This creedal statement serves as a plumb line for us in discerning God's yearning for us in our interaction with the social, economic, political, and cultural arenas of our life together as United Methodists. It unifies us with a worldwide connection as we have searched the globe among our United Methodists for a way to state what we truly believe. We've now created this statement, which is reflective of all of our concerns and all of our commitment to serve God in particular ways. And now I'd like to call upon Grace Cajiuat who has served as a member of this task force and who will lead us in a musical setting of this fine document.

GRACE CAJIUAT: Will it be on the screen? Since the beginning of the drafting we have received many entries, many settings, because people got excited about the possibility of letting this be incorporated in the worship. Then 23-year-old Carol Simpson, Director of Contemporary Ministries in a church in Glendale, submitted a musical setting and envisions this as a psalter. So today we shall experience a social creed as she envisions it. Let us stand. I will sing it once and I invite you to sing the response with me.

*(music and liturgy)*

*(applause)*

BISHOP BICKERTON: Thank you very much. You may be seated.

*(pause)*

Are you ready? It's just about time for us to adjourn. Yes, let's go over here, to mic. B. Mic. 4, section B. I'm sorry.

HARNISH: Thank you, Bishop. Jim Harnish, the chair of the committee that will welcome the 2012 General Conference to Tampa, Florida.

*(applause)*

I would move, Bishop, that the program committee for the 2012 General Conference allot no less than 75 percent of the agenda for work—for legislative work—and committee and plenary sessions, and no more than 25 percent of the agenda for worship, celebrations, presentations, and other plenary activity. And if there's a second I'll speak to it.

BISHOP BICKERTON: Is there a second? Yes?

HARNISH: I think most of us have been inspired, challenged, thrilled with the many presentations and celebrations in which we've shared, and yet when my wife asked "Has anything happened in Fort Worth that would make any difference to people in Tampa?" I realized that's the work of this conference. It is the work we do in the legislative committees and in the plenary discussions. At \$500 per minute we ought to use our time to its best advantage and put our money where our action is. I would encourage us to attempt to control the time that we use in the General Conference.

BISHOP BICKERTON: It's a speech for. Is there someone to speak against that? Yes, section A, mic. 5.

*(pause)*

MARGARET M. NOVAK (Yelowstone): In the spirit of our founder, I'd like to remind us that we need to celebrate the means of grace together and I believe that there are ways for us to adjust the way we do business here through our Commission on General Conference. I'm sure that they'll be willing to listen to our suggestions, but to bind us in this way—not to be able

to celebrate the means of grace together—is not a good idea.

BISHOP BICKERTON: Yes, question? Section B, mic. 5.

SHANE L. BISHOP (Illinois Great Rivers): Is there some ratio that we're under now so we have something with which we can compare this percentage?

BISHOP BICKERTON: Is there anyone who can address that? Gere? *(unintelligible)* Yes, the agenda chair here can speak to it. Mic. 5, thank you.

YOUNGSOOK C. KANG (Rocky Mountain): As far as I understand, the scheduled orders of the days allow us to have 75 or 74 percent of our time for Legislative Committee work and the rest has been devoted to celebrations and worship.

BISHOP BICKERTON: Thank you. Are you ready to vote on this? If you would support the motion, would you show the hand? Opposed, like sign. Let's use those keypads, folks. If you would support this motion, would you press "1" on your keypad? If you are not in support of the motion, please press "2." Please vote when the clock appears.

*(pause)*

Are we working? There we go. Let's try it now. Are you ready? When the clock appears, if you're in favor of the motion, please press "1." If you are opposed, please press "2." Please vote when the clock appears. *[Yes, 338; No 365]*

*(pause)*

BISHOP BICKERTON: And you have not approved. *[Yes, 338; No, 365]* All right. We're going to move. Let's just ask you to put your cards down. We're at the time of recess. We've got several things to go through before we can recess, so we just call your attention to those things. I need that thing right there, Gere Reist. Well, here it is. It's been sitting under wraps all week. There's

been all kinds of bids flowing, and it's been exciting to see how it's taken place. We've gotten bids from folks like the Kansas Conference for 3,600; North Texas for 4,400; Oklahoma for 8,100. Pacific Northwest, 9,500, Cal-Pac, 15,000; Tennessee Conference came in with \$22,000—Holston, I'm sorry, it says Tennessee on my paper—Holston; Central Texas, \$32,000; Greater New Jersey \$75,000; Northern Illinois, \$40,000; Western Pennsylvania, \$40,000; North Carolina and Western North Carolina 21, 2,180; and a whole host of others. Detroit at \$2,000; New England, \$2,500; a whole host at \$1,000. There is a bid for \$80,000 for this basketball. Do I hear a bid for \$80,001?

*(laughter)*

BISHOP BICKERTON: \$80,001? Hearing none, it's my pleasure to present this basketball in honor and recognition of all of what you've done this week, to the West Ohio Annual Conference with a bid of \$80,000. Bishop Ough?

*(applause)*

BISHOP BRUCE R. OUGH: What, George? *(unintelligible)* There we go, yeah. Give me that ball. *(laugh)* Dear friends, don't you love being part of a church that is becoming a global movement for the making of disciples for the transformation of the world?

*(applause)*

BISHOP OUGH: I often get asked in West Ohio, what does it mean to be a church that is a movement rather than an institution? And my standard response is that a movement is driven and empowered and guided by the Holy Spirit to reflect the justice and compassion that we just sung about. And you have been a part of the movement at this General Conference. We did not vote to do this.

*(laughter)*

BISHOP BICKERTON: That's right.

BISHOP OUGH: Did you notice that?

*(applause)*

BISHOP OUGH: Now I, I, my math's not that good; but you, you add all that up, and I think we're getting close to a half a million dollars.

BISHOP BICKERTON: I'm going to tell you what that is.

BISHOP OUGH: All right.

BISHOP BICKERTON: Mr. Gates has agreed to match your bid of \$80,000; and with Mr. Gates' match, this General Conference this week has raised \$428,030.

*(applause)*

BISHOP OUGH: That means, that means while we've been here, we have saved the lives of nearly 50,000 children in Africa and other parts around, other parts of the world that are plagued with malaria.

*(applause)*

That is a movement. Those are the winners—not West Ohio—those are the winners. Thanks be to God.

BISHOP BICKERTON: Absolutely.

*(applause)*

BISHOP BICKERTON: All right. I'll turn to Gere Reist for announcements.

FITZGERALD (GERE) REIST: There is a lost and found booth in front of Room 104; and there are many items on the table there, I'm told. So you may want to check the lost and found booth in front of 104.

UNIDENTIFIED MALE SPEAKER: Bishop, I don't think the story of the basketballs are quite over. Peninsula Delaware is asking that every conference in the Northeast Jurisdiction bring their basketball to Harrisburg in July. They seem to think you might find some use for them.

BISHOP BICKERTON:

Bring'em on. Let's do it, Northeast.

*Correction of Media Reports on Northeastern Episcopal Reduction*

REIST: And I've been asked to share with you that the Northeast Jurisdiction is not losing a bishop in both 2008 and 2012 as was mistakenly reported in some of the media. The, the reduction would take place one bishop no later than 2012, I believe, is the correct statement. Now, if you're on the com—the newly elected Commission on General Conference, please play, pay close attention. The Commission on the General Conference, as soon as the noon lunch break begins, please go to Room 201, Room 201 A and B. And if you're on the newly formed standing committee on Central Conference Matters, please go, as soon as the break begins, to Room 121, Room 121 E and F.

From the worship team: Please join us for the mi—midday Eucharist at 12:40 P.M. in the center of the arena. Bishop James Swanson Sr., presiding. The noontime concerts in the food court will feature The Festival Choir, Christ United Methodist Church, Sugarland, Texas; and Boiling Point, led by Eric Bjorklund from Minneapolis, Minnesota. That concludes my announcements.

BISHOP BICKERTON: Thank you. I mistakenly left out the Committee of Courtesies and Privileges, Rosa Washington-Olson. I'm sorry Rosa. Welcome.

ROSA WASHINGTON-OLSON (California-Nevada): Thank you, and good afternoon.

BISHOP BICKERTON: Good afternoon.

WASHINGTON-OLSON: I would like to answer a question first. Last night when I stood up and after I sat down an, and went out in the hall, I was bombarded; and people wanted to know if I was a pastor. No, I'm not. I'm an educator and a

motivation speaker who has a passion for the gospel. We have been surrounded by such a cloud of witnesses. If any of you have ever gone on the Walk to Emmaus, you know that you have an agape team. Well, we have truly had an agape team here and we still have the agape team long after we have gone home, hopefully tonight or tomorrow morning. Mr. Morrison asked that we show our appreciation for that agape team that comes in here long into the night, clean up the floor of all the stuff that we've left, clean all the mirrors in the bathroom that we splashed all the water on, the people who work at the coffee down the hall. And this afternoon, Mr. Morrison will introduce you to the people who say "I'll help you"; and so we want to, at this moment, to show our appreciation for those men and women that work so hard to keep this place clean.

BISHOP BICKERTON: Absolutely.

*(applause)*

WASHINGTON-OLSON: And lastly, there are eight people on the Committee on Courtesies and Privileges. I, I would like for them to stand. One from Bulgaria, one from the Philippines, one from Liberia, and the rest are from the United States. So would you please stand where you are so that people can thank you for working on this committee?

BISHOP BICKERTON: Thank you, thank you.

*(applause)*

That'll do it. Three things as we close. Number one, you have been absolutely amazing this morning. It is such a joy to see your faces. I'm really eager—Sally, if you're listening, I'm really eager to get home tomorrow to be with my family; but I am thrilled to be with this family. And you have been an amazing body this morning; and I thank you from the bottom of my heart for your grace, your hospitality, and your spirit of Christian conferencing. You

have embodied what it means to do good, do no harm, and stay in love with God; and I thank you for that.

Secondly, you have blessed me beyond compare with what you have done with the nets this week; and I can't let this moment pass without expressing a deep sense of thanks for what you've done. And I would give one word to this conference. A week ago I had no idea that I was going to walk to that center table until just a few minutes before I did. There is something about a movement in this church that's really special when it starts to happen. And it's not just about nets, it's about anything. We cannot plan and structure everything in this church if we're going to transform it. We have to let the Spirit move us to do things we didn't expect we were gonna do.

*(applause)*

You've been a part of that movement this week by getting involved in a bidding war, if you will; but I've sensed the Spirit in this place in significant ways, and I am very grateful for the movement of the people called United Methodists here in General Conference.

Thirdly, yesterday was a very significant moment for this General Conference as we worshiped. There was a video that we watched that put two words up on the screen. Those words were *white privilege*. I was very struck by the video, and I know that it's gonna take a whole lot more than a video for us to dismantle racism. But when I, as a white male, came to an understanding of what white privilege was—and my confession to you is I didn't come to that recognition soon enough—when I came to that recognition, I fell on my knees to confess my sin as a person who has benefited from white privilege. And I try in my ministry to be very sensitive—gender sensitive and racially sensitive.

I say that to say that behind me are two white males. There's been a three-white male team around me

today; and I wanna tell you why. Behind me are my two bishops.

Twenty-three years ago, William Boyd Grove laid his hands on my head and ordained me as an elder in The United Methodist Church. And several years ago, Bishop S. Clifton Ives provided opportunities for me to find healing and rejuvenation of my call to ministry. Behind me are my two bishops; and for this first opportunity to preside in front of this body, I just had to have my two bishops behind me as my support base. And I thank them not only for the support they've given me today but the support that they've given me every day of my ministry. I thank God for the two of you behind me.

*(applause)*

Today, yeah, one other announcement.

REIST: Because we're struggling with the calendar, would legislative chairs please meet with Susan Brumbaugh before lunch today? Legislative chairs, please meet with Susan Brumbaugh before lunch today.

BISHOP BICKERTON: And, and—

REIST: Right here.

BISHOP BICKERTON: A final word, friends. We've just gotten word earlier this morning that there have been tornadoes that have hit Arkansas, again, and also in Mississippi. Excuse me, in Missouri. And as of 11:20, we've gotten word that there are three persons who have died—no, six persons who have died in tornadoes in Hensley on Highway 365, six people injured and transported to local hospitals. There is hurt in our world today, and we need to be in the spirit of prayer as we close out this session. Now, I'm going to act spontaneously again as we close. We've been prayed for by bishops and other persons throughout this week; but I don't know that we've been prayed for by a lay person, and I have a very special friend here that I would like to ask to pray

us out the building. Pat Morris, are you here? Pat Morris is the conference treasurer of the Western Pennsylvania Conference. She is my prayer partner in Western Pennsylvania, and she's a key layperson in our church; and I'd like to ask Pat if she would pray us out the door today. Mic 10.

PATRICIA A. MORRIS (Western Pennsylvania): Please pray.

*(prayer)*

BISHOP BICKERTON: Amen. We are in recess, thank you.

### Friday Afternoon, May 2, 2008

*(music)*

BISHOP CHARLENE P. KAMMERER: Good afternoon, everyone. I'm Charlene Kammerer from the Virginia Conference, and we are now convened for the afternoon session. Please find your places. Please find your places. Assisting me this afternoon in our session will be Bishop Jack Tuell and Bishop Judith Craig, and I have asked my colleague Bishop Sudarshana Devadhar to open our session with prayer. Bishop Devadhar?

BISHOP SUDARSHANA DEVADHAR: Let us pray.

*(prayer)*

BISHOP KAMMERER: Thank you, Bishop Devadhar. Now, I turn to Alan Morrison, our business manager of the General Conference, who will recognize our Host Committee.

ALAN J. MORRISON: Today has been a day in which a number of recognitions has been done; and one of the things that you see very quickly is that while Gere Reist and I get to be the ones who have face time up front with the General Conference, the reality is there are a lot of people that work in the background to help make this event happen. And one of the significant

groups that does that are volunteers that come from the host conference where General Conference is held. And Central Texas Conference has done an outstanding job in helping us host General Conference here in Fort Worth. I'd like to welcome to the stage to re—

*(applause)*

*Bishop Chamness, Allen Goss,  
Thomas Childs Recognized*

I'd like to welcome to the stage Bishop Ben Chamness, the episcopal leader of the Central Texas Conference, as well as Allen Goss, the chair of the Host Committee, and Thomas Childs, the host operations director.

BISHOP KAMMERER: All right, thank you.

MORRISON: Let's show our appreciation.

BISHOP KAMMERER: Bishop Chamness.

BISHOP BENJAMIN CHAMNESS: In many ways this has been a great General Conference; and I could recite many reasons for that, including your wonderful spirit of holy conferencing. But this afternoon I want to call to your attention the fact that more than 2,000 volunteers have served you for the 2008 General Conference. Over 1,400 of them have been on the premises during these days, and hundreds more worked in advance to prepare for our time together. We have—

*(applause)*

Thank you. We have consumed more than 100,000 cookies that were baked and prepared by women and men in the churches of the Central Texas Conference, and it has been the intent of the local Host Committee and the volunteers to offer you gracious hospitality. If you feel that goal has been accomplished, I wish you would help me, join me now in thanking them.

*(applause)*

*(cheering)*

Standing with me are Dr. Allen Goss, who has served as the chair of the local Host Committee and who has helped to inspire and guide and direct all of these volunteers, along with Dr. Thomas Childs, who has served as the director of operations. And at this time I want to make a presentation to them as a token of our appreciation.

*(applause)*

Allen corrected me. It was 144,000 cookies.

*(laughter)*

Thank you.

BISHOP KAMMERER: Thank you so much.

MORRISON: And any of you that desire to take a box of cookies with you, there's probably some left that we can send a care package with you on your way home. Additionally, the Host Committee assisted in recruiting medical treatment for the General Conference for many of our international. That's a very important aspect, and so we also want to offer a word of thanks to Harris Methodist Hospital for the countless service that they've given us with the healthcare of our international delegates as well as U.S. delegates as well.

*(applause)*

Well, have a great end of the conference as we come through this afternoon and evening together.

*Alan Morrison Thanked for Housing Solutions*

BISHOP KAMMERER: Alan, please don't go yet. I want to make a comment on our behalf that we are aware that the housing and reservation challenges and difficulties were not of Alan's making, but the solutions to all of those problems were of his *doing*. Would you thank him for his wonderful work on our behalf.

(pause)

BISHOP KAMMERER: All right, friends, as you know, we have a full agenda; and we are scheduled for a celebration moment somewhere around 3:30. We are going to continue calendar items. I'm not yet—I'm not going to recognize any yellow cards at this time. Let's keep moving with the scheduled agenda here, and we are at Church and Society II, continuing their report. And I will ask the chair, Frederick Brewington, to come to the platform and direct us about where we are. Thank you.

FREDERICK BREWINGTON (New York): Good afternoon. Oh, we've had lunch, haven't we? Good afternoon. As we continue our work, Bishop, I want to thank the bishops and everyone here on the platform for making our job much easier and providing us with the information that was necessary for us to be able to go forward and do it in an efficient way.

*Religious Coalition for Reproductive Choice*

Bishop, the next item is Calendar No. 1342. It is found on p. 2457 of the *DCA*, and this item refers to Petition No. 80727. It can be found in the advanced edition of the *DCA* on p. 393. Bishop, the committee recommends to adopt Calendar Item 1342, and the rationale: The committee recommended to the General Conference that the members should retain the Resolution No. 114 to continue our membership in the Religious Coalition for Reproductive Choice with whom we have been in relation for 35 years. Our membership is one that has served us well in this coalition and has served us well year in and year out. The General Board of Church and Society, the Women's Division, continue to work on our behalf as members of this coalition that includes the Episcopal Church, Presbyterian, United, the Presbyterian Church, United Church of Christ, the Lutheran Church, the

Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), the Church of the Brethren, and the American Baptist Church. Bishop, at this time, we recommend the continuation of our membership in this coalition and the continuation of this Resolution No. 114. There is a Minority Report on this, Bishop; and at this time, with your permission, let me introduce who is going to present the Minority Report, that is, Marget Sikes, who is the vice chair of Church and Society II.

BISHOP KAMMERER: All right, we will now have the Minority Report; and following the Minority Report presentation, we will then go back and perfect the Majority, then work on the Minority and return to the petition as it is. Yes.

MARGET H. SIKES (North Georgia): Thank you, Bishop. Hey, y'all. I am Marget Sikes. I am a lay delegate from North Georgia. I am also the current secretary of the General Board of Church and Society. I bring that to your attention because I want you to know that I have worked around this issue for the last eight years and also to highlight the fact that even faithful board members disagree around some of these issues.

I'd like to give you the rationale for our Minority Report. The argument in our legislative committee against withdrawal from RCRC centered around whether or not it is factual that this organization supports types of abortion that our United Methodist Church rejects. A brief look at the RCRC's own material gives ample factual data that they do, in fact, support and advocate for all types of abortion. RCRC's president and CEO, Rev. Carlton Veasey, wrote in response to the Supreme Court's ruling last year upholding a partial birth abortion ban, and I quote: "Now the thing we've most feared has happened. The Supreme Court turned back the clock on women's health and upheld an abortion procedure's ban." There is good work done by RCRC, but there is also work that is in direct conflict

with our United Methodist position. This advocacy work for all types of abortion is troubling if not offensive to some with whom we seek relationship. Please note in this Minority Report, that the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America rejected formal affiliation with RCRC. The second argument against withdrawal from RCRC was the need to be at the table in coalition work. The Minority Report gives us the opportunity to be at that table while not lending our name to activity that is in direct contradiction to our stand on the sanctity of human life. I urge you to adopt the Minority Report.

BISHOP KAMMERER: All right, that's a presentation for the Minority Report. We'll come back to the Majority. Is there anyone who wishes to speak to the Majority Report? Yes, right here, mic 3. We're perfecting the Majority. We're taking amendments. We are not speaking yet for the Majority Report. Only if you have amendments. Only if there are amendments; that's the perfecting process. All right, we'll move on to the Minority. Are there any amendments, any perfecting you wish to do? Yes, Section D, mic 10.

KIMBERLY (KIM) HICKS WRIGHT (Western North Carolina): Thank you, Bishop. We are on the Minority Report, correct?

BISHOP KAMMERER: We are amending it. We are not speaking for the minority. Only if you have an amendment. Do you have an amendment?

WRIGHT: I do have an amend.

BISHOP KAMMERER: All right.

WRIGHT: On p. 2458, yes, right after "Ministries to" on the third line. We would like to replace "seek, an observer status with," replace those wo—that wording with "withdraw all affiliation and support of the Religious Coalition for Reproductive Choice." Strike the rest of that line, and leave the next paragraph.

BISHOP KAMMERER: All right, could you clarify for the body which

column when you said “the third line.”

WRIGHT: It’s the first column.

BISHOP KAMMERER: Thank you. All right, is there a second? It’s been seconded, you may speak to it. Excuse me for a moment. I just want to remind the body that by your ruling we are under two speeches for and against, including the amendments, with a one-minute total. Thank you. You may proceed.

WRIGHT: Thank you, Bishop. One of the first things that I learned in marketing in school was the significance and importance of name association. It’s, it’s really important and it’s—The United Methodist Church’s name and our symbol is recognized around the world. We’re currently listed on all of the literature and on the website, which would imply that we support forms of abortion. This organization advocates the choice to abort an unborn child for any reason and at any time. This is incompatible with our Social Principle, so I would ask us to withdraw from RCRC. Thank you, Bishop.

BISHOP KAMMERER: All right, we’ve had a request for any of us in the body, if you are pointing to a p. no., in this case please use the thousand reference, 2458, just for translation purposes. And we thank you. All right, anyone wish to speak against the amendment? Yes, Section D, mic 11.

ODETTE LOCKWOOD-STEWART (California-Nevada): Bishop, I’m speaking against the amendment? So I would like to speak against the amendment—this is a question—against the amendment and the Minority Report?

BISHOP KAMMERER: You can only speak to the amendment at this point.

LOCKWOOD-STEWART: OK, then I’ll hold. Thank you.

BISHOP KAMMERER: All right, another speech against, mic 3, please. That was a question at mic 11. I will receive that as a question. Mic 3.

TRACY SMITH MALONE (Northern Illinois): It has already been stated that RCRC is pro-choice and not pro-abortion. I think the record ought to reflect that they do communicate the grave moral nature of abortion; but they do not at any time advocate for abortion. But it does support women and men making their own faithful decisions about family matters. I think it’s very important for The United Methodist Church to stay at the interfaith table of the Religious Coalition for Reproductive Choice so that our Social Principles can inform other denominations. We can help bring understanding and benefit to our Social Principles about comprehensive issues. We need to stay at the table.

BISHOP KAMMERER: All right, that’s a speech against the amendment. Does anyone else wish to speak? Yes, Section D. Are you speaking for? Mic 11, this is a yellow card, are speaking for the amendment?

ERNESTO CONTRERAS (Mexico): No, I just want to give a piece of information from Mexico. Is that enough?

BISHOP KAMMERER: I do not believe that would be appropriate. All right, does anyone else wish to speak to the amendment? Yes, Section D, mic 11.

JUDITH (JJ) J. WHITNEY (Arkansas): I would like to speak against the amendment. This organization was founded by The United Methodist Church, and I think that we should really investigate our participation in that. The RCRC, I’ve done a lot of research, I’ve gotten a lot of information, as all of you have—trees worth of information. And so I did some research of my own. RCRC does not support abortion for gender selection. It does not support abortion for birth control. It provides a lot of education opportunities for our African American and Latino churches, for our youth. Over 30,000 youth have been helped by this program.

BISHOP KAMMERER: Please sum up now. Please sum up.

WHITNEY: So I urge you, I urge you to not support this amendment. Thank you.

BISHOP KAMMERER: All right, that’s your second speech against the amendment. Section A, mic 3. I saw the green card.

ANDREAS ELFVING (Finland-Swedish Provisional): I would like to speak for this amendment. The issue of abortion in the United States is one that is very deeply divided between two extreme camps. We have the pro-choice ditch that doesn’t want to see any legal restrictions on why abortions may be performed, and the pro-life ditch that doesn’t want to allow any abortions for any reasons whatsoever. Placed in the middle of this, we have the United Methodist position, which is one of great wisdom. Now, it is clear that RCRC advocates against legal restrictions on abortion; and that is not our position. We do not think it is proper for abortions to be performed in all circumstances. That should be clear for—

BISHOP KAMMERER: All right, please sum up.

ELFVING: —anybody who can read our Social Principles, so I cannot see how you can advocate a membership in RCRC at the same time support our Social Principles faithfully. Thank you.

BISHOP KAMMERER: All right, thank you. All right, we’re ready now for the Minority chair to speak. Marget, if you would like to have a comment before we take the vote on the amendment. You may speak to the amendment if you choose. She is declining. The Majority chair, would you like to speak?

UNIDENTIFIED MALE SPEAKER: Not on the amendment, thank you.

BISHOP KAMMERER: All right. All right, the amendment is before you. Are you ready to vote? Please wake up the keypads by pushing any number. And you will press “1” for a

yes to the amendment, and press “2” for a no. Please vote when the clock appears.

(pause)

BISHOP KAMMERER: The amendment does not prevail. [*Yes, 251; No, 472*] All right, we’re back to the main motion, perfecting the Minority Report. Are you perfecting the Minority Report, sir, with the yellow card? Mic 2, mic 2.

WILL L. GARRETT (North Alabama): Bishop, is it appropriate to ask to move to suspend the rules for the purposes of debate to one speech for and one speech against, limited to one minute per speech for the remainder of the day?

BISHOP KAMMERER: Yes, that’s in order.

GARRETT: I so move.

BISHOP KAMMERER: First, we have to suspend the rules for that purpose. You’ve heard the reason, and this will require a two-thirds majority. So there’s no debate. If you will suspend the rules for the purpose stated, you will press “1”; if you do not, press “2.” Please vote when the clock appears.

(pause)

BISHOP KAMMERER: The rules are not suspended. [*Yes, 429; No, 309*] I would like to remind the speakers to please repeat your names. I know we’re all tired and in a hurry; but as you come to the mic, please repeat your name a second time. Thank you. All right, we’re back to the perfecting process. Does anyone wish to speak? We’re perfecting the Minority. All right, now, you may debate. Does anyone wish to speak to the Minority Report? Yes, Section B, mic 1.

BETH ANN COOK (South Indiana): I rise to speak in favor of the Minority Report. South Indiana is one of the five annual conferences that submitted the request for us to withdraw from RCRC. Our discussion centered around the fact that

RCRC does promote levels of abortion, types of abortion, that our Social Principles do not support. I’m not sure of the factual information on the one about gender selection; but I personally got a lobbying call asking me to vote against it, and she would not say that gender selection abortion was wrong. And I told her that as a woman and a feminist, I found that to be the highest form of sexism, to say that a girl child might not have the right to exist just ‘cause she’s a girl.

BISHOP KAMMERER: Please sum up.

COOK: But I do appreciate our nuanced position, so I think this is a good alternative.

BISHOP KAMMERER: All right. And earlier, I had signaled to the person at mic 11 that at this point in the debate she could speak. Mic 11.

LOCKWOOD-STEWART: Thank you, Bishop. I speak in opposition of the Minority Report and support of the Majority Report. Our be—presence at the table is essential. RCRC does not promote all forms of abortion, nor do the other partners, the Episcopal Church, the Presbyterian Church, and many other religious bodies there. Our *Discipline* in Paragraph 161J has a long and complex statement about abortion; and it ends, “Therefore, a decision concerning abortion should be made only after thoughtful and prayerful consideration by the parties involved with medical, pastoral, and other appropriate counsel.” That counsel done in an interfaith context is essential; and I pray humbly that people will listen to voices that they might not consider are guiding them in their votes, to vote against the Minority Report and in support of the Majority.

BISHOP KAMMERER: All right, you’ve had one speech for and one against. Section D, mic 11.

LYN A. POWELL (North Georgia): Thank you, Bishop. I rise to speak for the Minority Report. As all of us know, our Social Principles

clearly stand against abortion as a means of birth control. On the RCRC website is a list of coalition churches, churches that take no declarative stand against abortion for birth control. The silence of the churches on this issue implies tacit support. And so The United Methodist Church is listed and affiliated through the RCRC with churches that, for example, affirm abortion as “a stewardship responsibility.” Other churches on their list support partial-birth abortions, which, of course, we do not. By the way, the RCRC was not founded by The United Methodist Church; it was founded by a caucus of United Methodist individuals.

BISHOP KAMMERER: Please sum up now.

POWELL: Moving to the end, Bishop, I believe that it is important to—if I may have one more sentence—I believe that it is an important for us to stay at the table in an observer status only—that’s very important for us; but I do urge the body to have a cease listing The United Methodist Church as a member of this organization. Thank you.

BISHOP KAMMERER: All right, you’ve now had two speeches for the Minority, one against, so I’ll recognize a red card. In Section C in the far back, far back, mic 12.

(pause)

KAE E. TRITLE (Iowa): As a health professional who has worked in women’s reproductive health, I have found that my witness as a United Methodist supporting the Social Principles, I have made more of a difference working within these types of organizations. I can help women with their values clarification in looking at what they really believe and what they really would desire for both them and their unborn child. Thank you.

BISHOP KAMMERER: All right, friends. We’ve now had two speeches for and against. We’re going to be ready to vote; but first

we will have the Minority chair to respond, and then the Majority chair Report to respond before we take the vote. Marget?

SIKES: Thank you, Bishop. In their own literature, RCRC considers abortion as birth control or for gender selection to be anti-choice rhetoric that should be avoided. Multiple petitions to this General Conference call for our withdrawal from RCRC altogether. There is value in continuing the relationship and dialogue between our agencies and RCRC, which is why the Minority Report calls for us to have observer status. It is my prayer that this will provide a grace-filled place for those in various places on this divisive issue and on RCRC's advocacy work to gather. It will also provide a more faithful witness to our balanced United Methodist stand on abortion, and so I urge you to support the Minority Report.

BISHOP KAMMERER: All right, and Frederick?

FREDERICK K. BREWINGTON (New York): Thank you, Bishop. It appears that the entire argument is a—around the issue of abortion; but, let me start by saying that the evan—evangelical church did not leave because of, of RCRC's position; they left because the issue of abortion was not on their radar screen at the time that they left.

The membership in RCRC allows us to be—and that being full membership—allows us to be at the table to engage in the debate and, in fact, be a leader. Our Social Principles are ones that allow us to talk about sex—sexual education, responsible parenthood, reproductive health, and others. The claims of abortion for gender selection, as a means of birth control, or use as a form of abortion are just not accurate as to what RCRC is about. If that were the case, our ability to affect the dialogue...we would be clearly in contrast to what our Social Principles are. That is not the case. The case is that *because* we are at the table we are able to affect and engage indi-

viduals and make a difference for people that are in real need of these type of services. I encourage you to allow our continuation and vote against the Minority Report.

BISHOP KAMMERER: All right, now we are at the Minority Report. You will either vote yes by pressing "1" for the Minority Report or no by pressing "2." Please vote when the clock appears. You have not sustained the Minority Report, so the Majority Report is now before you. [*Yes, 374; 413, No*]

Does anyone wish to speak? Section C, in the front here, please. Yes, the gentleman in the suit coat. Mic. 8.

JULIUS C. TRIMBLE (East Ohio): I stand before you as a pastor of an African American church in the city of Cleveland, Ohio, United States. While much of the discussion has centered around abortion, very little discussion speaks to the many other programs that have benefited many churches in South Africa and in the United States. One program, Keeping It Real, which addresses the HIV/AIDS pandemic, has been a tremendous benefit to our communities and churches. RCRC is not just about the issue that we've talked about. Too often, we vote on things and do not anticipate the unintended consequences of leaving—

BISHOP KAMMERER: All right. Please sum up.

TRIMBLE: —the ecumenical table. I support the recommendation of the majority.

BISHOP KAMMERER: All right. Section 3, right here, sir. The person with the card, Yes, you. Mic. 3; or you're coming to mic. 5.

LEWIS F. TIBBITS (Detroit): I speak in opposition to the main motion. I was a camp director for 27 for The United Methodist Church. I heard a lot of songs sung by the kids, kids that I deeply loved: "Jesus Loves the Little Children, All the Children of the World," "Jesus Loves Me." We raised almost a half a million dollars to help against

malaria. I feel that life is a gift from God no matter if it's a fetus or it's a born baby. I think we are wrong in feeling that it is an option no matter what the case is for us to have the abortions.

BISHOP KAMMERER: Please sum up quickly.

TIBBITS: I speak against it.

BISHOP KAMMERER: Thank you. All right. In the section D, the woman standing in the pink sweater. The woman standing, yes. Mic. 11.

LANA L. ROSS (Iowa): There's another component of service that RCRC provides that we've yet to talk about, and that is our training for clergy. It gives our leaders of our denomination skills, knowledge, and ability to help women and families make difficult decisions about a woman's health. These conversations are difficult, and I am so grateful that The United Methodist Church is part of RCRC so our clergy can gain the knowledge of facilitating that conversation with people who need to have that, and I am so grateful that our faith community can help them during this difficult time. Thank you.

BISHOP KAMMERER: All right. We have two speeches for the majority and one against; so we may have one against, if someone chooses to speak. Does someone wish to speak for? You're holding up a yellow card. Yes, I see the green card in section B. Again, yes. Pardon me. I need to turn...no, I'm sorry. You may be seated. I need to turn to section...I think it's section C, mic....the person standing, mic. 9.

GINGER JONES HOLLAND (Mississippi): How can I go home and tell my congregations that The United Methodist Church has supported an organization that does promote abortion? And not only that, but it also is not in line with our principles of celibacy in singleness and fidelity in marriage. The materials that I have read are not in line with our understandings. I would wholly encourage us to defeat this

report. We cannot align ourselves as a denomination with a group that is against our principles.

BISHOP KAMMERER: All right. You've now had two speeches for and two against the Majority Report. We will turn to the... Frederick, if you would like to make a—

BREWINGTON: Thank you, Bishop.

BISHOP KAMMERER: —final comment?

BREWINGTON: Our relationship with RCRC has been 35 years in the making. RCRC works to educate youth and adults about issues of abstinence—making responsible behavior a part of what they do and making wise decisions. As a member of the Coalition, we do not automatically adopt anyone else's position but push our position as are clearly stated in the Social Principles and have done that for the 35-year history. The relationship that exists is one where we have the opportunity to use those resources. The fact that we have talked about the importance of pastoral care and guidance is because of our relationship with RCRC that gives us resources to allow members of our congregations to make wise decisions where there is relevant and important information provided to our clergy. Thank you, Bishop.

BISHOP KAMMERER: All right. We're now ready to vote. You are voting on the main motion, which is the Majority Report. If you vote for it, you will press "1" for yes; if you vote against it, you would press "2" for no. Please vote when the clock appears. [*Yes, 416; No, 384*]

(pause)

BISHOP KAMMERER: You have sustained the Majority Report. Now, we have several other items coming from Church and Society 2. If you'll proceed to the next petition number.

BREWINGTON: Yes, Bishop, the next three are three rejections that deal with the very same issue; and

we've been asked to consider them as a bundle. I'd like to present them as a bundle for one vote.

BISHOP KAMMERER: All right, let's try that. That certainly is in order. If you will present the information for the delegates, please, particularly giving attention to the place they can find these.

BREWINGTON: Yes, these are Calendar Nos. 1187, 1188, 1189. They all can be found in the *DCA* on p. 2267. They are petition Nos. in order: 81453, 80179, and 80033. They are found on different pages in the *Advance DCA*. The first found at p. 433, the second at p. 393, and the third at p. 4, excuse me, 348, 348. As to each of these petitions, the majority of the committee recommended that they be rejected; and rather than read the rationale for each, Bishop, I'll just read one rationale dealing with the first.

BISHOP KAMMERER: All right.

BREWINGTON: That was Petition No.—Calendar No., excuse me—1187, Petition No. 81453. Each of these were sought to be rejected, but the rationale for this one was the committee saw this petition as being as inflammatory as others that were presented. This petition made a statement that the RCRC supports in *any and all circumstances* regarding abortion. We found that not to be supported, even though it was debated within the committee. It also states or insinuates that the RCRC supports abortion as a form of birth control. The committee was told that that was not accurate. Finally, while there were a number of other clear inaccuracies, this petition did not discuss the benefits we gain by being at the table through RCRC in the entire issue, discussion, and discernment. Each of the other petitions had similar views taken by the majority, and the request by the committee was that they each be rejected.

BISHOP KAMMERER: All right, now it's been recommended by the committee that we consider these as a bundle. That means that when we vote, we are voting on Calendar

Items 1187, 1188, and 1189. Remember you are voting on the petition as you heard referenced in the report. All right? Question at section B here. Come to mic. 5.

STEPHEN P. WENDE (Texas): This is a question for the presenter because trying to talk with us... can we assume that we are at the table in pro-life groups? Also, are these different groups? Because, the way you're talking about us being at the table here, I'm really not against—I'm trying to understand the rationale being given. Are we at the table of all the other groups involved in this conversation?

BISHOP KAMMERER: Sir, I believe you're making a speech.

WENDE: OK, sorry.

BISHOP KAMMERER: I would ask the chair in his summarizing remarks to consider responding to that.

WENDE: That would be great, thank you.

BISHOP KAMMERER: You are making a speech. You are not asking a question. Yes, in section C, the yellow card, section C, the woman standing, going to mic. 11, I believe, or 8, whichever is closer to you. Mic. 8.

EVELYN R. MCDONALD (New York): A point of clarity because I am genuinely confused. We already voted to support our membership at the table. How can we revote the same issue again?

BISHOP KAMMERER: We're not revoting the issue. We're calling for separate petition items.

MCDONALD: The petitions are addressing the same issue of membership at the table, at RCRC.

BREWINGTON: Bishop?

BISHOP KAMMERER: All right, yes, mic. 3, section A. All right, let's try mic. 3. I apologize to the body.

ANDREAS ELFVING (Finland-Swedish Provisional): Thank you. I'm waving a green card so I guess I'm speaking in favor of these petitions.

BISHOP KAMMERER: Yes.

ELFVING: In the rest of the world or in many countries in the world we have laws regarding abortion, so we do have that in Scandanavia as well. We also have abortion rates far lower than the United States. Abortions are not impossible to get or hard and I don't think anyone can argue that we are against women's rights in Scandanavia. In the United States you have a Supreme Court ruling that in effect makes it impossible to pass any sensible laws regarding abortion. That's what our church should be pushing for, not being involved in an organization that lobbies to keep this insane situation the way it is. Please support these abortions, please support these petitions, and let's get some sanity in this debate. Thank you.

BISHOP KAMMERER: Well, sir, I believe that is a speech against, actually.

ELFVING: It's a speech for these petitions.

BISHOP KAMMERER: It's a speech....

ELFVING: I'm in favor of the petitions listed on the screen.

BISHOP KAMMERER: Yes, OK. It's a speech for the petitions listed on the screen and against the committee's recommendation. All right, yes, section C, mic. 9.

TARA THRONSON (Southwest Texas): I would like to reiterate the point that being a member of RCRC does not mean that we must share all of their points of view on abortion and to reiterate that it does give us an opportunity to engage in discussion and be part of influencing others. But most importantly, it's an opportunity to educate women about abortions and hopefully prevent ever being in a situation where one would be required. Sex education so they protect from the beginning and never get in that situation is primary.

BISHOP KAMMERER: Please sum up.

THRONSON: Thank you.

BISHOP KAMMERER: OK,

thank you. All right, that is a speech...it's a speech against the petitions. All right, section B. Yes, sir, mic. 2

KARL BAUMGARDNER (Northwest Texas): Last year when the U.S. Supreme Court ruled that the partial birth abortion ban was constitutional, RCRC publicly came out and criticized that decision. In fact, one of the Board of Directors of RCRC was the named plaintiff trying to get that law overturned.

The law was in line with our *Discipline* and RCRC does not agree with any kind of partial birth abortion ban. So I think we should vote in favor of these petitions.

BISHOP KAMMERER: All right, that was the second speech for the petitions. I see a card, no. 12, in section D, mic. 12.

PHILIP H. CARVER (Iowa): Thank you, Bishop. Bishop and members of the conference, I understand this to be a procedural motion and to vote to adopt would contradict the previous action; so I support rejection.

BISHOP KAMMERER: All right, that's your comment. All right. Now what is before us are the Calendar Items 1187, 1188, 1189. You may speak briefly, Fred, before we take the vote.

BREWINGTON: Thank you, Bishop. Each of these petitions make statements that are alleged facts that were unsupported. The reason why the committee made their decision as they did was because they drew conclusions without even attempting to substantiate them. The information provided to the committee by Bishop Shamana disputed what is written in the rationales of at least two of these petitions. The determination to reject them by the committee was to bring to this body the one that you have already voted on so that we would not have bad language going into our written documents that we would surely regret later on. I would urge you to support the committee's position and reject these petitions.

*Vote on RCRC*

BISHOP KAMMERER: If you support the petitions, you would press "1"; if you do not support the petitions, you would press "2." The committee does not support the petitions. Please vote when the clock appears. [*Yes, 300; No, 484*]

*(pause)*

They are not supported. Now, friends, we are going to a celebration moment. First of all, are we finished with Church and Society 2, does this complete? For now, all right, we won't thank you finally yet. Thank you for your hard work. And now we're going to turn to a celebration moment for the whole conference. Following that, we will take a brief break and I'll instruct you on the time, but let's enjoy the celebration moment.

BISHOP GREGORY VAUGHN PALMER: Christ our Lord invites to his table all who love him, who earnestly repent of their sin, and seek to live in peace with one another.

BISHOP SHARON BROWN CHRISTOPHER: My brothers and sisters, we have been gathered in connection for eight days, since our opening conversation about a future in which The United Methodist Church may answer Jesus' call to set God's table of grace so all may have a seat and all may be invited to the feast.

BISHOP PALMER: In the midst of the world's hunger pangs we gathered here and connected around the world as the church of Jesus Christ, The United Methodist Church, seeking to pattern our relationships not on the divisive ways of the world, but on the way of Jesus Christ, the Prince of Peace, the harbinger of hope.

BISHOP CHRISTOPHER: In these past days we have poured out our hearts in expression of our love for God, neighbor, and the church. We have talked and shared. We have

sung and we have prayed. We have celebrated our commonalities, and as before—and as we will again—we have witnessed the passion of our differences.

**BISHOP PALMER:** For the sake of our opinions, let us not destroy the work of God. Do you love and serve God? It is enough.

**BISHOP CHRISTOPHER:** Through General Conference we live out our charge as United Methodists. John Wesley taught us that from holy conferencing grace flows. While we recognize our differences, let us focus on General Conference in which we began to discern God's will that we share with the world the hope that we know in Jesus Christ.

*(video presentation)*

*(Summary of the 2008 General Conference)*

*Review of 2008 General Conference*

**BISHOP PALMER:** It is right and a good and joyful thing always and everywhere to give thanks to you, Almighty God, Creator of heaven and earth.

**BISHOP GREGORY VAUGHN PALMER:** It is right and a good and joyful thing always and everywhere to give thanks to you Almighty God, Creator of heaven and earth.

**BISHOP CHRISTOPHER:** And so we go forth at the end of this day; we hope we find hope in following three simple rules: Do no harm, do good, and stay in love with God. These three simple rules hold the momentum of our 21<sup>st</sup>-century Wesleyan movement toward a world transformed by United Methodist Church being transformed by the grace of God. So what do we do and say as we leave this place? When a stranger on your flight home or the members of your congregation ask you about General Conference, what will you say? From this day forward who will you tell them is The United Methodist Church? I offer you this. Tell them we are one diverse body

committed to answering Jesus' call to feed the physically, mentally, and spiritually hungry of our world.

**BISHOP PALMER:** May the people exclaim, "I want to live the Jesus way, the Christian way, even the United Methodist way." For in that way is hope.

**BISHOP CHRISTOPHER:** Tell them that in the midst of the world's desperation you are embracing Four areas of Focus with your United Methodist brothers and sisters at the far reaches of God's earth. Tell them that we are a people who serve a God who does great things, and that we are following Jesus by leading God's transformation and reconciliation in the world by spreading the gospel and bettering the human condition.

**BISHOP PALMER:** "I tell you the truth," Jesus said, "when you were younger you dressed yourself and went where you wanted. But when you are old you will stretch out your hands and someone else will dress you and lead you where you do not want to go." Then Jesus said, "Follow Me."

**BISHOP CHRISTOPHER:** Listen to our young people. It's about interaction. It's about the call to follow Christ. Are we ready? Are we ready to set God's table of grace so that the physically, mentally, and spiritually hungry of the world may feast on the bread of life? Are we ready to be the cup overflowing? I for one believe that we are. I believe that now is our time to be the church of Jesus Christ.

**BISHOP PALMER:** By your spirit make us one with Christ, one with each other, and one in ministry to all the world until Christ comes in final victory and we feast at his heavenly banquet. Pray with us.

*(prayer)*

**BISHOP CHARLENE P. KAMMERER:** Thank you bishops Christopher and Palmer, we are grateful for this closing celebration moment. And friends, it's going to

be a very long evening. You deserve a break. We will gather back here in just a minute or two before 4 o'clock. Enjoy your break.

*(pause)*

*Unauthorized Appearance on Stage*

**UNIDENTIFIED FEMALE SPEAKER:** Hi! Could I have your attention before anyone leaves? If you could stay in your aisle and push in your chair, I have something very special that I would really like to share with you.

*(unintelligible)*

**BISHOP KAMMERER:** Welcome back. Please find your places.

*(pause)*

All right, please take your seat, please take your seat. All right, friends, we need to go ahead with some announcements here, and so I'm going to ask that you remain quiet even as you are moving to your seats, and this will help us as we reconvene. Thank you. I'm going to ask Gere Reist to share with us a very urgent and important matter and hopefully someone in the body can help us. Gere?

**FITZGERALD (GERE) REIST:** There are many look-alike bags, General Conference bags. The Lazarus Filiya's bag has been taken and it contains his passport and other items. Please, please, please check your bags to make sure you have not mistakenly picked up the wrong bag, and please return it to this platform immediately if you find it, so that Lazarus can be put at ease and so we can move forward in his necessity. Thank you.

*Unauthorized Appearance Explained*

**BISHOP KAMMERER:** I hope everyone heard that; so, if you see the bag or have the bag by mistake,

please bring it forward very quickly so that we can help assuage that anxiety. Now friends, we have 55 calendar items left.

Before we moved to the break, a young woman came to mic. here and she had begun speaking to the body and I wanted you to know that I explained to her what was happening procedurally and why we could not simply permit her to have the floor at that point. Is she in the house right now? Someone from the Troy delegation. All right, I believe it was a personal request from this young woman who wanted have—to sing a song and to have music played. This has been arranged by our music planners for following dinner, just as anyone who would like to enjoy that as you're coming back from this evening, but I did want you to know that I had spoken with her and tried to find out what she needed and wanted. So now, friends, there are yellow cards but I've explained, as Bishop Bickerton did this morning, we're not considering matters of privilege at this point. We have a long way to go, so we're moving ahead to continuing reports from General Administration. The chair is Carl Frazier. Please come and present the report.

*Inclusiveness of Attendance and Membership*

ROBERT (CARL) FRAZIER JR. (North Carolina): Thank you, Bishop. We have a constitutional amendment for you. It is on p. 2050, 2050 of the DCA; Item No. 175. It refers to Petition 81157, which is on p. 954 of the DCA. The committee is recommending adoption of the petition, and we've asked Renae Extrum-Fernandez, who chaired the subcommittee dealing with that matter, to share the committee's rationale.

BISHOP KAMMERER: All right, thank you.

RENAE EXTRUM-FERNANDEZ (California-Nevada): Good afternoon, Bishop. Sisters and brothers, it is my privilege to share with you not only our rationale, but

more importantly, the heart that Christ gave us to draw the circle wider in the welcome of our church. I hope that you have felt it. A fresh breeze blowing over, around, and among us. Not to be confused with the air-conditioning.

*(laughter)*

I know you felt *that*. I mean the Spirit stirring hearts to press forward on our journey to truly open doors in a worldwide church. Our subcommittee pondered two pathways before us. Path one: Continue to add to the growing list of God's children who remain vulnerable to our proclivity toward prejudice. Or path two: Simply draw the circle God has drawn around the invitation to beloved community.

John the Evangelist tells us that Jesus stood in the center of the great city of Jerusalem and lifted his voice and cried out, "Let all those who thirst, come to me and drink." When Jesus said "all," he meant all. So must we. The petition states, "All persons who seek relationship in Jesus Christ are eligible," so we chose to adopt Petition 81157 to call our church, to claim here, in the very heart of the articles of our constitution, that there is a wideness in God's mercy that defies the limitations of our human welcome. One small glitch I must report to you. We realized too late that the syntax, the ordering of phrases and even the sentences themselves, creates meaning that we do not intend, and I understand that a member of our subcommittee will be offering an amendment to address that. I would also like the house to know that we also shared concerns and considered concerns that particular individuals posed serious challenges to us in Christian community, persons such as registered sex offenders, or those who suffer from untreated mental illness, but we are confident that there are means available to help us meet those challenges. So, nevertheless, we affirm the wideness of

God's invitation to abundant life in Jesus Christ, and we invite you to join us in that affirmation by adopting this petition.

BISHOP KAMMERER: All right, the petition is before you. Yes, mic. 9. I see the red card.

MIKE F. CHILDS (Mississippi): I think all of us agree that the gospel's offered to everyone, and everyone is welcome, and I want everyone to come to my church and hear the gospel, but church membership is more than just a social club. And Jesus said, "Except you take up your cross and follow me, you cannot be my disciple." And for us to make church membership meaningless and the vows of membership meaningless would be a great, great mistake. Churches grow that have high expectations, and one of things in our church vows is repentance, turning from all wickedness, and repentance with the heart. If we do not uphold those vows, and the pastor uphold his responsibility to explain those vows and evaluate the readiness of membership as we've already voted, then it would be a tragic thing. It would make church membership absolutely meaningless and worthless, so I urge you to vote against this.

BISHOP KAMMERER: That's a speech against. Yes, right here in section A, the green card. Section A, please. Mic. 5.

JOSHUA T. DAVIES (Rocky Mountain): When I started about two years ago, I wanted to get back into general church politics because of the decision of the Judicial Council. So, I did what all good people do who watch Saturday morning TV: I followed that little "bill," only it was a petition. So I wrote a petition, I brought it to my church council, we amended it, we passed it, we brought it on to our annual conference; we passed it there. I came here to General Conference, I got in the committee that was discussing it. I got on the subcommittee that was discussing it because I was gonna make sure we passed it. And then something funny happened. When I

was in my legislative committee I actually started listening. I listened to Rev. James Karblee from Liberia and our friends from Uganda. I listened around that room and I found that categories are so American.

**BISHOP KAMMERER:** Please start summing up.

**DAVIES:** We have divided everyone into categories. I listened to my Bible where it says, "In Christ there is no Jew or Greek, no male or female." We create these categories. It is actually a harder standard with this petition because unlike before, we remove the categories except one: being willing to be a follower in Jesus Christ.

**BISHOP KAMMERER:** Sorry, your time is up. All right, mic. 10.

**TRACY R. MERRICK** (Western Pennsylvania): Thank you Bishop. Bishop, I stand to amend, in a very small way, this particular petition. The first two sentences, as they're recorded on p. 954, would remain unchanged. We would take the third sentence and break it into two, so that they would read, "All persons shall be eligible to attend its worship services, participate in its programs, receive the sacraments, and upon baptism, be admitted as baptized members." The second sentence would be "All persons, upon taking vows declaring the Christian faith and relationship in Jesus Christ, shall be eligible to become professing members in any local church in the connection." Would you like me to read that again, or is it clear?

**BISHOP KAMMERER:** Is it clear? The body, is it clear? I think you need to read it again please, and let me just say that the committee had signaled to us that a member of the Legislative Committee was going to make the amendment. Would that be you, sir?

**MERRICK:** Yes, that is correct.

**BISHOP KAMMERER:** All right, so, if you will please read it again?

**MERRICK:** The first two sentences would be unchanged. The third sentence would be broken into

two, which read, "All persons shall be eligible to attend its worship services, participate in its programs, receive the sacraments, and upon baptism, be admitted as baptized members. All persons upon taking vows declaring the Christian faith, and relationship in Jesus Christ shall be eligible to become professing members in any local church in the connection." And if I have a second, I would like to address it.

**BISHOP KAMMERER:** Is it seconded? Yes, you may speak to it.

**MERRICK:** The current version of the petition could imply that there's a condition on being able to attend worship services; that is, all persons who seek relationship in Jesus Christ shall be eligible to attend its worship services. We felt that that condition is not what we want to apply as a denomination, for aren't we in the business of trying to invite folks who have no knowledge of Jesus Christ to our worship services and to participate in their programs so that they might become disciples. Thus the reason for moving this language later in the second sentence. This amendment is unchanged the rest of the petition and maintains the adjustments in the original language. Thank you.

**BISHOP KAMMERER:** All right, now, it's the amendment that is before the body, so I'll—

**EXTRUM-FERNANDEZ:** Bishop?

**BISHOP KAMMERER:** —if there's anyone...wish to address the amendment?

**EXTRUM-FERNANDEZ:** Yes. May I accept that as a friendly amendment?

**BISHOP KAMMERER:** Yes, I believe we've done that before if chairs have been willing to accept it. So, it now becomes. Thank you. Is there any objection from the house? We have done that in prior plenary sections. There's no objection, so it does become a part of the petition that is before you. Now, I need to ask the young man who went to mic.

5, Would you return? I just want to be clear, if you would state you are speaking for or against the petition. You didn't directly state that and I just want the body to be clear.

**DAVIES:** Thank you once again. I am speaking in favor of this petition, not the one that I brought, that we actually voted on the consent calendar reject two days ago. I'm still in pain.

**BISHOP KAMMERER:** You are speaking for. I wanted the body to be clear on that.

**DAVIES:** Yes!

**BISHOP KAMMERER:** And we have now, before we consider the amendment, we are now at the place where we have one speech for and one against. Yes, mic. 4, section B.

**MARC D. BROWN** (Virginia): This article is not about the authority of the pastor, it is about inclusiveness in the church as a constitutional. After 40 years, The United Methodist Church stands at the edge of the Jordan. As we choose whether we will live into a future with hope by our consideration of Article 4, let us remember the eighth chapter of Romans. It proclaims that there is nothing in all of creation that can separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord. I respectfully encourage support of this petition as we witness to a crucified Savior who died for all the world and a risen Lord who waits to greet us in the dawning of a new day. It is appropriate that our constitution should proclaim that Jesus invites all persons to the gospel feast. Thank you.

**BISHOP KAMMERER:** All right, that would be another speech for. You have the privilege of one more speech against. Section—mic. 10—the card—yes, holding it up—mic. 10.

**EDWIN (BUDDY) M. COOPER JR.** (South Georgia): Thank you, Bishop. As I read the petition, the line that bothers me is the line that connects us. It says they will be a professing member in any local church in the connection. In our time

of holy conferencing I have found that civil disobedience to our *Discipline* would make me afraid of this amendment.

BISHOP KAMMERER: All right, you have now heard two speeches for and against and before we vote you may speak to it again.

EXTRUM-FERNANDEZ: Thank you. When she placed her hands on my head at ordination, my bishop, Leontine T. C. Kelly, looked into my eyes and said, as only she can say, "Oh, Renae, take thou authority." So I am going to paraphrase her words. Church you have heard it said racism has no place in the church, but I say to you, exclusion in any form has no place in the church and I urge you to imbed this, one of our deepest of our Wesleyan convictions, in the heart of our Articles of our Constitution.

BISHOP KAMMERER: All right, now this involves a constitutional change, amendment, so it will require a two-thirds vote. That's for your information. If you support the petition as amended you will press "1." If you do not support it you will press "2." Please vote when the clock appears.

(pause)

BISHOP KAMMERER: The vote is in progress.

(pause)

BISHOP KAMMERER: All right, friends, I'm going to declare an invalid ballot because our technicians have informed us that some persons stopped voting. [Yes, 417; No, 214] They can tell that. I think there was unclarity in the body. Now, I need to ask, was there a problem with the translation? I do not see that. Sir, yes? You wanted to have the clarified amendment. Is that, yes?

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:  
(unintelligible)

BISHOP KAMMERER: All right, please go to the mic. and ask your question. Mic. 2.

HARALD RUECKERT (Germany South): I'm sorry to interrupt decision, but I ask for hearing again the amended petition so I can know what I'm voting on. I didn't vote right now because I didn't have the text. So I please can hear the text once more again.

BISHOP KAMMERER: All right, we will do that, thank you. And I'll turn to the secretary to read the text.

REIST: I'll read through the beginning and through the text as amended and end at that portion: "The United Methodist Church is a part of the church universal which is one body in Christ. The United Methodist Church acknowledges that all persons are of sacred worth and that we are in ministry to all. All persons shall be eligible to attend its worship services, participate in its programs, receive the sacraments, and upon Baptism, be admitted as baptized members. All persons upon taking vows declaring the Christian faith and relationship in Jesus Christ shall be eligible to become professing members in any local church in the connection." The text—

BISHOP KAMMERER: All right.

REIST: —of the original petition continues on from there unchanged.

*Vote for Inclusiveness*

BISHOP KAMMERER: All right. I believe the body now has the clarified information you need. We are ready to vote. If you support the petition as amended, you will press "1." If you do not support it you will press "2." Please vote as the clock appears.

BISHOP CHARLENE P. KAMMERER: It does prevail. [Yes, 558; No, 276]

All right, now we have completed this Petition Item.

ROBERT (CARL) FRAZIER JR. (North Carolina): Bishop?

BISHOP KAMMERER: Yes, the Chair. Would you wish to speak?

FRAZIER: I'm pleased to report that with that action the Conference

has received and acted on all legislation from the general administration committee and our work is complete.

(applause)

BISHOP KAMMERER: Thank you so much to you Reverend Frazier and all those who served on this committee. Thank you one and all. All right, yes, sir. You've been trying to get my attention. Let's see what kind of matter you have.

Mic.6.

THOMAS R. WUSSOW (Texas): Thank you. To quote one of our bishops that led us yesterday, "Let's try something." For the sake of moving us along, and in the spirit of trusting and having confidence in our committees, I would like to move that we take action to approve the committee recommendations on all outstanding calendar items, whether the recommendations be to adopt or reject, for those calendar items where the vote against in committee was ten votes or less.

(pause)

BISHOP KAMMERER: All right that is before us. Is there a second?

UNIDENTIFIED MALE SPEAKER: Second.

BISHOP KAMMERER: All right. Now, if you would speak briefly to it sir.

WUSSOW: Well, best I can determine, there are about 36 such petitions, and I think that this would move us along and as I recall from other General Conferences, this usually happens late in the evening. So why don't we just go ahead and do it now and get it over with. Thank you.

(laughter)

BISHOP KAMMERER: For your information, I've been informed there are 11 Items that would be in that category. That's information for the body. All right, do you wish to speak to this motion? For or against? Do you wish to speak to the motion?

I'm seeing yellow cards, not red or green. Do you wish to speak to the motion on the floor? Question? Yes, mic.6. No sir, the gentlemen's on his way, thank you.

TIMOTHY J. ROGERS (South Carolina): Would it be possible to hear the list of items?

BISHOP KAMMERER: Can we do that now? We're working on it. So we'll pause briefly until we get that. So that you're clear on what the items would be—the 11 items.

(pause)

Turn to our secretary...

REIST: You might want to make a note of this. I will repeat the calendar number and the ADCA page twice, so that you can write it down, rather than flipping pages to find it. Calendar Item 1350 on ADCA p. 1306.

Calendar Item... I'm sorry, I better give the DCA page, too.

BISHOP KAMMERER: Yes, please.

REIST: That DCA page for that one is 2367, DCA p. 2367.

The second item is DCA p. 2266, Calendar Item 650; ADCA p. 1358.

The third item: DCA p. 2454; Calendar Item 1226; ADCA p. 761.

The fourth item is found on DCA p. 2457; Calendar Item 1289; ADCA p. 760.

The next item is DCA p. 2231, Calendar Item 800; ADCA p. 318.

DCA p. 2265, Calendar Item 371; ADCA p. 297.

DCA p. 2256, Calendar Item 1112; ADCA p. 1308.

DCA p. 2365, Calendar Item 1338; ADCA p. 1307.

DCA p. 2365, Calendar Item 1339; ADCA p. 1308.

DCA p. 2453, Calendar Item 1366; ADCA p. 1146.

DCA p. 2364, Calendar Item 879; ADCA p. 298.

BISHOP KAMMERER: All right, thank you. Now I'd like for the

maker of the motion to please return to the mic. We've had so much information now, that you needed, but I'd like for him to state again the intent of the motion so that the body's clear. Speak the motion again. Thank you.

WUSSOW: Thank you. I would move that we take action to approve the committee recommendation on all outstanding calendar items, whether the recommendation is to adopt or reject, for those calendar items where the vote against in committee was ten votes or less.

BISHOP KAMMERER: All right. I think that's clear. All right, does someone wish to speak on the motion? Yes, is this a question? All right, mic.3.

ANA K. KELSEY-POWELL (Northern Illinois): I hate to ask this question but would it be in order for me to lift one of those that is asking to be taken off? To make that motion?

BISHOP KAMMERER: What number are you referring to?

KELSEY-POWELL: 1226 which has to do with campus ministry funding bans.

BISHOP KAMMERER: It's in, the motion's in order. So that would not be appropriate. Oh, Oh, excuse me, yes you may, I apologize, you may do so.

KELSEY-POWELL: All right, I would like to make that motion if I have a second.

BISHOP KAMMERER: It's been seconded. Now you may speak to it.

#### *Funding Restrictions*

KELSEY-POWELL: 1226 has to do with funding bans. This is my third time at the General Conference as a young adult. I have come as a 17-year old, a 21-year old and now as a 25-year old. Part of the reason that I stand here is because of the ministry I have experienced through campus ministry. I think that we talk about wanting youth and young adults in our church and this is one

way that we can demonstrate it through action rather than just words. Campus ministry is vital and important and the more that we restrict it, the fewer youth and young adults we have involved in it. Thank you.

BISHOP KAMMERER: All right, her motion and speech is to lift one of the calendar items for the purpose stated. Would anyone like to speak to the motion? Is this a question in Section C or do you wish to speak to the motion? Mic.9.

BONNER: Calendar Item 1226 relates to Petition No. 80502, I believe, found on p. 761 of the ADCA and has nothing to do—oh yes, never mind.

(laughter)

BISHOP KAMMERER: I can't believe Byrd Bonner says 'oh, never mind.' But let's thank him for that.

(laughter)

For the gracious care of the Body, we are always grateful. All right, does anyone wish to speak to the motion? All right, I believe you are ready to vote on the motion which is to lift the petition cited. If you—let's try it by hand. If you support the motion, lift the hand. If you do not support the motion, lift the hand. We are going to have to go to the keypad, just to be sure. All right, you will vote "1" if you support the motion; you will press "2" if you do not. Please vote when the clock appears.

(pause)

BISHOP KAMMERER: All right. You have lifted that one calendar item, and I'll ask the Secretary again to repeat which one it is. [Yes, 441; No, 360] This is for your information so that you'll know.

REIST: Calendar Item 1226, Calendar Item 1226 has been lifted from this motion.

BISHOP KAMMERER: All right. Now the main motion is still before

us, the main motion. Does someone wish to speak to the main motion before we vote? Do you have questions with the yellow cards? I see a red card—let me take that in Section A, mic.6. This is speaking now to the main motion.

MICHELLE BOGUE-TROST (Troy): I speak *against* this motion. I believe there are some issues we really need to talk about, and to just slide them out is a problem right now. I know it's late; I wanna go home. But I think we need to work through these petitions, so I speak against the motion.

BISHOP KAMMERER: That's a speech against. Does anyone wish to speak for the motion? Yes, mic.—Section B here, mic.2. We're taking speeches for and against at this point.

CHARLES COLE (New Mexico): I'm in favor of the motion because we hear a lot of complaints sometimes about the language in the *Discipline* being not drawn very carefully. My guess is if a study were done, a lot of that was passed at 11:54 P.M. on the last day of General Conference. I think we should pass this to remove these. Thank you.

BISHOP KAMMERER: All right. We've had one speech for and against. Yes, here at mic. 3 in Section A. Yes, you had your card up. Do you have a question or—let's try this. Mic. 3?

JIN MING MA (Pacific Northwest): Thank you, Bishop. The last petition on the screen, the Calendar No. 879, I spoke earlier to you, my dear brother and sister in Jesus Christ. Please pull that out to hear the voice from both the mainland of China, Taiwan, and millions Chinese people here. Thank you.

BISHOP KAMMERER: All right. This would be a speech against. Mic.3. Are, are you trying to make a motion to also lift this petition?

MA: Bishop, I'm trying to pull this petition out of this.

BISHOP KAMMERER: I believe you're trying to make a motion to

test the Body, whether this could also be lifted. Is that correct?

MA: Yes. Thank you, Bishop.

BISHOP KAMMERER: All right. We'll receive that as a motion from you. Is there a second? All right. Now, we will consider this motion; and will you state again the petition no. Please—I know you're trying to write, but please state the petition no. again. The last one on the screen.

#### *Support of Taiwan*

MA: Petition No. on the *DCA* 2364, Calendar No. 879, Petition 80971 and *ADCA* is 298.

BISHOP KAMMERER: All right. Thank you. Thank you. Are you ready to vote on this motion? I think you are, so if you would approve the motion, lift the hand. Those opposed? People, are you not clear on the motion?

FLOOR: No!

BISHOP KAMMERER: I see a person with three cards, so I guess I will acknowledge you, mic.5.

(laughter)

Take your choice.

(laughter)

WE HYUN CHANG (New England): It applies to all these three. By the way, I, I was told my congregation prayed for me last Sunday that I know when to speak and when not to speak.

(laughter)

They should have prayed harder.

(laughter)

We heard about this Calendar Item 879. It's a point of information. I was in the subcommittee. This is a totally new substitute motion. We made this after hearing the—our sister's concern. We addressed, heard her, and addressed her concern. We spent all night to, to accept her concern, and we got rid of the part that, that she

raises a concern. So this petition actually reflects her point of view and the result of holy conferencing. I wish we refuse this and then move on. So it's all three papers.

(laughter)

BISHOP KAMMERER: But this would be a speech against the motion. All right. Are you ready to vote? All right. If you agree with the motion, you will press "1", if you do not agree, press "2." Please vote when the clock appears. [*Yes, 242; No, 540*]

(pause)

#### *Amend Definition of Family*

It does not prevail, so the main motion is before us again. Yes, mic.2. I've seen your card, sir.

SAMUEL ALTUNIAN (Bulgaria Provisional): I'd like to make a motion to remove Item No. 8—Calendar Item No. 800 on *DCA* p. 2231, *ADCA* p. 318. It's about the—

BISHOP KAMMERER: All right, wait, wait, yes. State what it is and then I'll see—

ALTUNIAN: It's new, a new definition of 'family', so we have a second, I'll allow myself to speak about that.

BISHOP KAMMERER: All right, is there a second? There is a second.

ALTUNIAN: I think that making a new definition of 'family' is something important enough to discuss it and not just to put it a group of items and vote, vote without reading it even.

BISHOP KAMMERER: All right. This is a motion involving the petition you see on the screen, and he has spoken to it. Would anyone else like to speak to it? Please say the number again. Gere?

REIST: There was a request to lift Calendar Item 800, a request to lift Calendar Item 800.

BISHOP KAMMERER: All right, No. 800. All right. In Section D. Yes, moving to mic. 10.

JOHN W. SHERRER (Alabama-West Florida): I appreciate my brother lifting that one; that was the same one that I was wanting to get lifted. This changes the definition of the meaning of a family; and in my family, for all the generations that I know it's been a loving father and a mother. I certainly would like to see it remain that way in my church policy. Thank you.

BISHOP KAMMERER: All right. That's a speech for. Now, friends, I'm, I'm trying to help us at this point. We're gonna care for this motion, but there is a primary motion on the floor; and you can either vote that up or down. If you continue to lift petitions, it almost makes the motion moot. So I'm just reminding the Body; it will be up to you, but we will—this motion is still on the floor. And we've had a speech for—mic.9, please, over here. Mic.9.

COLLIER (Mississippi): I may—I'm not real clear. Are we speaking—are we debating the motion to group all of these, or we're debating the amendment?

BISHOP KAMMERER: No, we're not. We're not there yet.

COLLIER: OK. OK.

BISHOP KAMMERER: We're only speaking to this No. 800 that's before us. That was a question. All right. Yes, mic.5.

MARTIN D. MCLEE (New England): We are family, two parents. We are fam-i-ly.

BISHOP KAMMERER: Sir, is that a speech against or for?

MCLEE: Bishop, that would be correct.

BISHOP KAMMERER: All right. All right, in the back, Section D, no, Section D, please. Yes, the woman in the red, mic.12. Do you have a question?

ANNA C. BARRETT (West Ohio): Yes, Bishop. I would just ask you to be sure that you are repeating exactly what we're voting on before we vote. A lot of people in my area are confused, and I can't imagine

how confusing the people using translators are becoming in this situation.

BISHOP KAMMERER: All right. Thank you. What we are considering now is a motion to lift one of the petitions from this bundling motion. That is the only matter that's before us. Calendar Item No. 800. That's all that is before us at the moment. All right. Does—do you wish speak against, Section D? Mic.8. No, mic.8, please. Section D, not C. All right.

J. MONTGOMERY BROWN (West Virginia): 52 to seven in the committee. We've got to trust the system.

BISHOP KAMMERER: Sir is—

J MONTGOMERY BROWN (West Virginia): Fifty-two to seven in the committee. We've got to trust the system.

BISHOP KAMMERER: Sir is that a speech for or against?

BROWN: Against.

BISHOP KAMMERER: All right, thank you for clarifying for the body. Two speeches against, one for. Are we ready to vote? All right, we're gonna use the keypads for this. If you would support the motion to lift Calendar Item 800 you would press "1"; if you do not support it, press "2." Please vote when the clock appears.

*(pause)*

It is not supported. [*Yes, 334; No, 486*]

Now we're gonna return to the main motion and I'm gonna have the secretary read that. We're going to hear the main motion and then you may speak to that and—Gere?

REIST: —move that we take action to approve the committee recommendation when all outstanding calendar items, whether the recommendation is to adopt or reject, for those calendar items where the vote against in committee was 10 votes or less.

BISHOP KAMMERER: And we did remove one, is that correct?

REIST: We removed Calendar Item 1226.

BISHOP KAMMERER: All right, now that—that is where we are right now. Section B—yes, the red card; the red card, please. Mic. 2.

GREGORY MCGARVEY (South Indiana): I would oppose the handling of all of these items together. There are a myriad of things going on in those. I agree with the sister that said let's debate these. I'm sorry it's late, but these are important issues and I think they deserve individual accountlet—accountability to us.

BISHOP KAMMERER: All right, that's a speech against the motion. All right, on the main motion, that's our first speech for—excuse me, against the motion. And the gentleman who made the motion, that is a speech for. All right now, a speech against; point of order; what is your point of order? Mic. 9. Please don't lift the cards while we're debating. Mic. 9 please, what is your point of order?

GEORGE K. ANDING (Louisiana): Bishop, is this not, in effect, a motion to suspend our rules which under Rule 21 would be non-debatable and would further require a two-thirds vote?

BISHOP KAMMERER: It was not made as a motion. It is properly before the body at this point. It was not framed in that way. So we're going to vote on the motion as it was presented. Now, would th—we have two speeches against; would anyone like to speak for the motion? Yes, right here in section A. Yes, sir.

*(Pause)*

BISHOP KAMMERER: All right, yes sir.

SERGEI NIKOLAEV (Central Russia): I just wanted to recall at this point the presentation that John Brawn did today; and that's 98.6 percent of the items that were approved by committees passed eventually anyway, so just keep that in mind. Thank you.

BISHOP KAMMERER: That would be a speech for. And now, we have now had two speeches for and two against. It is time to vote on this motion. So if you vote for the motion which would include the bundling of the items except for the exception listed, you would press "1." If you do not vote for the motion, you would press "2." Please vote as the clock appears.

(*pause*)

Please vote as the clock appears.

(*pause*)

The motion prevails. All right, they were all—they all pass. [*Yes, 506; No 323*]

All right; now, friends, we return to our—we're going back to General Administration Committee. Mr. Jerry Rinehart, if you will come to the platform. No. 5. Excuse me, it's Church and Society 2. Back to your group.

JERRY R. RINEHART (East Ohio): Bishop, we're back.

BISHOP KAMMERER: Welcome back.

RINEHART: Thank you. Was it something I said? (*laughter*)

BISHOP KAMMERER: I guess they were not expecting the body to care for all that—all those matters. All right.

*Retain Language on Marriage*

RINEHART: The next item is Calendar No. 1343.

BISHOP KAMMERER: Page numbers first please.

RINEHART: OK, Bishop, that's fine. Page number in the *DCA* is 2366. In the *Advance Edition* of the *DCA* it is p. 319. It is Calendar No. 1343, found—it's Petition No. 80057. The committee recommends to adopt Calendar No. 1343. Presenting the Majority, Bishop, is Jerry Rinehart, the chair of the subcommittee. The Minority presenter will be Molly Vetter, a member of the subcommittee

BISHOP KAMMERER: All right. Mr. Rinehart. Point of order? Did I

hear point of order? Before you speak, please. Mic 3.

JACK RYDER (Northern Illinois): Can—it is kind of a point of order, but can I move that, I'd like to suspend the rules to move something about if a Minority Report is defeated, that there be no speeches for or against the main motion which is opposite of the Minority Report.

BISHOP KAMMERER: All right, you've asked for the suspension of rules for the purpose stated. There can be no debate, so get ready to vote. If you would suspend the rule, press "1." If you would not, press "2." Please vote when the clock appears. [*Yes, 331; No, 395*]

(*pause*)

It does not prevail. Now, friends, we are at the close of session and I need to know if you want to proceed to extend the time or not. It's an Order of the Day for your recess and the dinner break. We'll go ahead and have the announcements for the day and continue the calendar items upon your return this evening. All right, Gere, would you read our announcements?

REIST: Thank you. I've been asked to announce that only four seats have not been occupied by a delegate or an alternate from central conferences due to visa rejections. There were 25 vacancies in the 2004 General Conference. We thank the bishops of the central conferences for their outstanding leadership represented in the attendance.

(*applause*)

The *United Methodist Reporter* brought 2,000 copies for distribution. They apologize for thinking too small. If you would like a complimentary, free copy, email [info@umr.org](mailto:info@umr.org) with your full name and address, that's [info@umr.org](mailto:info@umr.org).

I think a rather remarkable thing has happened here, in that those good folks up there in the booths went out to dinner last night and

they had been watching all the action around the basketball and they raised \$455 in offerings.

BISHOP KAMMERER: Our translators—let us thank our translators.

(*applause*)

REIST: Now I have two memoranda from the Judicial Council and the punch line on both of them is the same. I'm not going to read both memoranda and I do hope that all of you understand. I don't preach the way I read Judicial Council decisions.

(*laughter*)

BISHOP KAMMERER: We're glad to hear that you do not intone in that way.

REIST: In response to both of the matters referred to the Judicial Council, they have responded that they do not have sufficient time to research and deliver an opinion in response to the requests before the adjournment of the 2008 General Conference. The matters are deferred to the fall 2008 docket of the Judicial Council. And we have been—had some prayer requests. Bishop Scott Jones has gone home because of illness in his family, and Rev. Tim Bruster has left the General Conference because of deaths in his family. We would hold all those who have lost loved ones, or whose loved ones are suffering, in our prayers.

BISHOP KAMMERER: All right, thank you. Again, I want to thank the assistant bishops, Bishop Jack Tuell and Bishop Judith Craig, for their marvelous support this afternoon. Thank you for your continued conferencing and when you come back tonight, bring your sleeping bag. We are now in recess for dinner.

(*laughter*)

(*music*)

(*applause*)

**Friday Evening,  
May 2, 2008**

BISHOP WILLIAM W. HUTCHINSON: Well, now that you're all revved up, I think we will see if you can settle down for just a few moments here. If you will come on in the room and find your places. If you will come on in the room and find a place to be seated. We have a long way to go tonight, and we wanna get started on that so that we are faithful to our time. All right, if I could call the body to order. If I could call the body to order, we're gonna begin with a time of prayer, so if you're moving I would ask you to just stop where you are and let us enter into a time of prayer so that we can move into our evening agenda. So let us be in prayer if you will, please. Just center in yourselves if you will. You've had a good evening break here. We've had time to sit with friends, and we've had time to break bread together. We've had time to catch our breath a little bit and time to, at least, reflect for a moment on that which is still before us.

*(prayer)*

Well, good evening. My name is Bill Hutchinson. I am the Resident Bishop in Louisiana—

*(applause)*

—and it's a joy to be with you tonight for this home stretch. So we've got a lot to do, and we're going to move into this home stretch in just a moment after we have a couple of announcements. And then I will move to those who have cards that I see you out there with the cards. First of all, I'm gonna call upon Bob Hayes from the—who is the secretary of the Council of Bishops—

*(applause)*

—Robert Hayes, the Resident Bishop of the Oklahoma Confer-

ence, to make an announcement for us.

BISHOP ROBERT E. HAYES JR.: Thank you, Bishop. Throughout the day, we have had the introductions of those persons who have made the teamwork of this General Conference what it has been; and as the secretary of the council, we want to share with you the person behind us who has enabled us to be what we have been; that is, the Council of Bishops. And I'm gonna ask that Jo Ann McClain, our secretary, our *(unintelligible)*,

*(applause)*

*Recognition of Jo Ann McLain, COB*

I wanna introduce to you Jo Ann McClain. She is the person behind the council that makes the council go, and many of you have been in her office throughout the week. She's been here now nearly 2½ weeks preparing. And I want to just give Jo Ann this certificate that certifies that Jo Ann McClain is the bionic woman of the Council of Bishops.

*(laughter)*

She has served in that capacity; and as a token of our appreciation, we are giving Jo Ann—we have ordered one of the first 20 montage printings of the General Conference of 2008, to be presented to Jo Ann, suitable for framing. And Jo Ann, we just want to express to you our deep appreciation, not only on behalf on the Council of Bishops, but all the people who came in and out of the doors of the Council of Bishops' office. Let's give Jo Ann a hand, you all.

*(applause)*

Thank you. Thank you so much.

JO ANN MCCLAIN: Thank you.

BISHOP HUTCHINSON: Thank you, Bishop Hayes. We appreciate that. I'm gonna call on Gere. He has

a couple of announcements that he needs to make at this point, rather than later in our session, so that we're fresh and can hear these. So, Gere, if you will make your, your two announcements.

FITZGERALD (GERE) REIST: Well, Bishop, I'm going to—if you don't mind a personal note, you don't know how valuable Jo Ann is and how crazy she is. Now some of the—some of you will know this, but a couple weeks ago, she—her computer broke down, and there was a tornado coming; and she decided we would drive right into the tornado to get her computer fixed. So we were evacuated to the bathroom of Best Buy together.

*(laughter)*

BISHOP HUTCHINSON: Amen.

REIST: No, we're not going into an—any detail on that.

*(laughter)*

The Mozambique, Brazil, Virginia basketball will go to Brazil after this General Conference. In July, the Virginia Conference Voices of Youth Choir will visit Brazil, and then bring the ball to Virginia. In August, a group of Virginia Conference United Methodist Women will visit Mozambique and take the ball there, where it will stay. The ball was purchased through an offering by delegates of the three conferences. I think that's a wonderful story about the ball.

BISHOP HUTCHINSON: Amen. That is a great story. That's a great story.

*(applause)*

REIST: Now, sometimes people leave messages up here; and they get lost in the paper on the desk, but they wanted to make sure I didn't lose this message. Some of you borrowed sweaters from the Host Committee. Please return them to a page

or marshal. They really would like the sweaters back, and we're probably all warm enough now tonight.

BISHOP HUTCHINSON: Yes.

REIST: Thank you.

BISHOP HUTCHINSON: Yeah, I think we've warmed the room up enough to—you can give up the sweaters for the evening.

There is a special prayer request that we have that I want us to just pause for a moment and recognize. Our brother from Peru, Bishop Bravo, has just received word that his father has died; and he is, of course, going to be returning home, as all of us are, but he's going to do that with a great sadness and with a heavy heart. So let's pause for just a moment for a time of just silent prayer for Bishop Bravo and for his family as they deal with the loss of this loved one in their lives.

*(prayer)*

All right, I think we are ready to begin. I see some yellow cards that are asking for recognition. I'll go here on section B, if you would here. Yes, in the black jacket.

ANN L. GLASS (South Indiana): Thank you, Bishop Hutchinson. I rise to move that we set an adjournment time of 11 o'clock this evening, so that we can honor our intent to celebrate worship and the contracts with this convention center and our transportation to hotels.

BISHOP HUTCHINSON: All right, is there a second to this motion?

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Second.

BISHOP HUTCHINSON: There is a second. Is there any debate on the motion? Do you understand the motion that we would finish our business at 11 and then we would move from business into worship at that time? I see no one moving. If—let's do this by show of hands. If you would approve that, you would lift your hand. Those opposed, no, same sign. *[Approved by hand vote]* It is

approved and we will operate under that rubric. Yes, back here by mic. 5

RALPH R. ODUOR (New England): Thank you, Bishop. I rise on a matter of personal privilege. While I recognize that the body has worked hard and diligently, we have unfortunately failed in our responsibility to sufficiently name and address matters of justice, such as immigration, the impact of war, and how our denominational pension investments reflect our spiritual values and commitment to human rights.

BISHOP HUTCHINSON: Sir, I believe that this is a speech for and are you going to make a motion?

ODUOR: All right, just one, one sentence personal privilege, that's it.

BISHOP HUTCHINSON: All right, just one more sentence.

ODUOR: There is no peace without justice. In the words of Mr. Wesley, "There is no holiness but social holiness." Thank you.

BISHOP HUTCHINSON: Yes, sir, thank you. Clear to the back in section D. Yes, you there in the short-sleeve white shirt.

SAMUEL J. ROYAPPA (Wisconsin): Thank you, Bishop. On behalf of the General Conference 2008, I move to petition to GCFA and Connectional Table to develop a detailed action plan for proactively moving The United Methodist Church further from holy conferencing church to holy giving church, otherwise known as tithing church. The action plan be presented at the next, or 2012, General Conference. If there is a second, I'll speak to it.

BISHOP HUTCHINSON: All right, is there a second?

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Second.

ROYAPPA: We have legislated and we want to legislate everything under the sky except how we must share our financial resources with our churches and forward ministries. It is time for our denomination to focus more on raising and generating more financial resources.

BISHOP HUTCHINSON: All right, thank you. I believe this is a motion to refer. We're ready, I think, to vote on that. If you would vote to refer this matter, you would do so by the lifting of your hand. Thank you. If you're opposed to the reference, same sign. *[Approved by hand vote]* It does carry. Thank you. All right, there's one other card here.

*(pause)*

ANNE L. BURKHOLDER (Florida): Bishop?

BISHOP HUTCHINSON: Yes, and state—yes, give us your name if you would, and what your intent is.

BURKHOLDER: I wish to make a motion.

BISHOP HUTCHINSON: All right.

*Call for Improved Functionality of Book of Resolutions*

BURKHOLDER: I move that the Connectional Table create a task force with the following assignments: to review the original purposes of the *Book of Resolutions* and evaluate its effectiveness in fulfilling those purposes; secondly, to evaluate the effectiveness of the process by which resolutions are submitted to the General Conference and approved by the body; thirdly, to establish guidelines the length, scope, and documentation of supporting information for resolutions; and finally, to make recommendations that emerge from this review to the General Conference of 2012 that will improve both our use of resolutions as guidance for our mission and our dispatch of resolutions during General Conference.

BISHOP HUTCHINSON: All right, I again hear this as a motion for referral.

BURKHOLDER: Yes.

BISHOP HUTCHINSON: Is there a second to the motion to refer?

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKERS:  
Second.

BISHOP HUTCHINSON: There is a second. OK, I see red cards in the back. Yes, here on the—yes, if you would please. Just one moment, if you would, please. Did you wish to speak to the motion further?

BURKHOLDER: I would.

BISHOP HUTCHINSON: OK, you certainly have that privilege. Please continue.

BURKHOLDER: Do you want me to do it now?

BISHOP BURKHOLDER: Yes, if you would.

BURKHOLDER: OK. As a pastor and conference leader, I remain perplexed about the functionality of our *Book of Resolutions*. As a member now over two General Conferences of legislative committees, I am truly perplexed about the efficacy of our established process and encouraging holy conferencing. Friends, there has to be a better way. My perception is that the *Book of Resolutions* is rarely studied in churches, used only in rare instances—

BISHOP HUTCHINSON: If you will sum up.

BURKHOLDER: —in response to pastoral crises, and perhaps best serves the church as guidance for general agencies, boards, and commissions.

BISHOP HUTCHINSON: All right.

BURKHOLDER: Go to the back of my sheet. I submit to you that in the current form and with the current process, they cannot be effective in the way that we need, both for our local churches as well as for the general church.

BISHOP HUTCHINSON: All right, thank you. Now, I'm going to go back to the mic. 3. This is a statement against.

MATTHEW A. LAFERTY (East Ohio): Bishop, I would like to remind the house that we already dealt with petitions around this very particular issue. The Conferences Com-

mittee dealt with legislation on this exact issue. Those were brought to the house and we rejected those petitions and so it seems to me that we're actually going back and trying to redo legislation that we already had defeated. Secondly, Bishop, I would request that you would ignore yellow cards this evening as we have a lot of work to do.

(*applause*)

I realize that my friends would like to do other business, but we have 50 or so calendar items left and so please ignore the yellow cards. I would urge the defeat of this motion.

BISHOP HUTCHINSON: All right, thank you. We have one statement against; we can take one statement for. Is there a statement for? Here's a green card here. If you would go to mic. 9.

SHEILA R. CUMBEST (Mississippi): I, too, was on the legislative committee that dealt with many resolutions. All of you have seen these resolutions and many of you have never read them fully or know what's in them. Even though we may have had it come through a conference or legislative committee at this conference and it was rejected, we need to pay attention and do something about the *Book of Resolutions*. We do not have something that will help us state to the world what we actually believe and something that will further us along.

BISHOP HUTCHINSON: All right, if you would sum up.

CUMBEST: Let's please reconsider this.

BISHOP HUTCHINSON: Thank you. Clear to the back in the suit—yes, sir. Right here in the middle I think it's—this will be the last speech against and the last speech. Yes.

CARL SCHENCK (Missouri): I'm also a member of the Connectional Table and the action before the house currently, and I believe also the preceding action that we have taken, are a misuse of the Connectional Table. The Connectional

Table is a site for the bringing together of the vision, the mission, and the resources of the church to ensure that we are doing the big things well. It is not a place where we are prepared for, nor should we be distracted in, multiple studies that could be much better done in some other arena in the life of the church.

BISHOP HUTCHINSON: All right, thank you. We have two for and two against now. We're ready to vote on the issue. Have the keypads been activated? Are they activated or we need to do that? You will need to activate your keypad, so press any number, if you will, to activate it. If you will vote for this referral, you will press no. "1"; if you will vote no on the referral, you will press no. "2"; and if you would, vote when the clock appears.

(*pause*)

All right, you have not referred the motion, so the motion dies. [*Yes, 315; No, 454*] We are ready to move, I think, to the calendar items for the evening. Now let me remind us, as we have already been reminded, that we have a significant amount of work to do tonight and so unless there is something that is just absolutely critical that you speak to, I ask that we continue to keep ourselves moving in the voting process. So I am going to call upon our committee now for our first calendar items.

#### *Resumption of Marriage Language Discussion*

FREDERICK K. BREWINGTON (New York): Thank you, Bishop. Just reminding the body that we are at Calendar No. 1343, found on page—I am going to give it to you—p. 2366 of the *DCA*, 1343, p. 2366. It's also in the *Advance DCA*, at 319. The committee had recommended adoption. We are in the beginning stages, Bishop, of dealing with the Majority and the Minority Reports.

BISHOP HUTCHINSON: All right.

JERRY R. RINEHART (East Ohio): Delegates, I rise to deliver to you the Minor—the Majority Report on Calendar Item 1343, that's 1343. This petition is a petition to retain the language as currently stated in the *Discipline* on Paragraph 161c. That paragraph currently defines the marriage covenant between one man and one woman. There were 326 similar petitions submitted to retain the current paragraph as stated. This testifies to the breadth and scope of those who hold this opinion across our global church. It is remarkable that so many voices agree on a single issue. These voices agree that marriage is the union of one man and one woman. Thank you.

BISHOP HUTCHINSON: All right, thank you. Now, is there a Minority Report?

MOLLY VETTER (California-Pacific): There is, and I rise to present the Minority Report. I've been fretting all day about whether it was foolish or not to stand up here to offer a Minority Report on an issue related to issues this conference has already spoken on. But the Holy Spirit compels me to present it anyway. That it seems unlikely is no reason to stop working for the work you feel furthers God's kingdom. I've not been a pastor for so many years, but I've been pastor for enough years to know that I have very little ability to choose what God will bless. In fact, God's blessing often comes in places I least expect it and least look for it, and I'm here today to testify to my own sense of God's blessing on the relationships shared between people who are of the same gender. Currently our paragraph describing and defining marriage limits marriage to being between a man and a woman. Our Minority Report seeks to rewrite the paragraph to eliminate these gender specificities, in favor of making a little more space that God might be blessing relationships otherwise. The Church has no real ability to control what God blesses but we do have the ability to name the

structures that we choose to integrate into our communities, how we will relate to people within our churches and within our communities. And the church has a role in strengthening relationships that are healthy and life-giving and mutual.

I long for a day when our church will recognize these relationships, even when shared between people of the same gender, and do what we can to help all people move toward healthier and more committed relationships. That we do not include gay and lesbian people in our definition of marriage does not mean that there are not gay and lesbian people making commitments that are life-giving and mutual and that serve our communities. But I wish we could open up space within our own church community, recognizing, with humility, that we may not have all things right. In fact, we may have found ourselves afraid of the wrong things, working too hard to keep the wrong people out of our church. I don't wish to couch my sense of the Holy Spirit's leading in any kind of misleading arguments.

I want to change this language so that we can include couples of the same gender within our understanding of marriage. Life is precious and too short to spend distracting each other with misleading arguments. This is exactly what I mean to do. There is, in fact, real evil, injustice, and oppression in the world and we have allowed ourselves to be distracted by going after a people who are, in fact, blessings to our community. Methodism has long been a vital movement and a movement, I believe, ready for a move that will create space for the leading of the Spirit into new understandings of human relationships.

BISHOP HUTCHINSON: Can we sum up, can we sum up?

VETTER: In sum, I wish that we would approve the Minority Report to rewrite our understanding of marriage, that it would have space to include all God's children.

BISHOP HUTCHINSON: OK, the Majority Report that is before us is the current language of the *Discipline*. So I think the thing for us to do is move to the perfecting of the Minority Report, rather than the Majority Report, which is the current language. And we will move to the perfecting, and if you would agree to do this, of the Minority Report and that will—then we will work on that issue. Yes, back here at—are we in agreement as a house that we can do it that way? All right, now, OK, then we are ready for any amendments or statements to the Minority Report, or if you are ready for it, we are ready to vote. I see no one moving. I'm sorry, back here at the back. No, the woman behind you was—yes, in the yellow sweater. Go to mic. 8, please.

MARTHA SWORDS-HORRELL (North Central New York): Bishop, is it in order to speak in favor of the Minority Report or you just looking for amendments?

BISHOP HUTCHINSON: We are working on amendments at this point. If you have any amendment; otherwise I'll come back to you. Are there—I don't see any amendments. So if we are ready to discuss the Minority Report, if you will go to mic. 8 and you may make the statement that you wish to make.

SWORDS-HORRELL: Thank you, Bishop. I rise to support the Minority Report. When I was a younger pastor, I, in one of the churches I served, the congregation had a special recognition for my husband's and my tenth wedding anniversary which we gratefully received. Afterward, one of our members spoke to me in congratulations but also in pain over the fact that his much longer committed relationship with his partner would never receive such recognition in our church—

BISHOP HUTCHINSON: If you would sum up, please.

SWORDS-HORRELL: —even though he was a very loved and respected church member. Covenant is

at the very heart of our biblical faith, and I ask you to support the Minority Report.

BISHOP HUTCHINSON: All right, thank you. I see a card, a red card right here in front of me and I—in section A. Yes, sir.

BISHOP HUTCHINSON: Thank you. I see a card, a red card, right here in front of me—section A. Yes, sir? A statement against.

PAUL D. HILLARD (North Alabama): Bishop, I rise to speak against the Minority Report. Our understanding of marriage is not drawn from human opinion, but is derived from Scripture. Scripture teaches us that Jesus spoke about this and all the things that Jesus has not spoken about; he did speak about marriage. He said, Have you not read in the Scriptures where a man leaves his mother and father and joins to his wife and they become one flesh.

BISHOP HUTCHINSON: If you will, sum up.

HILLARD: I'm not going into a lot of other Scripture reference, but I want to say this: If we were to approve or adopt the Minority Report, we would literally cease to be a kingdom-building, and not truly reflect the church, but become an irrelevant social club.

BISHOP HUTCHINSON: All right, thank you. I'll go over here to mic. 5. Yes, here. This is a statement for the Minority Report.

WILL GREEN (New England): Thank you, Bishop. I'm reminded of an old joke, where a non-Christian is asked if he believes in Baptism, and he says, "Believe in it, I've seen it!" I say the same thing about same-gender loving couples. Believe in God's blessing in these relationships? I've seen it. God is already blessing gay and lesbian marriages and I think we would do well to honor God, by blessing them as well. Thank you.

BISHOP HUTCHINSON: All right, thank you. One more against. I'm going to go back here to the very back in, yes, in section C, come to mic. 11, please.

DAVID M. STANLEY (Iowa): The church has already taken its firm stand on this issue. The current language of 161.C is totally consistent with the action of this General Conference, reaffirmed just two days ago. If the Minority Report were to be adopted, then our Social Principles on one side of one sheet of paper—look in your *Discipline* in the 161 area—on one side would say one thing and on the other side of that same sheet of paper, it would say the exactly the opposite. This would surely make that part of our Social Principles utterly confusing and ineffective. We have made our decision; let's reaffirm it. Please vote no on the Minority Report, and vote yes for the committee's recommendation.

BISHOP HUTCHINSON: All right, thank you. Yes, briefly.

VETTER (California-Pacific): I give thanks for being part of a Methodist tradition that has moved our scriptural understanding through a way in which we can see how culture is sometimes embedded in the holy word. We no longer understand marriage as a property transaction, transferring a woman from her father to a husband; we no longer see marriage in these old ways. We no longer see marriage as simply existing for procreation, but see blessing and beauty in loving couples. I ask you, I urge you to take one step further to open up the way we understand marriage to include all God's children.

BISHOP HUTCHINSON: All right, thank you. Frederick, would you like to say something?

JERRY R. RINEHART (East Ohio): The Old Testament, the New Testament, and today, marriage is between one man and one woman. Removal of defining the language of marriage as "one man and one woman" would create great chaos, not only within our church, but within the statement that our church gives the world. Let's take into mind what it may do even in our own central conferences, let alone the United

States. "One man and one woman" statement is needed to help them deal with issues of polygamy. The Legislative Committee, in its wisdom, decided to maintain the language so that we would be consistent with the *Discipline*. I would urge you to vote with the Legislative Committee and maintain that language. Please defeat the Minority Report.

BISHOP HUTCHINSON: All right, thank you. We're ready to vote.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Bishop Hutchinson?

BISHOP HUTCHINSON: You have a question of parliamentary procedure? All right, mic. 6, please.

(pause)

TURNER ARANT (Mississippi): Bisho, the Minority Report has no signatures as to the ones who filed the Minority Report. Does this make it legal? Because under the rules this is supposed to be filed or presented within two hours to the chairman and then followed with the 10 percent of the committee signing the petition.

BISHOP HUTCHINSON: All right, let me turn to the secretary to see if there are a list of those who signed the petition.

BREWINGTON: Yes the chair, the vice-chair, and the secretary received the notification in a timely fashion. The paperwork was committed and supplied to the office. It just may be a misprint, but all the signatures were attached.

ARANT: But it's not in the *DCA*?

BREWINGTON: I can't say anything to that. I'd say, you're accurate it's not there, but the truism is that all the paperwork was properly done.

BISHOP HUTCHINSON: Mr. Arant, let us go ahead and since the signatures were attached when they came to the office. Thank you. I think we're ready to vote. We're now voting on the Minority Report. If

you would adopt the Minority Report, you will press “1.” If you would not adopt the Minority Report, you will press “2,” and if you would do so when the timer appears.

(pause)

**BISHOP HUTCHINSON:** All right, you have not adopted the Minority Report. We’re ready to vote on the Majority Report, which is the retention of the language. I think we’re ready to do that without any debate on that. Again, if you’ll take your keypads and you would adopt the Majority Report, unless you care to say something further about it. [*Yes, 252; No, 576*]

**UNIDENTIFIED MALE**

**SPEAKER:** Nothing further, Bishop.

**BISHOP HUTCHINSON:** Thank you. If you will take your keypads— if you will adopt the Majority Report, which is the retention of the language, you will press “1”; if you will vote against that, you will press “2.” Please do so when the timer appears.

(pause)

All right, you have adopted the Majority Report. [*Yes, 603; No, 222*]. We are ready to move now to the Board of Ministry, or the Committee on Ministry and Higher Education. Call upon Kathleen Baskin-Ball to make that report.

(pause)

**KATHLEEN BASKIN-BALL** (North Texas): Boy, North Texas Conference is still awake back there. That’s so great! Buenos Noches! Good evening to Bishop Hutchinson, Bishop Pointer, and my own beloved Bishop Norris, also members of the conference. I am Kathleen Baskin-Ball, clergy from North Texas and chair of the Committee of Ministry and Higher Ed.

#### *Sacramental Privilege of Deacons*

The item I present to you tonight for your consideration is found on

*DCA* p. 2269. This is Calendar Item 1208, Petition 80165, and can be found on the *Advance DCA* on p. 1439. This petition, as amended, seeks to give deacons sacramental authority in their primary appointment at the request of a pastor in charge or district superintendent and in the absence of an elder. The committee recommends that the General Conference adopt this petition as amended, and I introduce to you two persons: David Dodge, a deacon in the Florida Conference and a member of the subcommittee, who will give a brief rationale; and again, to you, Amy Gearhart Sage, subcommittee chair and an elder from the Missouri Conference, who will give the last word.

**BISHOP HUTCHINSON:** Thank you.

**DAVID A. DODGE** (Florida Conference): In 1996, the General Conference meeting in Denver, Colorado, in the United States recreated the order of deacon in The United Methodist Church. Our current Paragraph 329.1 of the *Book of Discipline* states that “deacons are persons called by God, authorized by the church and ordained by a bishop to a lifetime ministry of word and service to both the community and the congregation in a ministry that connects the two.” For 12 years, the church has been living into the vision of the 1996 General Conference. This is resulting in more and more deacons serving in places that extends the possibility of the grace-granting sacraments to the people of God in places where elders may not be present.

Of the current 1,300 deacons in full connection over one third are serving appointments beyond the local church. And of the current 1,400 candidates for the ministry of the deacon, many of whom are young adults, one half plan to serve beyond the local church. We see deacons increasingly serving in places that address the foci into which our bishops and the Connec-tional Table are leading: deacons

serving in places of ministry with the poor, deacons serving in settings that are seeking to improve health globally.

This petition seeks to extend the sacraments to the people of God who are being served by some deacons. This petition is not about providing a convenience to any order of ministry. This petition is about enlarging the circle of those who will come to know the continuing transformational power of God that is available through the singular moment of baptism and in the frequent celebration of the Eucharist. In our tiredness, with the clock ticking—

**BISHOP HUTCHINSON:** Sir, could you sum up, move it faster? Thank you.

**DODGE:** Yes, sir. We may be tempted to refer this on to the ministry study. We did that four years ago; and that commission, of which I was a part, addressed the topic. And this petition is in alignment with the study.

Our chairperson has already outlined the delineations and the limitations that would be in place. And so I would ask you, for the sake of the mission and the ministry of the church, that you would adopt this petition in its amended form as in Calendar Item No. 1208. Thank you, sir.

**BISHOP HUTCHINSON:** All right, thank you. Now the item is before you. We are ready to debate the item. Is this a question of procedure, an amendment? All right, if you will go to mic 3.

(pause)

**Laurie A. Haller** (West Michigan): I would like to offer an amendment by substitution on p. 2269, the third column, 10 lines down. I would like to substitute the following sentence for the sentence that begins, “For the sake of extending the mission and ministry of the church,” and down through the end of that sentence. The new sentence

would read: “For the sake of extending the mission and ministry of the church, a district superintendent may, in special circumstances, request that the bishop grant local sacramental authority to deacons whose primary appointment is beyond the local church.” And if I have a second, I’ll speak to it.

The intent of this petition is to offer sacramental privileges to deacons, not for mere convenience, not simply because the pastor-in-charge is on vacation, but in extraordinary and special circumstances. The amendment I am proposing makes two changes: First, it restricts the possibility of sacramental privileges for deacons to those whose primary appointment is outside the local church, such as chaplaincy, where deacons might best fulfill their call by being able to offer the sacraments where elders are not present. The second change is it takes out “pastor-in-charge.”

**BISHOP HUTCHINSON:** Please sum up.

**HALLER:** It designates the superintendent as the person who brings the request to the bishop. I believe this amendment preserves a critical theological distinction between the orders of deacons and elders while also allowing for exceptions. Thank you.

**BISHOP HUTCHINSON:** All right, thank you. The amendment is before you. That is a speech for. Is there a speech against the amendment? Speech against the amendment? All right, I’ll come over here to my left, yes, there in the middle, yes. If you’ll come to mic 5, please?

*(pause)*

While she is coming, let me just say that we are now down to four minutes per calendar item if we stay in our time frame. Not to press you forward but to just remind you where we are. Yes, mic 5.

**YOUTH A. C. HARDMAN-CROMWELL** (Virginia): I want to

speak against this amendment. It seems to me that if we can allow local pastors who are not ordained at all to be allowed by the district superintendents and bishops to offer Communion in the places in which they are appointed that, with the restrictions that are in this particular petition, surely we can trust ordained deacons to do the same thing.

**BISHOP HUTCHINSON:** All right, thank you. We can take a speech for. Yes, back here in the middle, in the blue shirt, yes, sir, you.

*(pause)*

Yeah. Mic 11.

**KENNETH (KEN) H. CARTER JR.** (Western North Carolina): I want to speak in favor of the amendment. The permanent order of deacon was created to lead the church into missional service in the world. This is a great gift to our church. This amendment strengthens the identity and the vocation of the order of deacon in the world and blesses those whom he or she serves. Sacramental presidency within the church would cause a shift in the true vocation of the deacon and would lead to confusion or blurring of roles in relation to the orders of deacon, elder, and also the category of local pastor.

**BISHOP HUTCHINSON:** Sum up.

**CARTER:** When we say the words of the Great Thanksgiving, we say these words: “Make these gifts be for us the body and blood of Christ for the world, that we may be for the world the body of Christ, redeemed by his blood.”

**BISHOP HUTCHINSON:** All right, thank you.

**CARTER:** The work of an elder is at the table and the work of the deacon who leads—

**BISHOP HUTCHINSON:** Thank you, sir, you’ve run out of time. Thank you. All right, one more speech against. I will go to the far back, by mic 12.

*(pause)*

**DEANNA E. STICKLEY-MINER** (West Ohio): I speak against this amendment because deacons are responding to the needs of the people. With the language as it currently is, it would allow a deacon, who has been appointed to a local church to establish ministries with the homeless, not to have to hear again the painful words of a homeless mother who asked her if she didn’t ordain her and her children because she didn’t have money to pay. Now it may within us create confusion; but for the people in the communities, they do not understand our distinction, and it is a way of entering people into the redemptive love and life-transforming grace of Jesus Christ.

**BISHOP HUTCHINSON:** Thank you. All right, now we’ve had two speeches for. We’ve had two speeches against. I think we’re ready to vote. We’re voting on the amendment; and we will vote to simply, to either adopt the amendment or to reject the amendment. I think we’re ready to vote. You have no further—you do have something you wish to say?

**DAVID A. DODGE** (Florida): Yes, briefly, Bishop.

**BISHOP HUTCHINSON:** Briefly.

**DODGE:** I would say that I think we are limiting our imagination about how a deacon might be serving even within an appointment to the local church, and we would stand with the petition as it was originally presented in its original amended form.

**BISHOP HUTCHINSON:** All right, thank you. Now if you will take your keypads, and you will press “1” if you are supportive of the amendment. You will press “2” if you are not supportive, and you will do so when the clock appears.

*(pause)*

BISHOP HUTCHINSON: All right, you have not adopted the amendment. [*Yes, 345; No, 472*] We're now back to the main motion. We're ready to speak to that. I'll come here in the very front in the middle. Speech for.

(*Pause*)

WILLIAM B. MORGAN (North Alabama): Bishop, I have the privilege of being the pastor of a church where we have a wonderful shared ministry between several elders and several deacons. Certainly we have focuses in our ministry; but there is a wider partnership, and we have learned it's a shared sacramental partnership. There are relationships that deacons has, have with me—members in the ways that elders have relationships and even within the local congregation, it extends the ministry of all. And I would str—be strongly in favor of the committee's recommendation.

BISHOP HUTCHINSON: All right, thank you. Those—are there any speeches against? I see right over here on the right. Yes, yes, sir, you there. Mic 3, please.

LONNIE D. BROOKS (Alaska Missionary): This action would put us outside the ecumenical consensus on this matter as it is expressed primarily in the document "Baptism, Eucharist, and Ministry" of the World Council of Churches. The United Methodist Church is signatory to that agreement, and it reserves sacramental authority to elders and not to deacons.

BISHOP HUTCHINSON: All right, thank you very much. We can take another speech for. Another speech for. Let me go clear back here to the back. The woman in the blue sweater, looks like. Yes. Mic 11, please.

BRENDA WIER (Central Texas): I served on the subcommittee for this, Higher Education; and it was exciting to talk to our persons across the church, across the world, and find ways that deacons are involved.

I was consecrated in 1977 as a diaconal minister. I was ordained a deacon in full connection in 1997. Our church has seen this incredible ministry, and it has grown and involved. And as we look at the worldwide church and the needs of our central conferences to be able to have our deacons be in this role in those specialized ways and ministries, would be an exciting part in a new growth for our church and our ministry.

BISHOP HUTCHINSON: All right, thank you very much. One more against? Yes, back here, yes. Mic, which is closer, 11? Mic 11.

ROBIN C. WILSON (Alabama-West Florida): Bishop and friends, it has been my privilege for the last seven years to represent our Board of Ordained Ministry in visiting our United Methodist seminaries as well as our non-affiliated seminaries in which we have many ministerial candidates attending. One of the questions that comes up in my relationship with these students is helping them discern their call between deacon and elder. There still seems to be much confusion as to what the ministry of the deacon versus the ministry of the elder is; and I worry that if we blur those lines of sacramental authority, that this will be seen by many of our ministerial candidates as a way to circumvent the itinerant system. There are many who do not appreciate the ministry and the blessings of the itinerancy, and I worry that if we do not vote this down—

BISHOP HUTCHINSON: All right, we have, we have reached the end of the time.

WILSON: Thank you.

BISHOP HUTCHINSON: Thank you very much. Now we've had two speeches for and two against, and we are ready for the vote. Yes, sir, if you have a question about parliamentary procedure? I cannot—we cannot have other, any other speeches. Yes, mic 11.

JOHN A. SIMMONS (North Georgia): Bishop, is it appropriate to

make a request, a move for referral?

BISHOP HUTCHINSON: Yes, you can make a move for referral.

SIMMONS: Then, Bishop, I would move to refer this petition to the Commission for the Study of Ministry.

BISHOP HUTCHINSON: All right, the motion is to refer. Is there a second? All right, there is a second, if you would like to speak to it.

SIMMONS: The approved commission is to address the ordering of ministry for deacons and elders and local pastors in particular. We have a great deal of confusion with exactly how that ordering is to be made right now, and the co—the purpose of the commission is set up to address that ordering and to hopefully provide legislation for the next General Conference to address that. This limited—

BISHOP HUTCHINSON: All right, if you would sum up.

JOHN SIMMONS: —sacramental authority might well add more confusion to the meaning of itinerant ministry and the distinctive calling of deacons, elders, and local pastors. I urge your referral.

BISHOP HUTCHINSON: All right, there is a motion to refer. That's a speech for. I'll go here, right here in the middle, yes, to mic five please. Speech against.

STEPHEN P. TAYLOR (South Carolina) Thank you, Bishop, and I'll speak quickly. We do not need to refer. There are people who need the sacraments in places where deacons are working, and our tradition has always been to let the function go where the people are. Wesley ordained (*unintelligible*) so that the sacraments would go to the people; and we keep sending our people to where the people need them, our ministers, that's why we have local pastors with sacramental authority to be there with the people in certain places that deacons are the one ministering to the people and the people need the sacraments. Under these special conditions, let's give them

the chance to do that on our behalf and the behalf of the welcoming Christ. Thank you.

BISHOP HUTCHINSON: All right, let me try this. Let me see if it's the sense of the body that we're ready to move to a vote. We've—if you would, vote to move to a vote, would you just raise your hand? Those opposed, same sign. All right, I think the body is ready to, to vote on this. So if you will take your key-pads, we are ready to vote on the motion to refer. And if you would vote to refer, you will press “1”; if you would vote not to refer, you will press “2.” And do so when the clock appears.

(pause)

BISHOP HUTCHINSON: All right, you have voted not to refer. [Yes, 244; No, 594] We're ready to vote now, I think, on the main motion. I will move to that vote, if you would like to make a concluding statement before we vote.

AMY GEARHART SAGE (Missouri): Thank you, Bishop. As an elder in the church, I have shared the feelings and opinions and struggled with this conversation for many, many years. However, in the holy conferencing of our Legislative Committee, I joined with the majority of our Legislative Committee in concurring that this conversation and petition is not about rights. It's not about convenience. It's not about changing the orders. It's about making the means of grace available to all and further extending the mission and ministry of the church. I was compelled most, most profoundly by a lay person in our Legislative Committee who said, “Please, please, don't ever let the Church and its structure deny us the means of grace.” That's why we believe as a Legislative Committee that this needs to be adopted and that we might offer the means of grace to others.

BISHOP HUTCHINSON: All right. That, could, our concluding speech. We're ready to vote. If you will vote for the Majority Report or the—the report that's before us, you will press “1” for yes, press “2” for no, and you'll vote when the timer appears.

(pause)

BISHOP HUTCHINSON: All right, you have voted to sustain the petition. [Yes, 568; No, 282] We're ready now to move to the report of the Committee on Discipleship. Yes, sir, I've, I would come to you here at mic. five. Is this a question? A motion? The motion is not in order at this time. We'll come back after the Discipleship have made their report, their presentation. Yes, I'll call upon Tyrone Gordon to make this report to us.

(applause)

Popularity's just great Tyrone.

(applause)

GORDON: Thank you, Bishop; Bishop Hutchinson and to my own Bishop, Bishop Norris. I am Tyrone Gordon, chair of the Discipleship Legislative Committee. Bishop, I would like to thank our Legislative Committee who worked so, so hard in processing our work. Luke Wetzel, Kansas East was our vice-chair.

(applause)

GORDON: Phebe Crismo from Northern Philippines was our secretary,

(applause)

And our sub-committee chairs George Howard from West Ohio, Judy Benson from Oklahoma, Andy Langford from North Carolina and Matthew Johnson from Central Pennsylvania. And we are so happy to work together. And Bishop, our

first item is found in the *DCA*, p. no. 2177, p. no. 2177, Calendar Item No. 768. It is Petition No. 80117, Petition No. 80117, which is found in our *Advance DCA*, p. no. 601. The Committee recommends to adopt Calendar Item 761, which is an amended version of the original petition. George Howard will come and present the rationale.

BISHOP HUTCHINSON: Excuse me, clarity, was it 761 or 768?

*Ministry of Laity*

GORDON: I'm sorry, 768.

BISHOP HUTCHINSON: Thank you.

GEORGE G. HOWARD (West Ohio): Good evening, church. The petition before you comes to us from Alaska. Part of our, part of this country, the United States, that is very vast with broad distances. The National Association of Lay Speakers met and discussed this last week, or I guess now it was two weeks ago. They reported that in Alaska, there are many communities without our presence, without the presence of clergy. And there are people that go two or three years without Communion. This petition is about how it is that our clergy empower the laity to take the Communion elements, after Communion, to villages, to towns in very remote places. During the subcommittee meeting, the people from the Philippines that were on this committee, echoed the people from Alaska. They said the laity are going out and starting new churches. This would empower them, under the authority of their pastor, to be the hands and feet of Christ, to be the move-mental church that the laity are called to be.

BISHOP HUTCHINSON: All right, thank you. We are ready to hear your discussion on, on this. Yes, sir. Mic.5.

G. HAROLD WRIGHT (Oklahoma): (*Identifies himself*)

BISHOP HUTCHINSON: Yes, sir.

WRIGHT: I make a motion to suspend the rules in order to limit debate.

BISHOP HUTCHINSON: All right. That is— that's appropriate.

WRIGHT: I would request that we limit debate to one speech in favor and one speech for and that we also limit the presenters of the petition to one minute as well.

BISHOP HUTCHINSON: All right. Is there a second?

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKERS: Second.

BISHOP HUTCHINSON: All right, we are ready to vote to suspend the rules. That's what we're voting on. If you will first of all vote to suspend the rules, you will do so by a show of hands. Down. If the— and if you're opposed to that, same sign. It does pass. Now we're ready to vote on the motion itself, that is to limit the time of debate and the number of speeches. Yes, sir. Back in the back. Yes. Over here, mic. 11.

JAMIE E. JENKINS (North Georgia): (*identifies himself*)

BISHOP HUTCHINSON: Yes sir.

JENKINS: One speech, one minute. We've got some important items in front of us. It just seems unreasonable to me that we would limit. The one speech would really be the person who presents and nothing from the floor. Time is important but the matters at hand are even more so. I think it's just not reasonable to limit to sixty seconds for and against on the matters yet to be considered.

BISHOP HUTCHINSON: All right, thank you sir. Is there anybody that wishes to speak for? Yes, if you would come to mic. 8 or over to 7. I guess 7's closer.

FRANK H. (DUKE) ISON (Western North Carolina): How many more calendar items do we have?

BISHOP HUTCHINSON: Many, about forty I think.

ISON: I think that says everything we need to say about the petition to have one speech, 30 sec, I mean one minute.

(*laughter*)

BISHOP HUTCHINSON: All right, thank you. I think we're ready to vote on this. You, you know the, the consequences of what we're asking to be done. So I think we're ready to vote. Those who will vote in favor of the limitation of the debate, you will press "1." If you're not in favor of limiting the debate, you will press "2." And you will do so when the timer appears. [*Yes, 546; No, 265*]

All right, you have voted to limit the debate and so we will proceed with one speech for, one speech against. Let me make sure I have this correct. One minute per presenter, speaker and one minute for each person who is presenting at the podium. Is that my, am I correct? All right. All right, we're ready to, we're on 768, the Ministry of the Laity. We're ready for a speech for. Yes, come to mic. 8, if you will. Is that a, are you going to offer a speech for? 11, that's fine.

LYN A. POWELL (North Georgia): Thank you, Bishop. I want to share with the body that I came to Fort Worth determined to vote against this particular piece of legislation and I was in the legislative sub-committee that addressed it. But when we heard the appeal from Alaska and also from our brothers and sisters from the Philippines, we intentionally wrote into this piece of legislation a very important caveat and it says "in areas of the globe where distribution of the Communion elements is affected by time and distance." This means that lay persons in metro Atlanta will not be able to participate in the permission of this, of this legislation. It's intended for persons who have not had Communion for years and years and years and yet hang onto their faith and beg our lay persons who travel circuits throughout Alaska and the Philippines to administer Communion. And we also wrote in that it must be under the, under the permission of the pastor of those lay per-

sons. So I, I urge the body to approve this.

BISHOP HUTCHINSON: All right, we, we've run out of time. We're ready for a speech against. Is there a speech against? I see no cards. I think we're ready to vote. Those of you who are ready to vote, do you wish to say one more thing? One minute.

HOWARD: Not even a minute. We are a movemental church. This helps our clergy to empower the laity to be about the mission and ministry of the church. I urge you to vote yes.

BISHOP HUTCHINSON: All right, thank you. Now, if you'll take your keypads, we will vote "1" if you are for the petition and "2" if you are not for the petition. You'll vote when the timer appears. [*Yes, 668; No, 143*]

All right, you have sustained this petition and it has carried. We're ready now to move to Global Ministries committee. Global Ministries, and Carolyn Johnson will speak for Global Ministries committee.

JOHNSON: Thank you, Bishop and members of the General Conference. You've heard a recurring theme of thank yous to the persons who worked in our legislative committees and I'd like to also thank those persons who worked in Legislative Committee 8 and a very special thank you to—I'm going to ask them to stand—to David Wilson who was our vice chair and Maggie Jackson who was our secretary. Thank you.

(*applause*)

You had the opportunity the other day to meet most of our sub-committee chairs. One chair was not able to be with us and I think he's still in the house now. Pastor Okoko Luhata from East Congo and Emily Innes who was here for awhile. Thank you. Now, you, you will be using four document references so you will need, obviously, your current DCA, your ADCA, and your *Book of*

*Resolutions* and I will give the p. references now.

### *Holy Land Tours*

So we want to start with p. 2458 in the *DCA*, 2458, 2458. And this is related to Calendar Item 1369, 1369. I will also give you the reference in the *Book of Resolutions*, it's Resolution 292, 292, which is found on p. 732, 732. Again this is Calendar Item 1369, Petition 80437, 80437. The Committee is recommending that you revise, that you adopt the petition with the suggested amendments you see in Calendar Item 1369. And I would move that.

BISHOP HUTCHINSON: All right, thank you, this is before us now. Calendar Item 1369. Are there any speeches for? Or opposed? Yes, back here in the back. Yes, if you'll go to mic., I think 8 is probably the closest one. It looks like it from up here anyway.

JORGE LOCKWARD (New York): This is a very important resolution. It's been on our books and it is very important that we renew it. I had the opportunity of being in Palestine and in the middle—and in Israel—and in the middle of the discussion that we have with the two sides, we forget that there is a third side and that is our Christian brothers and sisters in Palestine and Israel. This resolution helps us stay in community with them and also calls us to accountability as to how we travel into the Holy Land. I urge that you support this petition.

BISHOP HUTCHINSON: All right, thank you. Now is there anybody who wishes to speak against? I see no red cards. I think we are ready to vote. If you will vote for the sustaining of the petition, you will press "1" and if you vote against that, you will press "2" and you will vote when the timer appears. [*Yes, 644; No, 150*]

All right, you have voted for the petition as 644 to 150. It is sustained. Thank you. We are ready now if we can to move to the Church and Society 1. Church and Society 1. Julius Trim-

ble will make this presentation. Friends, we are now down to three minutes per calendar item. If we take every calendar item, we have an average of three minutes for discussion of each one. So, Julius, if you will lead us into this one.

### *Science and Technology*

TRIMBLE: Bishop and friends of general conference, Church and Society 1 dealt with more than 200 petitions and tonight we will be looking at p. 2174, 2174 in the *DCA*, Calendar Item 733, 733, Petition No. 80050, found in the *Advanced DCA*, p. 187. The petition has been amended by Committee.

BISHOP HUTCHINSON: Excuse me, Julius, would you give us the page no., please, in the current *DCA* where we will find the calendar item.

TRIMBLE: p. 2266.

BISHOP HUTCHINSON: Ah, thank you. 2266.

TRIMBLE: My apologies, 2266, Calendar Item 733, 733.

BISHOP HUTCHINSON: Thank you.

TRIMBLE: Petition No. 80050, Science and Technology. The petition is amended, has been amended by Committee. The Committee recommends adoption. Beth Quick chaired the subcommittee, but had to leave and Denise Honeycutt will share the summary and the rationale from the Committee.

BISHOP HUTCHINSON: All right, Denise.

J. DENISE HONEYCUTT (Virginia): I have to tell you Beth Quick was my friend until she told me she had to leave and I had to present this.

(laughter)

OK, so the middle column, the very last sentence, we are, we are recommending that you approve this. There is a slight change in the very last sentence. *Word* should be capitalized. That is referring to the Word of God so that should be capitalized. This petition is affirming science and faith as

being wonderful partners that are no longer considered incompatible but instead are ways in which working together can help shape our understanding of how God works in our world and how we can have a more full understanding of God in our own lives. You will notice in the original petition that we have removed some of the language about Biblical authority and interpretation. That language initially referred to the Bible as metaphor and that seemed not to fully represent many ways in which some folks read and interpret Scripture. So with that change and with what you see before us, we would encourage you to adopt this petition.

BISHOP HUTCHINSON. All right, thank you. The petition is before you. Is there any discussion on the petition. Yes, here to my, yes sir, if you will come to mic. 3. Be a speech for?

MATTHEW G. KUZMA (Northern Illinois): Yes, for. I would like to speak for this petition. I believe, and many of the folks that I know who are Christians believe, that the Bible, the Scriptures, and our experience in faith teach us the *who*, who was created, and the *why*, why God created us, but that science is best explaining at *how*, how it happened in this world in our time and how do we explain the world around us. So the *what*, the physical things, but the *why* and *who* we are and called, our faith and the Scriptures speak to most authoritatively. And so I'd urge the adoption of this. Thank you.

BISHOP HUTCHINSON: All right, thank you. We can take a speech against. Is there a speech against? I see none, yes sir, is this a question? Yes, if you'll come to mic. 6.

TIMOTHY J. ROGERS (South Carolina): I am looking at the very last part of the report on 2266 at the phrase that has been deleted "that God has wrought is." So I have two questions: The first is, does that mean that the sentence found basically in the center of the paragraph, of the petition now reads "we find that as science expands human un-

derstanding of the natural world, our understanding of the mysteries is enhanced.” Is that the way that is supposed to read?

BISHOP HUTCHINSON: I’ll ask the committee to speak to it.

HONEYCUTT; I think if you will look on p. 2266, it should read “We find that as science expands human understanding of the natural world, our understanding of the mysteries of God’s creation and Word are enhanced.” That is the correct reading.

BISHOP HUTCHINSON: OK. All right, I think we are ready to vote unless there’s a speech against and I’ve seen none. So I think we are ready to vote. If you will vote for the, to adopt the petition, you will press “1”; if you vote not to adopt, you will press “2” and vote as the light appears.

(pause)

BISHOP HUTCHINSON: All right. You have voted to adopt the petition. [*Yes, 639; No, 158*] Now we’re ready to move to the—one of the independent—the independent commissions. That is Arnetta Beverly.

ARNETTA E. BEVERLY (Western North Carolina): Good evening, Bishop and members of the conference. The work of the independent commission could not have been done without the assistance and support of our vice-chair, Mark A. Nerio, Southwest Texas; our secretary, Tara Sutton from Detroit; subcommittee members Teresita Matos from Florida; Greg Nelson, Oregon-Idaho; Joseph Harris, Oklahoma; and Todd Bristow, North Texas.

I direct your attention to p. 2178 in the *DCA*, Petition 81228, which can be found in the *Advance DCA* on p. 1260. Bishop, the committee recommends that this item be referred to the annual conference, and the rationale is that the annual conferences should have a choice in structure.

BISHOP HUTCHINSON: All right. Thank you. The committee’s recommendation is that you refer. Is

there any question or discussion? I see none. I think we’re ready to vote. If you will vote to refer this petition, you will do so by pressing “1”; if you vote against, you will press “2” when the light appears. [*Yes, 708; No, 57*]

All right, you have voted to refer this petition. We’re doing—

BEVERLY: Thank you, Bishop.

BISHOP HUTCHINSON: Thank you. We’re doing great; we’re doing great, here. We’re moving right along. We’re ready to move now to Faith and Order. Mary Elizabeth Moore.

#### *Committee on Faith and Order*

MARY ELIZABETH MOORE (California-Pacific): Thank you, Bishop. I have thanked our remarkably grace-filled committee, and I want now to thank Mary Council-Austin, who gave excellent leadership to her subcommittee and was unable to be present with us on the stage for the first report.

Please turn to p. 2050 for our first Calendar Item, No. 173. The petition is 81448, found on p. 915 of the *Advance DCA*. The committee recommends rejection of Petition 81448. The rationale is that that sentence identified for revision describes the movements of God’s grace. Later in the same section, just two or three paragraphs later, is already a description of our responses to God’s grace, including repentance for our sins. The committee recommends rejection.

BISHOP HUTCHINSON: All right. The petition is before you. The recommendation is rejection. I see no cards. I think you’re ready to vote. If you will vote for the rejection—no, I’m sorry. If you will vote for the petition, you will vote yes, or “1.” If you are voting with the committee’s recommendation, you will vote “2.” If you’ll do so when the light appears. [*Yes, 142; No, 634*]

All right, you have voted with the committee to reject the petition. We now call upon Judicial Administration. Laura Easto.

LAURA B. EASTO (Baltimore-Washington): That means Baltimore-Washington is still awake, too. Thank you, Bishop. I’ve been up here four times, and you’ve sent me away four times. Every time you vote to put more stuff on the consent calendar, you shoo us off this stage, so I’m glad to...yeah, thank you for that.

#### *Complaint Against Professing Member*

We have one item that we want to present this evening. It’s on p. no. 2367 in the *DCA*, and it’s Calendar Item 1351. This item refers to Petition No. 81411 and can be found on p. 1295 in the *Advance DCA*. I want to say to you that this is a fair process for a complaint against a professing member in our United Methodist Church. We amended the original petition as a committee, and we recommend its adoption as amended. Evelynn Catterson, a member of our group and the cochair of the subcommittee, will give you just a 30-second understanding of our rationale.

BISHOP HUTCHINSON: All right.

EVELYNN S. CATERSON (Greater New Jersey): Thank you, Bishop. The initial petition basically did away with a trial for a layperson if a complaint or grievance was filed. This is in violation of our Constitution, paragraph 20. However, we thought that there should be a process if a complaint or grievance was filed against a layperson that would not result in the charge being an offense that could result in a judicial complaint. There is no process. Complaint or grievance filed is...there is no way the *Discipline* explains what has to happen with that. So we developed a four-subparagraph section that you have before you, paragraphs 5, 6, 7, and 8. 5 just states what is. Six simply states the rights of the accused. Seven indicates that fair process comes first; if that doesn’t work, then the layperson certainly has a right to a trial, but in the alternative can do the alterna-

tive process, which is eight, which would refer to a complaint or grievance that would not result in a judicial complaint. I urge its adoption.

BISHOP HUTCHINSON: All right. What's before us is the petition as it is amended. Is there any discussion? All right. I see none. I think we're ready to vote. If you will vote to sustain the petition or adopt it, you will vote "1." If you are against the adoption of the petition, you will press "2," and you will do so when the clock appears.

BISHOP HUTCHINSON: All right, you have approved it, thank you. [Yes, 716; No, 78] We're ready to move now to financial administration. Jonathan Holston, financial administration. Jonathan.

L JONATHAN HOLSTON (North Georgia): Bishop, our next item will be presented by Jim Berner.

BISHOP HUTCHINSON: Thank you, Jim.

#### *GBPHB Authorizations*

JIM BERNER (West Virginia): I was pleased to share leadership on my committee with Yunusa Usman from Nigeria and David Stotts from Mississippi. I would ask that you turn in the *DCA* to p. 2177, Calendar Item 772. It is Petition 80539, found in the *ADCA* on p. 782. I have some brief rationale, Bishop.

BISHOP HUTCHINSON: Yes.

BERNER: The Board of Pensions has an internationally recognized social impact investing throughout positive social investment programs. They have committed to invest over one billion dollars to fund affordable housing for families with low to moderate incomes. They have funded loans to community organizations like Native American Health Center in Oakland, California, and the Friendship House in San Francisco for Native Americans with chemical dependencies.

Through their microfinance lending program the Board of Pensions has supported the working poor in Albania, Bosnia, Kenya, the Philippines, Russia, Tanzania, and Uganda with

microfinance loans that support small businesses. Bishop, I urge the adoption of this petition.

BISHOP HUTCHINSON: All right, the petition is before you as it is printed in the *Advance DCA*. Is there discussion? Yes, sir, if you would come to mic. 2?

GREGORY MCGARVEY (South Indiana): I stand to support the petition. As a fully mature pension plan in one of those who is pretty mature, it would be extremely helpful for us to be able to continue to expand the base and this would allow us to do that. We are respected throughout this country and even around the world for our ability to provide a great pension plan. This will assist us in growing that. Thank you.

BISHOP HUTCHINSON: Thank you. Is there anyone wishes to speak against? I see no one. I think we're ready to vote. If you'll take your keypad...if you will sustain the petition as it is printed you will vote by pressing "1." If you do not wish to adopt it you will press "2." You'll vote when the clock appears. [Yes, 752; No, 49]

(pause)

All right, you have voted to adopt the petition as it is printed. Thank you

MCGARVEY: Thank you, Bishop.

BISHOP HUTCHINSON: We're ready to move now to Church and Society 2. Frederick Brewington.

FREDERICK K. BREWINGTON (New York): Thank you, Bishop. Bishop, the next three petitions we're going to bring as a group in an attempt to bundle them, if they are so allowed to be bundled by the body.

BISHOP HUTCHINSON: All right.

#### *Quality Healthcare*

BREWINGTON: They deal with the issue of quality health care. They are found at the following *DCA*, pp. 2175—excuse me, 2174 and 2268. They are Calendar Nos. 738, 737,

and 1198, found in the *ADCA* 347, 348, and 379. The petition numbers are: Petition No. 80642, 80568, and 81011. These three petitions, Bishop, deal with strong statements dealing with the need for quality health care and the right of all people to that as a basic human right. It sets out, they all set out, as strong statements rooted in a positive way that discuss the responsibility of government to partner and be involved, and making sure that health care is made available to all. Two deal with paragraph 162.T of the *Book of Discipline* and the other deals with resolutions 108 and 113 of the *Book of Resolutions* and seek to combine the intent of those resolutions into a single resolution. If further information is needed, Bishop, I would provide that; but the committee has recommended that each of these petitions be adopted.

BISHOP HUTCHINSON: All right. The request is that these be bundled into one vote and you would be adopting all three at the same time. Do I see any, heartburn with us doing it that way? I don't think I do. Yes, do you have a question? Back here in section C, to mic. 8.

TIMOTHY J. RISS (New York): I heard that we're adopting all three of these. Is one of them on consent calendar...I'm sorry...is one of them something that you wanted to reject?

BREWINGTON: That is not the recommendation of the committee. We are adopt as to all three.

RISS: I'm sorry.

BISHOP HUTCHINSON: I think we're ready to vote on this. If you will vote for the adoption of all three petitions you will do so by pressing "1." If you will reject all three petitions you will do so by pressing "2." Vote when the timer appears.

(pause)

BISHOP HUTCHINSON: All right, we have adopted all three petitions (Calendar Item 738, 737, 1198). [Yes, 690; No, 114] We are ready then to move back to ministry

and higher education. Call upon Kathleen Baskin-Ball.

*University Senate Composition*

**KATHLEEN BASKIN-BALL** (North Texas): Good evening again. I am presenting to you on behalf of the Legislative Committee on ministry and higher education, *DCA*, a petition on *DCA* p. 2178. This is Calendar Item No. 786. Petition No. 80205 and can be found in the *Advance DCA* on p. no. 1488. The petition is entitled “University Senate Composition” and seeks to increase participation in the University Senate by including in its membership those persons who are on or who are staffed to conference boards of ordained ministry. The committee recommends that the General Conference reject this petition.

David Beckley, who was our chairperson of the subcommittee, is layperson for Mississippi, had to leave conference this afternoon to return home, and so our vice-chair of the full legislative committee, Sergei Nikolaev from Russia, will present the rationale on this petition.

**BISHOP HUTCHINSON:** All right, thank you. Sergei?

**SERGEI NIKOLAEV** (Central Russia): General sentiment of this position is to increase the influence of boards of Ordained Ministry on the University Senate. The committee recommends rejection of this petition because of two reasons. First, the committee believes that the existing rules under which University Senate functions already address—adequately address—the primary concern of the petition. For example, the Division of Ordained Ministry already appoints two people to the University Senate and these people have—they are Board of Ordained Ministry experience. And secondly, the University Senate by its nature is a pure review group. Stronger influence of the boards of Ordained Ministry on the University Senate will prevent it from functioning as a pure review group. Hence the committee recommends rejection of this Petition 80205. Thank you.

**BISHOP HUTCHINSON:** All right, thank you. Now it is before you. The recommendation is to reject the petition. Yes, back here in section D—yes sir, you’re moving to mic. 8. This is a speech for the rejection in favor of the committee?

**THOMAS B. GRIEB** (Kentucky): No, it is a—it’s a speech for the petition.

**BISHOP HUTCHINSON:** OK, that’s good. Tom speaks for the petition.

**GRIEB:** I don’t think the influence of the Board of Ordained Ministry on the University Senate is necessarily a bad thing. There’s a synergy between both—University Senate and Board of Ordained Ministry both need to hear from one another. You also notice the vote of the committee-at-large was very narrow: 36 to 34. I would lobby in favor of the adoption of this petition.

**BISHOP HUTCHINSON:** All right, thank you. Is there someone wishes to speak against the petition? Yes, if you would go—what, which is closest for you? OK, mic. 4.

**BRUCE C. BIRCH** (Baltimore-Washington): I’m speaking against the previous speaker’s sentiment. I serve as the dean at the Wesley Theological Seminary. Part of the confusion of this particular petition is that it assumes that most of the work of the University Senate is related to its theological schools division. A huge part of the University Senate’s work relates to schools and universities where boards of Ordained Ministry are not particularly germane. But also, the rules of the University Senate are that when it does its work in relation to theological schools, it does not look into either the further accreditation of our officially United Methodist schools or the certifying of non-United Methodist schools without consultation with boards of Ordained Ministry in those conferences and those places. So there’s extensive—

**BISHOP HUTCHINSON:** You will sum up.

**BRUCE BIRCH:** —there’s extensive consultation with boards of Ordained Ministry but particularized to the places where those schools exist as opposed to placing those persons on the University Senate itself. I urge you to support the committee’s recommendation to reject.

**BISHOP HUTCHINSON:** All right, thank you. We are now ready to vote. If you will vote for the petition...

**NIKOLAEV:** (*Unintelligible*)

**BISHOP HUTCHINSON:** I’m sorry, yes. I’m sorry—yes, Sergei, please.

**NIKOLAEV:** Thank you. This petition has been discussed in detail in the Subcommittee on Higher Education, and concern that was raised against the petition was addressed there by the 12 administrators of seminaries and universities as well as members of the University Senate. Under—during the discussion it became clear that most of the concerns against most of the concerns that were raised in the petition were based on missed, misconceived assumptions. So, I urge you to vote to reject this petition and go with the committee’s recommendation because it allows the University Senate to work the way it’s supposed to work.

**BISHOP HUTCHINSON:** All right, thank you. Now we’re gonna vote either for the petition as it is or against the petition. If you vote against the petition you will be voting with the committee’s recommendation. So if you vote for the petition, you will press “1”; if you vote against the petition, you will press “2.” Do so when the clock appears. (*Yes, 214; No, 597*)

**BISHOP HUTCHINSON:** All right, the screens, I’m told the screens, the one that we look at, it has been rejected by 597 to 214, so you have voted with the commissions’ recommendation. Just one minute, please.

(*pause*)

**BISHOP HUTCHINSON:** All right, we are ready, now then to move to...let’s see where are

we...Discipleship. Yes sir, Tyrone Gordon.

TYRONE D. GORDON (North Texas): Thank you Bishop. I'd like to present our vice-chair, Luke Wetzel, and our subcommittee chair, Judy Benson to present this Petition.

*Jurisdictional Young Adult Ministry*

LUKE A. WETZEL (Kansas East): Thank you. Our next item is found in the *DCA* on p. 2176, it is Calendar item 766, and it is Petition no. 80230 and can be found on page 597 of the *Advanced DCA*. That's Calendar item 766, on page 2176 of the *DCA*. The committee moves Calendar item 766 be referred to the division on ministries with young people, and Matthew Johnson, the subcommittee chair, who is responsible is for this Petition had to leave early, and so, I'll ask another subcommittee chair, Judy Benson, to present the rationale.

JUDY J. BENSON (Oklahoma): In order to be consistent with previous actions of the body on similar petitions, on consent calendars, we recommend referral to the Division on Ministries with Young People on Calendar item 766, Petition 80230.

BISHOP HUTCHINSON: All right, thank you, it's a motion to refer. I think you're probably ready to vote on that. Those of you who would refer Calendar item 766 will do so by pressing "1" if you vote against the referral, you will press "2". Please do so when the timer appears. [*Yes, 728; No, 53*]

BISHOP HUTCHINSON: All right, you have voted to adopt the calendar...I'm sorry, to refer it. We are ready now for the next presentation, Global Ministries, and I think following this, if Dean Posey will be ready to come and help us with a little stretching exercise, that would be helpful. So, Dean if you're in the house or whoever...is someone prepared to do that...nobody is prepared to do that...you'll figure out how to stretch yourself in a moment.

(laughter)

BISHOP HUTCHINSON: Bishop Norris has volunteered to lead us.

(laughter and applause)

BISHOP HUTCHINSON: That'll be the hit of the evening, I can tell you! Carolyn Johnson.

*Israel/Palestine Conflict*

CAROLYN JOHNSON (North Indiana): Yes, thank you again Bishop and General Conference. The items...we have one item at this point, and the page number is in your *DCA* 2367. It's Calendar item 1348. In the *Advanced DCA*, the page reference is 1122; it's Petition 80441 on the Israel-Palestine conflict. The Petition relates to Resolution 323 which is due for a re-adoption, and if you are using your Book of Resolutions, you will find that resolution on p. 811. The committee recommends adoption of the petition.

BISHOP HUTCHINSON: All right, thank you, it is before you, Calendar item 1348, is before you. All right, I see a red card here, if you would go to mic 2.

WERNER PHILIPP (Germany East): I want to speak against this petition. I think this petition is out-sided, and with this language, not helpful. Many sentences of this petition are not balanced by a realistic view, of the history and current situation of this conflict. For instance, I cannot find a clear statement against anti-Semitism which denies Israel its right of existence and defense. As a German, with our special historical background, and I think as Christians, we have a special responsibility for peace between Israel and Palestinians. The goal cannot be one-sided petitions for one, or another party of this difficult conflict, but to pray and to act for peace and reconciliation between Israel and Palestinian people. Thank you for your attention.

BISHOP HUTCHINSON: All right, thank you sir. Thank you very

much. Is there a statement for...yes, in the far back in Section D, in the aisle almost.

RUTH A. DAUGHERTY (Eastern Pennsylvania): I speak in support of this...if we look at what has occurred in Israel, with the resolutions that have been passed by the United Nations urging that there be the Palestinians having justice, as well as the Israelis, and we know that the wall that is being built which is isolating Palestinians, so that they aren't even connected with one another and where they are, have to go through checkpoints to even to relate to one another, this is a very important action for us to take, urging that the peace movement continue forward, and this is being supported by both Jewish and Palestinian peace movements in Israel.

BISHOP HUTCHINSON: All right, thank you. Now we are ready to vote...do you wish to say any more?

JOHNSON: Only that the committee did have a very robust and rigorous conversation, and again this is a re-adoption of an expression about the situation that the church has had for the past eight years, and think that this needs to continue and we feel this is the best expression of that.

BISHOP HUTCHINSON: Thank you...we are on Calendar item 1348; if you will vote to adopt, which is the committees' recommendation, you will press "1", if you would vote not to adopt, you will press "2". And you'll vote when the timer appears. [*Yes, 528; No, 273*]

BISHOP HUTCHINSON: All right, we have adopted the Calendar Item 1348. Friends, you have worked very, very hard. I think we're ready to stop for just a moment. So what I'm gonna have you do is either stand in place. We're going to start again in ten minutes, that's at a quarter 'til. If you need to leave the room, do so; otherwise be back in place or stay in place and we will start promptly at a quarter 'til.

(music)

(laughter)

BISHOP HUTCHINSON: They were telling me to keep my day job, and Bishop Norris is gonna keep his rather than lead exercises.

(laughter)

If we could come back together, we will continue—you're doing great. We're, we are, we've actually made up a little time; and we have 29 items yet to go, 29 items. So you're doing well. So if you'll come be seated and—you'll come be seated. There was a person in—yes, back here at mic.6 that asked for a personal privilege and I agreed that I would give that to him. If you would go to mic.6, we will begin with that point of personal privilege. And then we have a couple of announcements you need to hear as we begin. So if you would be courteous as you're going back to your places, just do so quietly and listen to this personal privilege while you're moving. Yes, sir?

SKYLER S. NIMMONS (South Carolina): Thank you Bishop. I asked for this personal privilege to address the Conference. Bishop, delegates, friends, and observers of General Conference, in 2004, the General Conference made a commitment to raise \$8 million for the Global AIDS Fund during this quadrennium. As of the beginning of this General Conference session, we've only raised close to \$2.5 million. HIV and AIDS is continuing to affect us as a global community; especially among women and African Americans. While we worked, in close to our 12 hours today, over 3,600 people will have died of AIDS. I am extremely excited and amazed to hear of our growing commitment to the 2006 Nothing But Nets Campaign; however, I am saddened that we have fallen short on our promise to ourselves and the world.

I humbly ask you, brothers and sisters, to consider an offering and other ways in which we can support the Global AIDS Fund through sales of memorabilia from General Conference or our worship videos—

BISHOP HUTCHINSON: All right, sir, can you, can you—

NIMMONS: Yes.

BISHOP HUTCHINSON: —complete, complete it.

NIMMONS: This is the last sentence.

BISHOP HUTCHINSON: All right. Thank you.

NIMMONS: Throughout the last week and a half, we have spent a great deal of time using the words 'ethics', 'morals', and 'taking action.' It is time we proved ourselves to be people of our word. Thank you.

BISHOP HUTCHINSON: Thank you very much.

(applause)

We are ready now to go to a couple of announcements that need to be made, and then we'll move back to our calendar items.

REIST: Three items were taken from the GCORR display this evening at approximately 7:45 P.M. Missing are a black roller-board suitcase, a green stole, and a black robe. The stole and robe are of historic value. If found or taken in error, please call John Coleman—and you might want to write down this number in case you come across these—at 443-745-5654, that's 443-745-5654. There is good hope in asking you because we found the missing case with the passport.

(applause)

North Indiana, South Indiana, West Michigan, Louisiana, Central Texas, Western Penn., Texas, North Texas, North Carolina, your basketballs are in Room 104.

(applause)

The plant shelves that are around the arena are available to anyone who wants them. The plant shelves—the plants are missing now from the shelves, but you can see them around the arena.

And the Arkansas Delegation would like to affirm at the cede of the General Conference here in Fort Worth, Texas, their appreciation to Polly Schaeffer, an Arkansas United Methodist, for being the contest winner of the 2008 "A Future With Hope" logo.

(applause)

BISHOP HUTCHINSON: All right. I think we are ready now to continue our calendar items, and we will begin with Church and Society 1, Julius Trimble.

JULIUS C. TRIMBLE (East Ohio): Bishop, it is my hope that there's still members from Church and Society 1 in the crowd. If you, you were part of that legislative committee, you just wave your hand—not a card.

(laughter)

#### *Texas Death Penalty*

All, all, all of them have not gone home. We will be looking at DCA p. 2174, 2174, Calendar Item 734, 734, *Advance DCA* p. 307. The main body of the text is found on p. 308, p. 308, Texas Death Penalty. The petition stands as sub-submitted. The Committee recommends adoption. Tracy Smith Malone chaired the subcommittee and had to leave. On stage with me is our legislative committee secretary, Gladys Mangiduyos, who has helped with all of our work. I will share the summary and the rationale.

According to 2007 statistics from Amnesty International, among the top five nations known to carry out executions is the United States of America. The state of Texas far exceeds more than any of the other states in the U.S.A. in carrying out the death penalty. The governor, by law, is prohibited from commuting the sentence except upon the recommendation from the Board of Pardon and Parole. A known fact: The Board of Pardon and Parole recommended that a mentally handicapped

person's sentence be commuted, but the governor did not take the advice of the board. The person was executed.

Paragraph 164 (g), the *Book of Discipline*, our *Social Principles*, says, 'We believe the death penalty denies the power of Christ to redeem.' That section concludes with 'we oppose the death penalty.' This petition affirms our stance—

BISHOP HUTCHINSON: Julius, if you could bring it to a close.

TRIMBLE: —on the capital punishment.

BISHOP HUTCHINSON: All right. Thank you. All right, it is before you, Calendar Item 734. Is there any discussion? I see none. I think we're ready to vote. If you'll take your keypad and vote. Press "1" for yes, "2" for no. Vote when the light appears.

(pause)

[Yes, 583; No, 154]

BISHOP HUTCHINSON: All right, you have voted to sustain Calendar Item 734. We are ready now to move to Faith and Order. Thank you, Julius. Now we're ready for Faith and Order, Mary Elizabeth Moore.

MOORE: Thank you, Bishop Hutchinson. The next petition will be presented by the Vice Chair of Faith and Order, Ralph Oduor.

RALPH R. ODUOR (New England): Thank you, Bishop. Friends in Christ, the next item of business is in your *DCA*, p. 2177, Calendar Item No. 773, and you may find that in your *ADCA*, p. 931. Although the Committee is recommending rejection on this item, I would remind the body that this body has acted earlier, with respect to the *Discipline* including the Constitution, and taken actions which would seem to make this petition unnecessary.

BISHOP HUTCHINSON: All right, sir. Thank you. So the recommendation of the Committee is for rejection. We are ready then to vote on this or discuss if there is some-

body wishes to discuss. I see no cards. I think we're ready to vote. If you will vote for the petition, you will vote "1"; if you would vote to against the petition, you will vote "2".

(pause)

[Yes, 242; No, 519]

All right, you have voted 519 against and 242 for. The petition is rejected. So you have voted with the Committee. We call now for Judicial Administration, Laura Easto.

#### *Participation of Bishops*

LAURA B. EASTO (Baltimore-Washington): Well, we are rolling now! I will ask you turn your attention to p. no. 2368 in the *DCA*, Calendar Item 1352, p. 2368, Calendar Item 1352. This item refers to Petition No. 80499, which can be found on p. 1303 in the *Advanced DCA*. Bishop, this is a petition that illuminates the fair process in judicial administration. Paragraph No. 2701 in the *Book of Discipline* was opened with this petition and the hard working members of the Judicial Administration Committee rewrote the entire paragraph to try to help it to make more clarion sense. So what you have before you, the committee recommends adoption as amended.

BISHOP HUTCHINSON: All right, thank you. The recommendation is adoption as amended. Is there discussion? I see none. I think we are ready to vote. You will vote for Calendar Item 1352, you will vote yes, press "1"; against, you will press "2" and you will vote when the clock appears. [Yes, 667; No, 91]

All right, you have voted for.

EASTO: Thank you.

BISHOP HUTCHINSON: We are ready now for Financial Administration.

ODUOR: Bishop, the next item will be presented by Byrd Bonner.

BISHOP HUTCHINSON: All right.

#### *Divestment and Sudan*

BONNER: Thank you. We are in the *DCA* on p. 2366, Calendar Item 1344. It refers to Petition No. 80835, found in the *ADCA* on p. 908. The title is Divestment and Sudan.

Brothers and sisters, the eyes of the faith based investing community are upon us in this moment. During the last 24 hours, we have referenced and shared moments to remember the Holocaust as yesterday was Yom HaShoa. Earlier today we had a reference to Tiananmen Square as a woman who was a survivor of that massacre stood in our midst, one of our own delegates. In both of those instances, there were references to the fact that we would never let those atrocities and genocide happen again. But it has happened again and continues to happen in the Darfur region of the Sudan. You all know about this atrocity in our midst and it is well documented in a resolution that has been passed by us while we've been here on our position on the subject. The Resolution that you have before you is recommended for adoption by the Financial Administration Legislation Committee. It references in its text dependence upon foreign, direct foreign investment and targeted divestment from Sudan. When those of us in the investment community...

BISHOP HUTCHINSON: Byrd, Byrd.

BONNER: ...who follow these resolutions, read them, we read them as a whole, not just looking at the *Therefore* language but the resolution as a whole, we urge your adoption.

BISHOP HUTCHINSON: All right, the time is up and we are ready now for you to discuss if you wish to do so. Calendar Item 1344. Is there any discussion? I see none. We are ready to vote. If you will vote for Calendar Item, the petition as amended, Calendar Item 1344, you will press "1"; if you are opposed to that, you will press "2". Do so when the timer appears.

(pause)

[Yes, 710; No, 83]

(pause)

BISHOP HUTCHINSON: All right you've voted to sustain by 710 to 83, Calendar Item 1344. We call now on Church and Society 2, Church and Society 2, Frederick Brewington.

*Vulnerable Human Life*

FREDERICK K. BREWINGTON (New York): Thank you, Bishop. The next item is found on p. 2267 of the *DCA*, that's 2267 of the *DCA*. It is Petition No. 81251, 81251. It bears a calendar no. of 1190, that being 1190 and it's also found in the *Advance Edition of the DCA* at p. 425. The committee recommends the rejection of Calendar No. 1190. The petition which was entitled 'Defending the Sacred Worth of all Vulnerable Human Life' was rejected by the Committee because it mixed so many concepts together that it became unclear, and used terms and drew conclusions based on data which was at least a decade old. Also, it mixed in young people, the poor, the elderly, and terminally ill in an attempt, to the Committee it—they thought, to link it with abortion. A majority of the Committee had problems with the petition and we recommend its rejection.

BISHOP HUTCHINSON: All right, it is before you. The recommendation is rejection. Is there discussion? Let me see if the house is willing to do this, to save a little time on the voting, I think that you—we may can do this by a show of hands. Let's try that and see if it's clear to us. If you would vote for the petition, or for Calendar Item 1190, you will do so by raising your hand. Thank you, hands down. Those who are opposed to Calendar Item 1190. And it does not carry. Thank you. We're ready then to move to Ministry and Higher Education. I'm sorry, point of order. Mic. 11.

MICHAEL MCKEE (Central Texas): Bishop Hutchinson, I think we had been voting on petitions all night and then we just began to vote on a calendar item so we were unclear about what we were voting on. Can we do that again?

BISHOP HUTCHINSON: All right, we can and I apologize for that. My colleagues reminded me I've been saying 'petition' and I should have been saying 'calendar item.' I hope I've not confused you terribly for that. So we will, I will be glad to take the vote again just to make clear that we're all right. So we're to Calendar Item 1190. The recommendation of the committee is rejection. If you will vote for Calendar Item 1190.

VOICES FROM AUDIENCE:  
No!

BISHOP HUTCHINSON: I'm sorry.

UNIDENTIFIED MALE  
SPEAKER: You were right, you are correct.

BISHOP HUTCHINSON: All right, I'm, they're telling I am correct. If we will vote—all right. Just one minute, let's, let us make sure we're real clear. All right, this is what we have followed all evening and I was trying to shift in mid-stream here. But let me go back to what I've been doing which I think you have followed. On this one because they're recommending *rejection*, we're going to vote with the petition, or on the petition itself. So, if you will vote for the petition you will vote "1." If you will vote against the petition, you will vote "2." If you vote "2" you are voting to sustain the Committee's recommendation which is rejection. So if you vote to uphold the petition as it is printed, you will vote "1." If you vote to reject the petition, you will vote "2." A vote of "2" is to sustain the Committee. So, you're almost there. [Yes, 158; No, 534]

(pause)

All right, you have voted to reject the petition itself. Thank you, thank you for that clarification. Now, let's go to Ministry and Higher Education, Kathleen Baskin-Ball.

KATHLEEN BASKIN-BALL (North Texas): I am Kathleen Baskin-Ball, clergy from the North Texas Conference, Chair of the Committee on Ministry and Higher Education. More importantly, I am the mother of a precious little boy by the name of Skylar, who at four months of age attended his first General Conference; and I'm here to confess tonight that he voted illegally on the floor of General Conference 2004. But now at age four Skylar is watching the proceedings on live stream on his dad's computer at home and so I promised I would wave to him since this is my last time to be before you because it is our last petition to share with you tonight. Woo hoo!

(applause)

I want to say one other thing before I introduce the one who is going to give the rationale for this petition. I want to say thank you to my brothers and sisters

(pause)

who are shaping Skylar's young life with such love and who continue—I want to say thank you to all of you who continue to find ways to make the church and the Gospel of Jesus Christ accessible to all God's children. This church of ours, even with all its imperfections and its disagreements and its brokenness is absolutely the greatest blessing in my life, in my family's life.

(applause)

I want to say thank you to the Church, for in my battle with cancer these last 14 months, we have known no greater joy than the love and the fellowship of the Church. And so thank you for these last two weeks and for the privilege of chairing the Legislative Committee and

for being a part of the love that, no matter what we have done these last two weeks, I believe God will continue to share with the world in a bold and ferocious way. And so the victory will be Jesus Christ's and I believe that and so it's with confidence that I move on to be the church after this event.

(pause)

### *Health Requirements*

I have one last petition. It is on *DCA* p. no. 2269; that is 2269. The Calendar Item is 1209, 1209 and it is Petition No. 81058. It's found in *Advanced DCA* p. no. 1430. The Committee recommends that the General Conference reject this petition. I reintroduce to you Joy Barrett, Secretary of the sub-committee, clergy in the Detroit Conference, who comes to give a very brief rationale for this motion.

JOY A. BARRETT (Detroit): Thank you, Kathleen. Again, *DCA* 2269, Calendar Item 1209. This is one of several similar petitions. Our Committee commends the intention of this petition and the call to consider health and wellness in a holistic manner. We found ourselves; however, choosing to recommend rejection of this petition because we felt implementation would be too difficult at this time. We recommend rejection.

BISHOP HUTCHINSON: All right, the recommendation is rejection of the petition. Yes, back in the far corner. Section C the yellow card, mic 12.

BARRIE M. TRITLE (Iowa): I move to refer Item 1209 to the new Denominational Health Church Systems taskforce. If I have a second I'll speak to it.

BISHOP HUTCHINSON: Is there a second?

TRITLE: As our presenter just mentioned, there was a lot of support for this item, but we didn't know how to implement it. If we refer it to this group, maybe they can come back with some good suggestions as to how we can implement it.

BISHOP HUTCHINSON: All right, thank you. That is a speech for referral, is there a speech against? I think you're ready to vote. Let's do this, let's try this by a show of hands. If you are willing to, ready to refer, the petition, you will do so by raising your hand. Thank you, hands down. Those opposed to referral? It passes and it is referred. All right, we'll move to discipleship, Tyrone Gordon.

TYRONE D. GORDON: Bishop...

BISHOP HUTCHINSON: And as a Tyrone, just a moment of personal privilege. Kathleen, you are in all of our prayers as you go back home to your family. God Bless You and thank you for your witness.

(applause, cheering)

All right, Tyrone Gordon.

GORDON: That's my colleague. She's a very beautiful person. And I rise to present again Luke Wetzel who will lead us through our next petition along with George Howard.

WETZEL: Thank you Tyrone, thank you Bishop. Our next item is found in the *DCA* on page 2176, it is Calendar No. 767. This item refers to Petition No. 80469 which can be found in the *ADCA* on page 617. The Committee recommends to adopt Calendar Item 767, which is an amended version of the original petition. Sub-committee chair George Howard will come and present the rationale.

GEORGE G. HOWARD (West Ohio): The Legislative Committee moves to refer this. We really like the intent of what this petition was talking about, but felt like it needed a lot of work to clean it up. The General Board of Discipleship is capable and has the resources to perfect it, to put it on the web, to put it into a serie, a track series that they have. We believe that this takes the journey of a disciple and enables people to figure out how to develop themselves even more as an intentional disciple to Jesus Christ. We would ask you to refer it.

BISHOP HUTCHINSON: All right, the motion is to refer. If you would refer, you will raise your hand. Thank you, hands down. Opposed, same sign. It is referred. We will move back now to Global Ministries. Carolyn Johnson.

### *Way Forward for Israel and Palestine*

JOHNSON: Yes, thank you Bishop. If you will turn in your *DCA* to page 2459. This is Calendar Item 1370. This relates to Petition 81,196 which is in the *Advanced DCA* on page 1149. The Committee recommends rejection because of the item that you have previously adopted in terms of the other resolution of 323, and so this would have been for a new resolution which we think actually much of which is covered in what you've already adopted. So for consistency, that's the reason for the rejection.

BISHOP HUTCHINSON: All right, it's before us yes, back here where I see a green card if you will go to mic 6. This is a speech for the petition.

C. CHAPPELL TEMPLE (Texas): Bishop, I have a little prayer that this is that one percent that the General Conference overturns. The previous resolution did not show balance for the Israelis. This one brings that and with both of them in the book of resolutions, there is the opportunity to be an honest broker. Thank you.

BISHOP HUTCHINSON: All right, thank you. Is there a speech against? I see none; I think we're ready to vote. Now again, we're gonna vote with, with or against the petition itself which is Petition No. 81196. If you will favor the petition, you will vote yes or "1". If you will oppose the petition, you will reject it which is the recommendation; you will vote "2". Voting with the petition.

(pause)

BISHOP HUTCHINSON: All right you have voted 412 to 373 to reject the petition. [Yes, 373; No, 412]

We'll move now to Church and Society 1; Julius Trimble.

(pause)

*Universal School Lunch Program*

TRIMBLE: Yes, it's me again. DCA p. 2173, Calendar Item 730, found in the *Advance DCA* p. 274, 274, Petition No. 80448, Universal School Lunch Program. To present the recommendation of the committee, the subcommittee chairperson that dealt with this Calendar Item, Dale Weatherspoon.

(pause)

DALE WEATHERSPOON (California-Nevada): Bishop, on this particular item, 730, in the *DCA* it says that the Committee recommends to reject. This particular petition got lost somewhere along the way; our Committee had voted originally to reject it, but then wrote it to reconsider; and the vote to reconsider passed by 44 to three. And so I'm asking that the Body would vote to adopt this petition as presented on p. 274 of the *ADCA*.

BISHOP HUTCHINSON: All right, the motion is to adopt the petition. And again we will vote with the petition if you would favor adoption of the petition you will raise your hand; if you favor *adoption* of the petition raise your hand. Thank you, hands down. If you do not favor adopting the petition, same sign. And it carries. So the petition is adopted. Yes, yes mic.2.

SCOTT Y. SELMAN (North Alabama): Bishop I'd like to move that we suspend the rules so that I may make a motion that if a petition coming from the Committee has been approved by the Committee by two-to-one or greater, that no rationale be presented.

BISHOP HUTCHINSON: All right, the motion is to suspend the rules. Is—that is we're ready—I

think you're ready to vote on that. If you would vote to suspend the rules, signify by your hands—raising of your hands. If you would not suspend the rules, same sign. All right, let's see, let's go to the keypads. If you would vote to suspend the rules you will press "1", if you will not vote to suspend the rules press "2" when the timer appears.

(pause)

All right, you have not voted to suspend the rules. That would take a two-thirds vote so we are—yes, mic.8. [Yes, 440; No, 343]

J. MONTGOMERY BROWN (West Virginia): With all due respect, Bishop, the decision to vote with the keypad or not is being handled entirely by the Chair irrespective of our reasons for using a keypad.

BISHOP HUTCHINSON: All right, thank you. I was just trying to move the Body along so that we could cover everything. All right. Let's—we're back to the—back to the Universal School Lunch Program, the recommendation is to adopt.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKERS: We've done that.

BISHOP HUTCHINSON: Have we done that? I thought we just voted on the referral. OK. We adopted. Excuse me, and I'll try to keep better records here. We are ready for Faith and Order.

(pause)

MOORE: Ralph Oduor will present our next petition.

*Recognition of Bonhoeffer*

ODUOR: Thank you, Mary; thank you, Bishop. Friends in Christ, for the next item please turn to *DCA* p. 2177, p. 2177, Calendar Item 774; you may find the details in the *ADCA* p. 927, 927. It's recommendation to recognize Pastor Bonhoeffer, and the Committee recommends adoption.

BISHOP HUTCHINSON: All right, the recommendation is adoption of Calendar Item 774. Let me try this with the house. Can we do this: if it seems apparent that we're ready to vote, can we vote by hand—show of hands? If that is not clear then we will revert to the keypad for clarity. Is that an acceptable way to go?

FLOOR: Yes.

(applause)

BISHOP HUTCHINSON: All right. I think that's the sentiment of the house. So if you would vote to adopt this petition—this Calendar Item 774, you will raise your hand. Hands down. Those oppose, same sign. It is adopted. Thank you.

All right, we're ready for Judicial Administration, Laura Easto.

*Complaint Against Clergy*

EASTO: Thank you, Bishop. Our calendar item is on p. 2367 of the *DCA*, Calendar Item 1349, p. 2367. Calendar Item 1349, it is Petition No. 81463. This is a petition that further—that offers further specificity to the complaint process for clergy. We are nothing if not helpful to the Body. We recommend from our group, the adoption of this petition.

BISHOP HUTCHINSON: All right, we are on Calendar Item 1349. If you, - is there a discussion? If you would vote to adopt Calendar - I see you in the back, excuse me. All right. A red card. mic.12, please.

BRIAN K. MILFORD (Iowa): I wanted to point out to the body, that the expenses of the council appointed by the Board of Ordained Ministry or selected by the respondent, excluding attorney fees shall be paid by the Board of Ordained Ministry. I don't feel this is appropriate in the judicial complaint process, as that is a church trial and not a civil trial. Thank you.

BISHOP HUTCHINSON: All right, thank you. Is there a speech for? I see none. Then we are ready

to vote on Calendar item 1349, the recommendation is adoption, if you would vote to adopt, this again by a show of hands. Thank you, hands down...if you not vote to adopt, same sign. I think we need to go to the keypads on this one...if you will vote to adopt, you will press "1", if you will not vote to adopt, you will press "2". Calendar item 1349, please vote now.

(pause)

[Yes, 386; No, 402]

BISHOP HUTCHINSON: You have voted not to adopt the Calendar item. Now we're ready for Financial Administration, Jonathan Holston.

HOLSTON: Again, I present Byrd Bonner to present this item.

#### *Funding Restrictions*

BONNER: Our next calendar item can be found on p. 2454 of the *DCA*, Calendar item 1226, it relates to Petition 80502 found on page 761 of the *ADCA*. A great word of appreciation to Matthew T. Williams of Liberia and Shannon Meister of Missouri who joined me as leadership of our subcommittee on Funds Administration, and were particularly important in the processing of this petition. This relates of the use of annual conference funds and the Committee focused on its role in accountability and enforceability in looking at its provisions. There was testimony given during long debate out of brokenness and out of unity, out of hurt and out of healing, out of faithfulness and out of transformation, a group of financial professionals, pension professionals and advocates in a mode of caring and grace. It was not driven by the United States voices, but there were voices from around the world. There was an uneasiness and unreadiness about the one-sidedness of this provision to this point in time. You see the addition there on the bottom of 2454 to add the words "from our current social principles", the Minority Report that was approved yesterday for paragraph

161g, with the language re-inserted from the floor, not to reject or condemn lesbian and gay members and friends with a citation to 161g. It is not perfect, brothers and sisters, but neither is it an olive branch. The committee strongly urges you to accept this proposal.

BISHOP HUTCHINSON: All right, we have Calendar item 1226 before us...is there discussion...I see none. I think you are ready to vote, if you will vote for Calendar item

1226, you will do so by the lifting of your hand. I'm sorry...what is the confusion? We are voting for the Calendar item...

UNIDENTIFIED MALE SPEAKER: The *petition*.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKERS: ..if we go with the calendar item ...)

BISHOP HUTCHINSON: ...the cal...well, the...if it's easier for you to go with the petition we'll do that. No? All right, it doesn't matter which way we go...you want to use the keypad, is that it?

UNIDENTIFIED DELEGATES: Yes!

BISHOP HUTCHINSON: Oh all right! All right. Very good, I gotcha...takes me a minute. All right, if you...let's go to the keypads...if you will vote for Calendar item 1226, you will press "1", if you will press, not to sustain Calendar item 1226, you will press "2". Vote now.

(pause)

(Yes 523, No, 284)

BISHOP HUTCHINSON: All right, you have voted to adopt 1226. We'll move to Church and Society 2.

#### *Prostitution*

FREDERICK K. BREWINGTON (New York): Thank you Bishop. The next item is found on the *DCA* at 2175, it is Calendar no.740; its Petition 81354, also found in the *Advanced DCA* at page 332. *DCA* 2175.

The Committee recommends to reject Calendar item 740. The petition was rejected because the Committee felt that it was covered by another petition which more fully addressed the issue, and others in paragraph in 161g. The issue that it dealt with was prostitution and it was fully covered, the Committee thought in the language which existed and was available within the *Book of Discipline*, particularly 161g.

BISHOP HUTCHINSON: All right, I don't know if this one is a sensitive to the body, as the other one was, but since it deals with sexuality, we will vote by the keypad. By the keypad.

(laughter)

BISHOP HUTCHINSON: And, if you will vote for Calendar item 740, you will, which is a recommendation to reject, you will vote...this is wrong...

(laughter)

BREWINGTON: They will vote for the calendar item. The recommendation is to reject. The calendar item is not the recommendation.

BISHOP HUTCHINSON: The recommendation is to reject.

BREWINGTON: Yes.

BISHOP HUTCHINSON: if you...

BREWINGTON: For the calendar item.

BISHOP HUTCHINSON:...I'm getting really very, very tired. I'm sorry.

UNIDENTIFIED MALE SPEAKER: We're all getting tired...

The committee is recommending to reject.

BISHOP HUTCHINSON: Thank you.

(pause)

(music)

BISHOP HUTCHINSON: All right, the Committees' recommendation is to reject. If you vote "1" to adop..., if you are going to adopt the

calendar item, you will vote “1”, Yes, If you want to reject the calendar item you will vote “2”, no.

UNIDENTIFIED MALE SPEAKER: That is correct. That is correct.

BISHOP HUTCHINSON: Now, I’m being told up here that this is the exact, correct, way to go. All right, forget the, forget the timer at this moment.

BREWINGTON: Bishop, the Committee recommends rejection of the petition.

BISHOP HUTCHINSON: All right, the Committee recommends rejection of the petition, so what have been doing is voting with the petition, if that is better for you, then we will do that. All right...I hear that that’s more clear to you. All right. Yes ma’am, is this absolutely essential that you speak?

*(laughter)*

TARA THRONSON (Southwest Texas): Yes, I have a question.

BISHOP HUTCHINSON: Yes.

THRONSON: You said that this is covered in 161, and my question is, since we accepted the Minority Report of 161g on Wednesday, is this still covered?

BISHOP HUTCHINSON: The answer is yes.

THRONSON: Ok. Thank you.

BISHOP HUTCHINSON: All right, now we’re going to vote, and we’re going to vote with the petition. If you will vote to sustain the petition, you will vote “1”, if you will vote to reject the petition you will vote “2”. If you vote “2”, you are in agreement with the Committee. That’s what I’ve tried to do all night, I don’t know why we’re (or I’m) so confused. All right...vote now. You’ve already done it...

*(laughter)*

All right, you have voted to reject the petition. *[Yes, 643; No, 616]*

GORDON: Thank you, Bishop.

BISHOP HUTCHINSON: All right. Discipleship. Thank you.

UNIDENTIFIED MALE SPEAKER: All right.

BISHOP HUTCHINSON: Point of order in the back. Calendar, I mean, to mic.11.

*(laughter)*

Calendar Item 11.

*(laughter and applause)*

CONSTANCE L. ACE (Greater New Jersey): *(identifies herself)*

BISHOP HUTCHINSON: Yes, ma’am.

ACE: Bishop, can you tell me how many petitions are yet to come before the body?

BISHOP HUTCHINSON: I can: 16.

*(cheers)*

ACE: Bishop, is there any way that we can take them by legislative area, instead of having the chairs bounce back and forth?

BISHOP HUTCHINSON: They are doing it by priority of the petitions as they determined what are the priorities to get them before you.

ACE: Thank you.

BISHOP HUTCHINSON: That’s why they are being done this way. So we’re ready for Discipleship.

GORDON: Bishop, I am happy to say this is our last petition.

*(cheers and applause)*

*Include Carter*

GORDON: And it can be found in the *DCA*, p. no. 2176, p. no. 2176, Petition No. 81148, and Calendar Item No. 765. It can also be found in our *Advance DCA*, p. 618. The Committee recommends that this petition be referred to the General Board of Discipleship. Phebe Crisma will come to explain the rationale.

*(groans)*

BISHOP HUTCHINSON: I am not sure they need a rationale.

GORDON: OK, it’s cool, cool, wit’ me.

*(laughter)*

BISHOP HUTCHINSON: I don’t want to see, keep somebody from speaking but I don’t think you need one. Are you willing to, ready to vote to refer? If so, you will lift your hand. Thank you. Hands down.

*(laughter)*

Opposed, no, same sign. Thank you. *[Adoption by hand vote]* Now that one was very clear for us, wasn’t it? Thank you.

*(applause)*

Now we are ready for Global Ministries, Carolyn Johnson.

JOHNSON: Yes. Not quite finished, but almost. Yes, Bishop. If you will turn in your *DCA* to p. 2178, 2178 and in the *Advance DCA* to p. 1150, that’s 1150. This Calendar Item 781, 781, references a, a Petition 81249, 81249. The Committee recommends rejection of the petition, not because it’s rejection of missionaries, but because we feel that there are adequate provisions as well as policies and programs that would handle what’s covered in the petition.

BISHOP HUTCHINSON: All right, thank you. Now we are going to vote with the petition, with the petition. So if you will vote in favor of the petition, you will raise your hand. In favor of the petition. Hands down. Those opposed to the petition. And it is rejected. *[Rejected by hand vote.]* Thank you.

JOHNSON: Thank you.

BISHOP HUTCHINSON: Church and Society 1.

TRIMBLE: Feel like I have been here before.

BISHOP HUTCHINSON: *(laugh)* They are ready for you.

*Israel and Apartheid*

TRIMBLE: Oh, OK. 2174, DCA p. 2174, Calendar Item 735, found in the *Advance DCA*, p. 279, p. 279, *Israel and Apartheid*. Denise Honeycutt will give the recommendation.

BISHOP HUTCHINSON: They don't need a recommendation, I think.

TRIMBLE: Don't need a... well, we need a recommendation. Recommendation is to reject.

BISHOP HUTCHINSON: OK, the recommendation is rejection. Again, we'll vote with the petition. If you will vote to sustain the petition, you will lift your hand. Vote "yes" with the lifting of your hand. Thank you. Hands down. Those who are opposed to the petition, reject it. Thank you. And it is rejected. [*Rejected by hand vote*] All right, we are ready to move to Finance and Administration.

*Financial Restriction*

BONNER: Our next calendar item is found on p. 2367, 2367 of the *DCA*. It's Calendar Item 1346. It relates to Petition No. 81348, found on p. 772 of the *ADCA*. This petition, as amended, is identical, adds identical language to the petition that you all just approved by a 65 percent vote from the Financial Administration Committee that related to the use of annual conference funds. The petition before you relates to the use of general conference funds or general church funds, and it relates the responsibilities of the General Council on Finance and Administration. The Financial Administration Committee recommends adoption of Calendar Item 1346.

BISHOP HUTCHINSON: All right, the petition is before you, or the calendar item, this is, we're on the Calendar Item this time. It is before you. If you will vote for the Calendar Item, you will lift your hand. Vote. Thank you. Hands down. Those opposed to the Calendar Item, same sign. And it is adopted.

[*Adopted by hand vote*] Thank you. We'll move to Church and Society 2.

*Sexual Abuse*

BREWINGTON: Thank you, Bishop. The next item is found in your *DCA* on p. 2267, 2267. It's Calendar No. 1192, 1192, Petition No. 81000, 81000, found in the *Advance DCA* at p. 318. The Committee recommends to adopt Calendar Item 1192 as amended. The Committee adopted this petition after amending it to include the language it crossed out except the words "or destroy" on the third line in the *Advance DCA*, which should be deleted. It strengthened the language in the *Book of Discipline* and also addressed the horror of slavery and other forms of sexual abuse. While it recognized our sexuality as a gift, it better expressed our position on abuse. We recommend adoption of the petition as amended.

BISHOP HUTCHINSON: All right. The petition is amended, and the amendment is to re-instate the words that are lined out on Column 1 of p. 318, with the exception of the two words in the third line of *or destroy*. Am I correct?

BREWINGTON: That is correct.

BISHOP HUTCHINSON: All right. All right, so we will again—this—we will vote with the calendar item. It's the amended petition, so if you will vote with the Calendar Item 1192, as the petition is amended, you will do so by lifting your hand. Thank you. Hands down. Opposed to the amended petition, the calendar item—OK, it is done. Thank you. It is adopted. Global Ministries?

JOHNSON: Yes, Bishop. It's a good thing I smile all the time; or you'd think I'd be smiling because this is our last one.

BISHOP HUTCHINSON: Hey!

*Women's Division*

JOHNSON: *DCA* p. 2367, 2367. This relates to Calendar Item 1347, 1347, which is a recommendation to make an amendment to Paragraph

1318 in the *Book of Discipline*. The committee votes that you reject this particular petition. Again, not because of a content situation but because we feel it's covered more adequately in other areas and in the purpose of United Methodist Women.

BISHOP HUTCHINSON: All right. Thank you. Now this time, we're going to vote with the petition, with the petition. If you—they are recommending that the petition be rejected. If you will vote for the petition, you will lift your hand. Thank you. Hands down. Those who would vote to reject the petition, same sign. And it is done. It is rejected. We're ready for Church and Society I.

JOHNSON: Bishop, may I say one last thing?

BISHOP HUTCHINSON: Yes, ma'am.

JOHNSON: There's a wonderful African American spiritual, and I hope it will—I can't sing it—but I hope it will convey to you about our committee and, perhaps, something about us in the collective. I can't sing, though, Mark; but you—

(*music*)

"I don't feel no-ways tired. I've come a long a way from where I started from. / You never said the road would be easy, but you wouldn't bring me this far to leave me." Thank you.

(*applause*)

BISHOP HUTCHINSON: Amen. Amen. Thank you.

(*music*)

Church and Society I, Julius Trimble.

JULIUS C. TRIMBLE (East Ohio): I want to thank Mike McKee, Dale Weatherspoon, Beth Quick, Tracy Malone, Sally Haynes, JoAnn Fukumoto, Walter Dry, Dennis Senty, ushers, everybody else. Mike McKee will make our last, our last calendar item.

*On Humility, Politics, and  
Christian Unity*

MICHAEL MCKEE (Central Texas): Thank you. Our last calendar item is found on *DCA* 2174. It's Calendar Item 736. It's found on p. 280 in the *ADCA*, Petition No. 80507. We recommend adoption with the amendment found in the *DCA* on p. 2174.

BISHOP HUTCHINSON: All right. This time we will vote with the calendar item, which is an amendment. If you would vote to amend and sustain Calendar Item 736, please raise your hand. Thank you, hands down. Those opposed same sign. It is adopted. We will move now to Finance and Administration.

BYRD L. BONNER (Southwest Texas): The next calendar item is on p. 2367, Calendar Item 1345. It relates to Petition 80020 found in the *ADCA* on p. 771. You have already taken action in this paragraph of the *Discipline* a few minutes ago contrary to this position, and so we recommend rejection. So we ask that you push "2" to reject.

*(laughter)*

BISHOP HUTCHINSON: Thank you. We will vote with the petition. If you favor the petition, you will lift your hand. If you favor rejection of the petition, lift your hand. Thank you. It is rejected. Now we're ready to go to Calendar I-I—to—Church and Society II.

*Rights of Man*

BREWINGTON: Thank you, Bishop. Next item is found on your *DCA* at p. 2267, 2267. It's Calendar No. 1193—God bless you—1193, Petition No. 81008, 81008, found in the *Advance DCA* at p. 342. The committee recommends to adopt Calendar Item 81008. The petition seeks to create a new subparagraph F to Paragraph 162 of the *Book of Discipline*. This address—providing to men the same rights in all aspects of their work, social and personal involvements. It includes equal rights for

parental leave and access to children and custody of children when it would be in the best interest of the child or children. The committee recommends adoption of this petition.

BISHOP HUTCHINSON: All right. Again, we'll vote with the petition. Yes, there is a card in the back, a red card. I—

DENNIS R. COON (Iowa): I'd like to suggest we vote against this. I think the glass ceiling for women still exists, and so I would move that we reject this.

BISHOP HUTCHINSON: All right. Yes, the green card in the back as well. Mic 12.

KAE E. TRITLE (Iowa): The—I'm speaking to approve this petition. When young men who are fathers try to gain custody of their children, the women's rights are usually more favored by the court system even though the men have shown to be responsible parents. Thank you.

BISHOP HUTCHINSON: All right. Thank you. I think we're ready to vote. Again, now we're gonna vote with the petition. If you favor the adoption of the petition as it is written, you will raise your hand. Thank you. Hands down. Those opposed to the petition, we would reject it. It is adopted. We move to Faith and Order.

MARY ELIZABETH MOORE (California-Pacific): I'm happy to introduce our last petition.

*(applause)*

It is appropriate that our last petition has to do with the mission of The United Methodist Church. Please turn in your *DCA* to p. 2050, 2050, Calendar Item 172, 172, Petition No. 80272, which you will find on p. 917 of your *Advance DCA*. This—we recommend accept; it will bring our earlier actions in this annual conference into completion. Let me add a personal word: that we discovered in Faith and Order that we can disagree greatly, that we can be one. We can be together in receiving the grace of God, in being and mak-

ing disciples, and that will indeed open pathways for God to transform the world. We move acceptance.

BISHOP HUTCHINSON: Thank you. It is—the petition is before you. Is there discussion? Again, we will vote with the petition. If you favor the petition, you will lift your hand. Thank you. Hands down. Opposed, same sign. It is adopted. Friends, we're doing very, very well. I have about two or three minutes until time for us to adjourn, but we've got about six items. Are you willing for us to press those six items before we adjourn?

*(applause)*

That will—way we will complete our business. All right, only five, I'm being told. All right, Faith and Order.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Judicial Administration.

BISHOP HUTCHINSON: I'm sorry. Judicial Administration.

BEVERLY SILAS: Thank you, sir. Thank you, Bishop. My name is Beverly Silas, and I'm vice chair of Judicial Administration. If you will, please turn in your *DCA* to p. 2178, Calendar Item 784, Petition No. 80847, p. 1298 in your *Advanced DCA*. This petition recommends a minimum of four years of active membership in a local church before a layperson could be elected to the Judicial Council. The committee recommends that you reject this petition.

BISHOP HUTCHINSON: All right. It's before you. I see—you've got red and green. Which one do you want? Red, OK. Mic 3.

MARK HOLLAND (Kansas East): I would encourage us at this late hour to go ahead and adopt this petition. It was a lot of discussion in the committee; and as you can see, it was very close. About five people made the decision. It was a 10-vote, but that's about five people. But my point is is that all the language in the *Discipline* is consistent with this that says you have to be a member of the

church for two years to be elected to General Conference, but there's no stipulation for being elected to the Judicial Council; and surely that's a bigger responsibility than being elected to the General Conference. And this simply states that all members of the Judicial Council have to be a member of the church for four years before they are elected to that position. So I'd encourage you to go ahead and support this even at this late hour. Thank you.

BISHOP HUTCHINSON: All right. Thank you. Is there a speech for? Yes, there's a point of order in the back. Mic 11.

ODETTE LOCKWOOD STEWART (California-Nevada): It's a— it's a point of inquiry. It's a question.

BISHOP HUTCHINSON: Yes.

LOCKWOOD STEWART: I'm just wondering. I'm wondering if we can hear the rationale why the committee suggested the opposite action. I'm just interested in hearing that in this case.

SILAS: The committee felt that four years was too long, and so we rejected this petition.

BISHOP HUTCHINSON: All right. Are we ready—yes? Point of inquiry, order? Mic 11.

JAMIE JENKINS (North Georgia): I served on the Judicial Administration Committee, and I think there was an amendment made to that petition in the committee that added the words at the end of that bold sentence there in the middle that said it would read: "should be a member of the at least four years next preceding their election and shall remain members for their term." And I, I think I recall that that amendment may have been the reason that we requested rejection.

BISHOP HUTCHINSON: All right. Are we ready to vote? I think we are. Again, we will go with the petition itself. If you are in favor of the adoption of the petition, you will vote—lift your hand at this time. All right. Hands down. Those who are opposed to the adoption of the peti-

tion, same sign. The petition does pass. It is adopted.

SILAS: Thank you, Bishop. That completes the work of the Judicial Administration.

BISHOP HUTCHINSON: Thank you so much. Thank you.

(*applause*)

Let's move to Financial Administration, Jonathon Holston.

#### *CFA Membership*

BYRD S. BONNER: Jumping the gun. All right. *DCA*, p. 2177, bottom of the first column, Calendar Item 771. It relates to Petition No. 81227 on p. 759 of the *Advance DCA*. This is a petition from the National Association of Directors of Connectional Ministries, asking for flexibility in the conference Council on Finance Administration organization. The committee gave significant deliberation to this and recommends and urges adoption of this petition as it's printed in the *Advance DCA*.

BISHOP HUTCHINSON: All right. It is before you. Yes? I see a red card in the back on my left. Yes, you in the yellow shirt. Mic 11.

WILEY STEVENS (North Georgia): The hour is late, Bishop. I rise as serving as chairman of CF&A. In my conference, I appreciate very much the lay having at least a majority, and I urge we keep that in our church law.

BISHOP HUTCHINSON: All right. Thank you. Is there a speech for? That was a speech against. Is there a speech against? I think not. I think we're ready to vote. If you will—again, we will go with the petition itself. If you would support the petition, you will lift your hand. Adopt, those who would adopt the petition—all right. All right. Let's try this again. Hands keep going up. Those who will adopt the petition, lift your hand. Thank you. Hands down. Those who would oppose the petition, lift your hand. I think we need to—let's go to the keypad. If, if you will adopt, press "1" for adop-

tion of the petition; and "2" if you will not go with the petition, if you would not adopt the petition.

(*pause*)

[*Yes, 431; No, 335*]

BISHOP HUTCHINSON: All right, you have adopted the petition. You have a second?

#### *Written Financial Policies*

BONNER: Thank you, Bishop, this is our last calendar item for Financial Administration. It's on the same page shortly before the one we just did. It's Calendar Item 761, nope, sorry 769, 769 on p. 2177. It relates to Petition 80096 found on p. 759 of the *ADCA*. It's a petition asking or, or setting forth a new provision in Paragraph 259 setting forth that every local church finance committee shall adopt a written financial policies to document internal controls. Currently, the Paragraph 259 has some internal control language in it; but this would require the finance committee of the local church to adopt financial internal control policies. The committee recommends adoption.

BISHOP HUTCHINSON: All right, it is before you. Is there discussion? I think we're ready to vote. If, we'll go again with the petition itself. If you would adopt the petition, you will do so by the raising of your hand. Thank you. Hands down. Those opposed, same sign. [*hand vote, approved*] And it does carry. It is adopted.

BONNER: Thank you, Bishop.

HOLSTON: Bishop, can I have a moment of personal privilege?

BISHOP HUTCHINSON: Yes.

HOLSTON: At this time I would like to recognize a person who has served at GCFA for so long as executive secretary who is not with us tonight, Sandra Kelly Lakore. She gave wonderful service, and we would like to recognize her as part of our church.

(*applause*)

BISHOP HUTCHINSON: Thank you. We have two petitions left—2.

(*cheers*)

I'm sorry, three?

BREWINGTON: Three, yes.

(*laughter*)

BISHOP HUTCHINSON: All right, we have three petitions left.

#### *Sexual Abuse*

BREWINGTON: Thank you. Bishop, just to clarify on Petition, Calendar No. 1192, it was found initially on 2267, it was reprinted in the amended version on p. No. 2370, and it was as was stated and as was voted on.

#### *Antisemitism*

The next petition is found at *DCA* p. 2268. It is Calendar No. 1197. It is Petition No. 81378, also found on the *ADCA* at p. 463. Everybody put on their armor.

(*laughter*)

Shall, I almost did it. Bishop, the committee recommends to reject Calendar Item No. 1197. The committee considered this petition and rejected it because it lacked substance and made broad vague statements that appeared to place The United Methodist Church on one side of a very complex issue without recognition of the intricacies and implications of adopting this petition. While it is a resolution, it was viewed in light of Paragraph 162b of the *Book of Discipline*, which is clear and more inclusive. The committee recommends rejection.

BISHOP HUTCHINSON: All right. The petition is before you, and again we will vote with the petition. If you favor adoption, you will raise your hand. Thank you. Opposition, the same sign if you would reject it. [*hand vote, not approved*] It is rejected. All right, you have another?

BREWINGTON: Yes, Bishop. Next item is found in your *DCA* at 2268, that is 2268. It is Calendar No. 1194. It is Petition No. 81256. It is also found in the *Advanced DCA* at p. 426. The committee recommends to reject Calendar Item 1194. The committee felt the attempt by this petition to define a family was too narrow and failed to consider the multi, multiple types of family units which exist both in the United States and around the world. The petition made statements that sought to connect one with another without logical rationale. While no one was opposed to families, the committee did not adopt dictating what did or did not constitute a family unit. We recommended rejection.

BISHOP HUTCHINSON: All right, it is before you. Is there discussion? I think we're ready to vote. We'll again vote with the petition. If you favor the petition, you will lift your hand. OK, hands down. Those opposed to the petition that would reject it. [*hand vote, not approved*] It is rejected. And if my stuff is correct—you have another one?

BREWINGTON: Bishop, on behalf of the, the Church and Society II, we thank you for your presiding. We thank the body for its patience. Our work is done.

BISHOP HUTCHINSON: Ah, praise the Lord!

(*applause*)

Now, we have one last petition. It is coming to us from Local Church. Cheryl Bell, this is the lady you've been waiting to see all night.

#### *Receiving Members from Other Churches*

CHERYL JEFFERSON BELL (Kansas West): All right, Bishop. I'd like for you to please turn to p. 2178 of the *DCA*. It is Calendar Item 785. This item refers to Petition No. 80261, and you can find it in the *Advanced DCA* on p. 13, 1337. I'd like to invite Albert Shuler to please make presentation of this petition.

ALBERT SHULER (North Carolina): Just to offer a very brief rationale with regards to Calendar Item 785, this proposal brings Paragraph 225 in line with Paragraph 217 of the *Book of Discipline*. I move its adoption.

BISHOP HUTCHINSON: It is before you. Is there discussion?

BISHOP HUTCHINSON: It is before you. Is there discussion? I see no cards or anyone moving. I think we're ready to vote. If you will, again, go with the petition, if you will adopt the petition, you will lift the hand. Hands down. If you will reject, same sign. The petition is adopted. [*Petition is adopted by hand vote*]

(*applause and cheering*)

This is a time of great celebration! Let me take one moment of personal privilege to say thank you for your steady patience through this and for your accepting of some of my foibles in this time. I'm grateful to you for your kindness. I want to thank the two who have backed me up: Bishop Alfred Norris of the North Texas Conference—

(*applause*)

—and Bishop Mike Coyner of the Indiana Area.

(*applause*)

And they have been great help to me. Thank you. God bless, and we are now ready to move directly into our worship. Sorry. We are moving into worship now.

MARCIA MCFEE: I invite you to stand for our invocation prayer.

(*prayer*)

(*music*)

Friends, before we hear our Scripture, I just got a note that a member of the East Congo delegation has lost his passport in a black case, so just—if you can have your eyes out for that. Now we ask our preacher to come forward.

*Bishop Palmer's Closing Charge*

BISHOP GREGORY VAUGHN

PALMER: Dear friends, hear this one verse from Paul's correspondence with the saints in Rome, Chapter 15 and verse 13.

*(Scripture and prayer)*

My greatest fear was that it would be after 11 o'clock when I stood up to the pulpit tonight. However, I must trust that the Holy Spirit thought that it would be a good discipline for me, looking out upon you, knowing that you are nearly held hostage by the work that we've been doing and that you are ready and anxious to go. But I also felt the nudgings of the Holy Spirit as I have been thinking across these months what I might say to you, that the job of the one who would come and proclaim any word from the Lord this night would be to encourage the saints as they went out. I thought of the apostle Paul, who so frequently in his correspondence with the churches with whom he had relationship, interaction, and ministry, in the middle of everything, sometimes it seems he would offer his prayerful yearning and hope for them. Sometimes at the beginnings of his letters and always at the end of his letters, he would offer to the people of God that he was serving his hopes, his yearnings, and his prayers for their well-being. And even in the middle, there were words that were benedictory, if you will.

The word *benediction* that we sometimes loosely refer to as a blessing brings together two Latin root words, which mean "well" and "to speak." A benediction is, shall we say, to speak well; or it is a good word. And so I have wondered what is the good word for us tonight after these days of holy conferencing here in Fort Worth, Texas, gathered as The United Methodist Church through its General Conference from around the world. And these words from the 15<sup>th</sup> chapter of Paul's Letter to the Romans leaped out at me: "May the God of hope fill you with

all joy and peace in believing so that you may abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit."

We heard earlier in the week and have had re-iterated on the screen from time to time since that homily by—I've never heard a, a bishop preach in the presentation of the financial report—but I'm so grateful for it. And we have been talking about abundance and our need to overcome the myth of scarcity. To abound is to exceed a fixed number of measure. It is to be great. It is to talk about that which overflows. It is to redound in some way. It bespeaks a largeness that overflows perceived and defined and fixed boundaries. And it occurs to me that the blessing that The United Methodist Church could be to the world and the blessing of being here for these days, of absorbing and putting into practice all that we have heard and worship, in presentations, in our work in holy conferencing, in legislative committees, in sidebars, and in this plenary session would be to be a people who would go out from this place and abound in hope in the life of the church, and so stir the church to be abundant in hope, not only for the church but for the world and all of the peoples of the world. But if we are to be a people who abound in hope, we must cross that last river and have done with the myth of scarcity, not let it be our macro or our micro story that shapes our lives and defines who we are.

In the 27<sup>th</sup> chapter of the Book of Genesis, there is a telling and a painful narrative, a plaintive plea in the interaction between Jacob and Esau, and really between Isaac and his two sons. As the blessing that rightfully, according to that hierarchical and patriarchal culture, belongs to the eldest son. I trust that this is an audience where I can say surely you know the story. Isaac, whose eyes had grown very dim, whose health is failing and about to flee from his mortal body, believes that the time has come that the blessing might be passed on. Whether or not he has been persuaded by outside agitation, I will not pursue

this night. You don't have that much time and neither do I. And as the story goes, you and I together are aware that rather than the blessing going to Esau, some chicanery, some trickery takes place, a conspiracy, if you will, to let the blessing fall on Jacob. When Esau returns from the fields, brings in a meal of wild game, gives it to his father, Isaac suddenly realizes that something has gone horribly wrong. It is almost as if he says, "Who are you?" or "Who is it then that I gave the blessing to?" And then in painful and mournful tones, Isaac says to Esau, in effect, I have already given the blessing to another, namely your brother, Jacob. And Esau cries out, "Have you only one blessing, father? Bless me also, father." And Esau lifted up his voice and wept.

If we are to move from scarcity to abundance, if we are to move from the meager to be those who abound in all of the resources that we need to do the work has—that God has called us to do in the church and in the world, we must genuinely take to heart that the God and Creator and Sovereign whom we serve and whom we love, who has disclosed that one self in the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, is the God and the Savior who has more than one blessing.

*(applause)*

Has a blessing for more than one grouping of people, has more blessings than we can count, let alone receive. And so surely there is enough to share and enough to go around. Think of all of the ways in which our lives in family, in community, in local congregations, as nations relate to each other about the resources of the land and of the earth and of the air. And the list goes on and on. Think of all of the ways in which we function out of the myth of scarcity and we believe there is only just a little bit—an ever-shrinking pie, and therefore there is not enough for everyone.

And when we believe that there is not enough and begin to live out of

that paradigm, we will resort to anything to have our way. Or we will shrink in the corners of this world and of this life, believing that there is not sufficient room at God's table, not sufficient resources to feed the hungry of this world, not enough love to go around in our families, in our communities; and therefore our only resort is to violence and to the denigration of others as a means of solving our problem. But our experience as people of faith, as is so often the case with people of faith, we take the questions that have been raised out of the human experience and out of living lives of robust faith. We answer those questions which sort of hang in the atmosphere. We take the question marks, and we turn them into exclamation points.

And Esau said to his father, "Have you only one blessing, my father? Bless me also." It was as if he was saying, "Surely there is enough for me." In spite of anything that has been done in an untoward way concerning me, surely there are enough resources, enough blessing, enough love, enough leadership, enough capacity. But the question hangs in the atmosphere because Isaac was not able to step out of the paradigm, the only one which he had known even though there had been some telling interventions by God, the great Jehovah, into the lives—lives of his forebears and into the life of his own. So we must search deep in our own faith so that we might cross the river of scarcity and be those who live in abundance and abound in hope in the church and in the world, because the God that we serve is the God who will take you from not enough to just enough to more than enough. I wish I had some witnesses in the house tonight.

*(applause)*

But when you have gotten your fill to overflowing, it is incumbent upon you and me as people of Christian faith particularly that we not become stingy with the blessings, stingy with what we have received from God. For after all, naked we came into this world; and we will

leave in a similar state. We brought nothing with us, and we will take nothing with us. Everything that we have, everything good and perfect gift, comes from above. And so what we have received by way of God's love and God's grace disclosed in the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ is not something—even when we think we have more than enough—to be hoarded because we are always worried about some rainy day. For everywhere, at every time, it's raining for someone. And maybe while you and I are holding on to ours individually and institutionally for some rainy day, maybe in the sharing we will help to interrupt someone else's rainy day.

*(applause)*

And God will use us beyond our wildest dreams and imaginations. And so when you are blessed, as we are—I have not a single doubt about it in my mind—don't be stingy with the blessings. You gotta move from scarcity to a life and a lifestyle of generosity. I speak of both spiritual and emotional, psychic as well as material resources. And it is lifted up for me and brought to a sharp point what this generosity can look like.

In Matthew's Gospel in the 13<sup>th</sup> chapter, and it's found elsewhere in other renderings in the Synoptic Gospels, the words are on this wise: That same day, Jesus went out of the house and sat beside the lake. Such great crowds gathered around him that he got into a boat and sat there while the whole crowd stood on the beach. And he told them many things in parables, saying, Listen, a sower went out to sow. And as he sowed, some seeds fell on the path; and the birds came and ate them up. Other seeds fell on rocky ground where they did not have much soil, and they sprang up quickly since they had not depth of soil. But when the sun rose, they were scorched; and since they had no root, they withered away. Other seeds fell among thorns, and the thorns grew up and choked them. Other seeds fell on good soil and brought forth grain.

Some a hundred-fold, some sixty, some thirty. And then these words, "Let anyone who has ears, listen." We don't have enough time to analyze the soil tonight, but I just wanna put a quarter in the meter and park it for awhile—

*(laughter and applause)*

—with the sower. A sower went out to sow; and among other things, it does not seem a far leap for me to conclude that the sower was generous. Dare I say even in some eyes reckless. There did not seem to be a lot of discriminating about where the seed went. The sower was willing to let other things and other realities and other powers take their course.

*(applause)*

And so I imagine him or her going along and just scattering the seed generously; and somehow or other, in the economy of God, the seed has been accounted for. And God, our Sovereign, already understands that it will not take deep and fruitful root in every, place but our responsibility is to sow seeds of life and hope with all of the generosity that we can.

*(applause)*

So if we are to abound in hope, we not only must flee the myth of scarcity, but when the abundance comes—and in reality we United Methodists, in great part, are already the recipients sometimes, I believe, of more than we know what to do with—we must sow that generosity back into the creation, back into the lives of other people, back into the hearts and minds of other people through all of the ministries that capture not only our but God's imagination, in order that this world might be transformed after God's purposes.

Do you hear the words of the Hymn 583, both in Spanish and in English, but the English rendering—"You are the seed, you are the seed that will grow a new sprout. / You are the star that will shine in the night. /

You are the yeast and the small grain of salt; a beacon to glow in the dark.” And then another verse that says, “You are the flame that will lighten the dark, sending sparkles of hope, faith and love. / You are the shepherds to lead the whole world through the valleys and pastures of peace. / You are the friends that I choose for myself, the Word that I want to proclaim. / You are the kingdom built on a rock where justice and truth always reign.” So not only do we have a ministry of sowing, but we ourselves, by God’s design, have become the seed that seeds hope into an otherwise dismal, cynical, broken world.

Now finally this: A church that is to abound in hope and give hope to the world must be a church that lives in the power of the Holy Spirit. When I say it, it all sounds so easy; and then I look at my feet, and I see that they are clay—sometimes fragile clay that breaks easily. And if you were to look down at your feet, you would understand them also to be feet of clay. All of us, from wherever we come from and however good we think we are at our most noble moments, we are fragile and vulnerable and our feet are clay. But God, in God’s mysterious way, chooses to use earthen vessels. And the writer says, “So that we will know that the power belongs to God and not to us.” And so if we are to abound in hope and infect and influence this world with our hopefulness, the seed of the gospel, we must be a church that lives in the power of the Holy Ghost. Everything that we have

prayed for this week, every covenant we’ve made, every promise that has been made, every petition that has been adopted, every ministry that we say we are going to fund, we can’t do it except the Holy Spirit help us.

*(applause)*

We can plan and we should. We can strategize as we must; but absent the power of the Holy Ghost, we can hang it up and look to the Lord and be dismissed. But in the Spirit, we are they that can do anything but fail. We are the people who can speak the things that are not as though they were. We are the people who can live now and be drawn, as Justo Gonzalez says, “into the future as we are drawn into God.” We are the people who choose in the power of the Holy Spirit to live now as if God’s reign has fully come. So a church abounding in the Holy Spirit—I didn’t say just in Spirit, because we got to know what Spirit we are going to abound in, but a church abounding in the Holy Spirit—is a church that can join and link arms with others and say bye, bye to malaria and make it history. It is a church where we can see that everyone has enough food to eat day in and day out. We are those that can see people have clean, decent and affordable housing. We are those who will hold the lantern of knowledge through education. We are the people who can believe even among the most reprobate people that the light of the gospel and the seed of the gospel can bring forth new and transformed life.

And so I leave from this place, holding some others by saying I am more hopeful for the church tonight than I have ever been. I am more hopeful for the church tonight than I have ever been because I am more vulnerable than I have ever been and I need to depend more on the power of the Holy Ghost than I have ever depended on the power of the Holy Ghost. And if The United Methodist Church would say down in its heart, “Lord, except you help us by your Spirit’s power, we haven’t got a chance.” But if we yearn and plead for the Spirit and align ourselves with the movements of the Spirit, it doth not yet appear what we shall be. Beloved, now are we the children of God and it doth not yet appear what we shall be. But this we know, that when he shall appear, we shall be like him for we shall see him as he is.

And so the good word for you and for me tonight, is this: May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that you and I may abound, dare I say overflow, in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit. In the name of God who creates, redeems and sustains, let the church say,

ALL: Amen.

*(music)*

BISHOP PALMER: I say again, “And now may the God of peace give you all joy and peace in believing so that you may abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.” Amen.

### Editor’s Note:

Correction to HERO Report, Wednesday, April 30, 2008, page 2282

It was reported that the absence of Bishop Daniel Wandabula at the presentation of the Hope for Africa Children’s Choir while two white American bishops introduced them was “an example of subtle racism in the midst of what should have been an international celebration.”

Following the conclusion of General Conference, a representative of Bishop Wandabula called General Conference Secretary Fitzgerald Reist to inform that, in fact, Bishop Wandabula was unable to be present for the introduction because of pressing matters and personally requested Bishop B. Michael Watson to officiate.

Garlinda Burton, General Secretary of COSROW, apologizes for the misrepresentation of racism in the HERO Report.

Entry of this correction into the record is authorized by Fitzgerald Reist, Secretary of the General Conference.

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