

2010 ELCA-SOUTHEASTERN SYNOD ASSEMBLY
Chattanooga Convention Center, Chattanooga, Tennessee
SECOND PLENARY SESSION
Saturday, June 5, 2010
8:30 a.m.

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[SINGING]

>> I THINK THAT YOU JUST LEARNED WHAT WE'LL BE DOING AT
WORSHIP TODAY, TO COMMIT THAT TO MEMORY.

MORE ABOUT THAT LATER.

OUR WORSHIP TODAY WILL BE PAPERLESS AND STREAMLESS, SO
WE'LL DO IT ALL FROM HEART AND BY HEART.

GOOD MORNING!

>> GOOD MORNING.

>> I CALL THIS SESSION OF THE 23rd ANNUAL SOUTHEASTERN SYNOD
ASSEMBLY TO ORDER.

PLEASE TURN TO PAGE A-4 IN YOUR MATERIALS, AND WE CALL ON OUR
CHAPLAIN, PASTOR EVON FLESBERG, FOR OUR OPENING PRAYER.

>> GOOD MORNING.

>> GOOD MORNING.

>> LET'S TAKE A MINUTE OR 30 SECONDS TO COME TO THIS PLACE OF

SILENCE AS WE'VE BEEN HUSTLING AND BUSTLING TO BE HERE.

PASTOR MARK BORSETH HAS OFFERED TO BE -- HE'S BEEN TENDING OUR PRAYER JOURNAL AND PRAYING THE PRAYERS LISTED PRIVATELY IN THE WORSHIP CENTER, AND HAS OFFERED TO BE AVAILABLE FOR A HALF AN HOUR AFTER EACH SESSION.

AND, PASTOR BORSETH, IF YOU'D STAND UP, PLEASE.

ALL RIGHT, OVER THERE.

SO HE'LL BE PRESENT TO PRAY WITH YOU OR FOR YOU.

I HAVE A SLIDE.

THE ROOT, THE ROOT.

IT'S COMING?

OKAY.

I TOLD YOU, THESE ARE BILLBOARD DEVOTIONS, BECAUSE I'M SUPPOSED TO HAVE ABOUT THAT MUCH TIME TO DO DEVOTIONS.

AFTER I SAW THE DEVOTION -- THE BILLBOARD FROM YESTERDAY, "AFTER THE FLOOD, WHAT'S NEXT?"

SUNDAY, PERIOD.

I WAS DRIVING ALONG AND I SAW THIS BILLBOARD FOR ROUTE:1 WINE.

IT SAYS, "CHARACTER COMES FROM YOUR ROOTS."

I ALMOST HAD AN ACCIDENT.

LET'S READ TOGETHER FROM ROMANS 5:1-5, ON J-13, IF YOU'RE JUST JOINING US.

J-13.

IF I MIGHT ASK THE WOMEN TO READ THE FIRST VERSE, OR THE FIRST

SENTENCE, PLEASE.

LET'S READ IT BY SENTENCE.

AND THE MEN READ THE NEXT SENTENCE.

WE'RE GOING TO START, WOMEN.

AND I LOVE IT WITH THE "THEREFORES."

YOU KNOW ALL THESE RESOLUTIONS, ALL THESE PRESUPPOSITIONS,
AND THEN IT'S "THEREFORE," PEOPLE, WE'RE AT THE "THEREFORE"
FROM PAUL.

THEREFORE, SINCE WE ARE JUSTIFIED BY FAITH, WE HAVE PEACE WITH
GOD THROUGH OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST, THROUGH WHOM WE HAVE
OBTAINED ACCESS TO THIS GRACE IN WHICH WE STAND.

AND WE BOAST IN OUR HOPE OF SHARING THE GLORY OF GOD.

>> NOT ONLY THAT.

WE ALSO BOAST IN OUR SUFFERINGS KNOWING THAT SUFFERING
PRODUCES ENDURANCE, AND ENDURANCE PRODUCES CHARACTER
AND CHARACTER PRODUCES HOPE, AND HOPE DOES NOT DISAPPOINT
US BECAUSE GOD'S LOVE HAS BEEN POURED INTO OUR HEARTS
THROUGH THE HOLY SPIRIT THAT HAS BEEN GIVEN TO US.

>> AMEN.

SO FOR "CHARACTER COMES FROM YOUR ROOTS," IT'S ROOT:1 WINE.
THEY PRIDE THEMSELVES ON SAYING THERE'S NO GRAFTING IN THEIR
WINE ROOTS, AND THEY DON'T SAY "CHARACTER COMES FROM OUR
ROOT," OR "OUR CHARACTER COMES FROM OUR ROOT."

NO, THE BILLBOARD SAYS, "CHARACTER COMES FROM YOUR ROOTS."

AND I STARTED TO THINK ABOUT OUR ROOTS AS LUTHERANS.

AND I WANT TO TELL YOU ABOUT A YOUNG MAN WHO WOULD BE HERE SHARING WITH YOU HIS LOVE AND JOY.

GENE LEWIS ASKED ME AS CHAPLAIN, HE SAID, "ARE YOU FUNNY? OR ARE YOU LUTHERAN?"

[LAUGHTER]

THAT'S KIND OF A HEAVY BURDEN TO PUT ON A CHAPLAIN WHO HAS 3 MINUTES, 5 MINUTES.

OKAY, BUT BEN LARSON WAS FUNNY AND LUTHERAN, AND HE HAD DEEP ROOTS.

HE WAS CONCEIVED IN THE WOMB OF A LUTHERAN PASTOR.

OUR SISTER SYNOD, LA CROSSE AREA SYNOD, OUR BISHOP THAT YOU HAVE KNOWN AND HAD THE PRIVILEGE OF MEETING BISHOP APRIL LARSON AND HER HUSBAND JUDD, PARENTS OF BEN LARSON, STEEPED IN THE GOSPEL FROM CONCEPTION.

STEEPED IN MUSIC AND BEAUTY.

FILLED WITH JOY.

AND HE WAS FUNNY.

FOR A LITERATURE CLASS, WE HEARD THAT HE VERY CEREMONIOUSLY BROKE 12 EGGS IN A BIG BOWL, STEPPED ASIDE AND PRONOUNCED IT "HOMLET."

HE COULD BE HEARD SINGING IN THE HALLS OF THE SEMINARY, SINGING LAUGHING, CELEBRATING HIS FRIENDS.

THIS YOUNG MAN WAS CERTIFIED FOR ORDINATION, CERTIFIED FOR

ORDINATION IN THE LUTHERAN CHURCH.

HE AND HIS WIFE, RENEE SPICKLE LARSON, AND HIS COUSIN,
JONATHAN LARSON, SPENT THEIR JANUARY GOING TO REACH OUT
AGAIN TO HAITI TO BE PRESENT TO THE PEOPLE OF HAITI.

BEN AND JONATHAN WERE THERE TEACHING IN A CLERGY AND LAY
ACADEMY IN A NEW LUTHERAN CHURCH THERE, CONFERENCE.

AND HIS WIFE RENEE WAS RESEARCHING THE DEVELOPMENT OF THIS
NEW CONGREGATION.

AND YOU AND I SAW THE IMAGES OF JANUARY 12th.

BEN WAS THE ONLY YOUNG MAN TO DIE IN THE BUILDING IN THE
RUBBLE.

RENEE AND JONATHAN TRIED TO RESCUE HIM, AND THEY HEARD HIM
SINGING.

AND THEY SAID, "WE'RE GOING TO TRY AND GET YOU HELP.

KEEP SINGING."

HE WAS SINGING TO THE MELODY "WHERE CHARITY AND LOVE
PREVAIL."

AND BEN'S LAST WORDS SUNG ON THIS EARTH WERE, "GOD'S PEACE
TO US, WE PRAY."

BEN WANTED TO BE A PASTOR WITH HIS WHOLE BEING.

HE LOVED GOD, AND HE LOVED PEOPLE, EVERY KIND OF PERSON WAS
A PERSON TO GET TO KNOW AND HAVE JOY IN.

WE NEED TO BE PRAYING FOR OUR YOUNG PEOPLE, CALLING THEM
FORWARD SO THE CHURCH WILL HAVE OTHER YOUNG LEADERS, AND

BEN'S SPIRIT OF JOY WILL BE PASSED OUT AND THE LAUGHTER WILL CONTINUE.

BEN LARSON, LOOK HIM UP ON THE INTERNET, YOU CAN HEAR HIS WONDERFUL MUSIC, HIS FAITH-FILLED MUSIC, AND GET A SENSE OF WHO WE MISSED ON THIS EARTH, BUT WHO WE WILL REJOIN IN THE KING COME OF GOD IN HEAVEN.

WE'LL BE SINGING WHERE CHARITY AND LOVE PREVAIL, AND LET'S STAND TOGETHER AND DO THAT.

YOU'LL BE SITTING LONG ENOUGH TODAY.

I WANT TO HEAR YOU, THIS IS THE PRAISING OF OUR GOD WHO CALLS US INTO MINISTRY.

I WANT TO HEAR YOU LOUDLY, AND I WANT TO HEAR HARMONY.

>> J-14.

J-14.

>> AND FOR OUR PRAYERS -- YOU MAY BE SEATED.

THE HYMNAL, THE ELW, WAS OPENED TO THE SAME MELODY FOR THE CLOSING HYMN.

THIS IS ON PAGE 208 IN THE ELW.

AND YOU WILL HEAR THE ECHO OF GOD'S PEACE TO US, WE PRAY.

I'M PRAYING NOW THE PETITIONS FROM OUR JOURNAL, AND IF I

MISPRONOUNCE A NAME, PLEASE FORGIVE ME.

THE INTENTION IS THE SAME.

WE HAVE A PRAYER, MY GRANDDAUGHTER IN CASPER, WYOMING, WAS JUST ADMITTED FOR A BLOOD CLOT IN HER LEG.

SHE HAD A SHUNT PUT INTO HER BRAIN TO RELIEVE SPINAL
FLUID PRESSURE, GOT A CLOT FROM THAT.

LORD, IN YOUR MERCY.

>> HEAR OUR PRAYER.

>> WE PRAY FOR THOSE DEALING WITH BACK PAIN, POST-OP, NEEDING
PRAYERS OF RELIEF AND HOPE.

LORD, IN YOUR MERCY.

>> HEAR OUR PRAYER.

>> WITH WE PRAY FOR LINDA LARSON'S DAD IN REHAB FOLLOWING
BROKEN HIP AND REPLACEMENT.

HE'S 97 YEARS OLD.

LORD, IN YOUR MERCY.

>> HEAR OUR PRAYER.

>> WE PRAY FOR ELOISE WITH A FEEDING TUBE INSERTED FRIDAY DUE
TO THROAT PARALYSIS.

LORD, IN YOUR MERCY.

>> HEAR OUR PRAYER.

>> WE PRAY FOR AN END TO A TWO-YEAR FINANCIAL CRISIS.

LORD, IN YOUR MERCY.

>> HEAR OUR PRAYER.

>> WE PRAY FOR THE FAMILY OF REVEREND DR. LUTHER LINDBERG,
WHO DIED JUNE 4th, 2010.

LORD, IN YOUR MERCY.

>> HEAR OUR PRAYER.

>> WE PRAY FOR PASTOR JACK OHSIEK IN THE HOSPITAL TODAY.

LORD IN YOUR MERCY.

>> HEAR OUR PRAYER.

>> WE PRAY FOR DAVID, WHO HAD BACK SURGERY WEDNESDAY, THAT HE MIGHT HAVE FAST HEALING.

LORD, IN YOUR MERCY.

>> HEAR OUR PRAYER.

>> WE PRAY FOR HEALING AFTER SURGERY FOR ZACH.

LORD, IN YOUR MERCY.

>> HEAR OUR PRAYER.

>> WE PRAY FOR PEACE AT WORK FOR JUDY AND ALL THOSE WHO NEED PEACE.

LORD, IN YOUR MERCY.

>> HEAR OUR PRAYER.

>> WE PRAY FOR HEALING AND PEACE AT HOME, FOR BILL AND ALL THOSE SEEKING PEACE.

LORD, IN YOUR MERCY.

>> HEAR OUR PRAYER.

>> WE PRAY FOR HEALING FOR LINDSEY, WE PRAY FOR MELODY'S DAD'S HEALING AND CAR HEALING.

LORD IN YOUR MERCY.

>> HEAR OUR PRAYER.

>> WE PRAY FOR BISHOP GORDY.

LORD, IN YOUR MERCY.

>> HEAR OUR PRAYER.

>> WE PRAY FOR THE LEADERS OF THE AFRICAN AMERICAN
COMMUNITY.

LORD, IN YOUR MERCY.

>> HEAR OUR PRAYER.

>> WE PRAY FOR OWEN THOMAS, 2-YEAR-OLD WITH KIDNEY PROBLEMS.
ALL CHILDREN.

LORD, IN YOUR MERCY.

>> HEAR OUR PRAYER.

>> WE PRAY FOR OUR PLANET, FOR THE OIL CATASTROPHE.

LORD, IN YOUR MERCY.

>> HEAR OUR PRAYER.

>> WE PRAY FOR JOE'S CANCER TREATMENT.

LORD, IN YOUR MERCY.

>> HEAR OUR PRAYER.

>> WE PRAY FOR OUR OTHER SYNOD ASSEMBLIES THIS WEEKEND.

LORD, IN YOUR MERCY.

>> HEAR OUR PRAYER.

>> WITH WE PRAY FOR PETER WHO'S HAVING HIS TONSILS REMOVED.

LORD IN YOUR MERCY.

>> HEAR OUR PRAYER.

>> WE PRAY FOR RICHARD'S DAUGHTER.

FOR MY DAUGHTER RACHEL'S CROHN'S COMPLICATIONS SURGERY

LORD IN YOUR MERCY.

>> HEAR OUR PRAYER.

>> WE PRAY FOR THE McMILLAN FAMILY OF DENNIS AND PAULA AND
THEIR FAMILY.

LORD, IN YOUR MERCY.

>> HEAR OUR PRAYER.

>> ALL THESE THINGS AND WHATEVER ELSE YOU KNOW THAT WE
NEED, WE ASK IN JESUS' PRECIOUS AND HOLY NAME.

AMEN.

>> AMEN.

>> AND FROM PAGE 208.

O LAMB OF GOD, YOU BEAR THE SIN OF THE WORLD, THE SIN OF ALL
THE WORLD AWAY.

YOU SUFFERED DEATH, OUR LIVES TO SAVE.

HAVE MERCY NOW, WE PRAY.

O LAMB OF GOD, YOU BEAR THE SIN OF ALL THE WORLD AWAY.

YOU SET US FREE FROM GUILT AND GRAVE.

HAVE MERCY NOW WE PRAY.

O LAMB OF GOD, YOU BEAR THE SIN OF ALL THE WORLD AWAY.

ETERNAL PEACE WITH GOD YOU MADE.

GIVE US YOUR PEACE, WE PRAY.

AMEN.

>> AMEN.

>> THANK YOU, PASTOR.

AS WE BEGIN THIS MORNING, A QUICK HOUSEKEEPING NOTE OR TWO.

THERE WAS CONCERN YESTERDAY ABOUT THERE NOT BEING ENOUGH SEATS IN THE PLENARY.

THERE ARE ENOUGH SEATS IN THE PLENARY.

ONE OF THE PROBLEMS IS THAT IT'S HARD TO FIND THEM BECAUSE BEING GOOD CHURCH-GOING PEOPLE, THERE ARE PEOPLE GUARDING THE ENDS OF THE PEWS HERE.

[LAUGHTER]

SO ONE WAY WE COULD ADDRESS THE PEOPLE WHO ARE NOW STREAMING IN LATE HAVING HAD THAT SECOND CUP OF COFFEE, THIRD CUP OF COFFEE, IS IF YOU WOULD LIKE, YOU COULD MOVE IN TOWARD THE MIDDLE.

I WAS TOLD TO TELL YOU TO DO THAT.

AND I TOLD ELAINE WHO TOLD ME TO TELL YOU TO DO THAT, THAT'S NOT GOING TO HAVE ANY EFFECT.

[LAUGHTER]

SHE SAID, JUST LIKE DISNEYWORLD, TELL PEOPLE THE TO MOVE INTO THE MIDDLE.

SO I'LL ASK, IF YOU FEEL INCLINED TO DO THAT.

THERE ARE ALSO SEATS ON THE FRONT HERE THAT NO ONE HAS TAKEN AND WE KNOW WHY THAT IS, TOO.

[LAUGHTER]

I WOULD ALSO LIKE YOUR INDULGENCE FOR A VERY SMALL CHANGE IN THE AGENDA, AND ASK THAT WE BE ABLE TO CONSIDER THE 2011 COMPENSATION GUIDELINES THIS AFTERNOON IMMEDIATELY

FOLLOWING THE PRESENTATION BY BISHOP TERRY KEE, INSTEAD OF ON SUNDAY, BECAUSE THE CHAIR OF THAT COMMITTEE, OR THAT TASK FORCE, IS GOING TO BE HERE TODAY, BUT NOT TOMORROW.

IT SHOULD BE A RELATIVELY BRIEF REPORT.

SO IF I DON'T HEAR ANY OBJECTION TO THAT, I'M GOING TO ASSUME THAT YOU'RE OKAY WITH MAKING THAT CHANGE.

I DON'T SEE ANYBODY RUSHING TO A MICROPHONE, SO THANK YOU FOR DOING THAT.

YESTERDAY WAS THE 55th WEDDING ANNIVERSARY FOR DON AND JAN HANBURY.

I DON'T KNOW IF THEY'RE HERE YET.

[APPLAUSE]

I DON'T KNOW IF THEY'RE HERE YET THIS MORNING.

YOU KNOW, THEY'RE RETIRED AND THEY OFTEN DON'T GET UP EARLY.

[LAUGHTER]

BUT YOU SHOULD -- WHEN YOU SEE THEM, WISH THEM A HAPPY 55th WEDDING ANNIVERSARY.

BUT THIS IS EVEN MORE SPECIAL THAN THAT.

WHEN THEY WERE MARRIED 55 YEARS AGO, DO YOU KNOW WHERE THEY WENT ON THEIR HONEYMOON?

CHATTANOOGA, TO LOOKOUT MOUNTAIN.

WHEN WE FINISH THE MEETINGS, THEY'LL VISIT ROCK CITY AND RUBY FALLS AND ALL THOSE PLACES.

SO CONGRATULATIONS TO THEM.

WE ALSO MISSED A COUPLE OF OTHER THINGS YESTERDAY THAT I WANT TO BRING TO YOUR ATTENTION NOW.

PASTOR ELDON THUROW SHOULD HAVE BEEN MENTIONED DURING THE OBSERVATION OF THOSE SERVING 40 YEARS OF -- 40-YEAR ANNIVERSARY.

WHERE ARE YOU, ELDON?

WOULD YOU STAND?

40 YEARS IN THE MINISTRY.

[APPLAUSE]

HE'S BEEN SERVING LONGER THAN 40 YEARS.

HE'S SERVING AS INTERIM IN CHRISTUS VICTOR IN OCEAN SPRINGS.

THE REASON HE WASN'T ON THE LIST IS HE'S RECENTLY TRANSFERRED TO OUR SYNOD, AND SOME OTHER SYNOD SOMEWHERE HAS HIS 40th ANNIVERSARY CERTIFICATE.

BUT WE'RE HAPPY TO HAVE HIM IN THIS SYNOD.

AND WE'LL FIGURE OUT WHERE YOUR CERTIFICATE IS AND MAIL IT TO YOU.

ALSO, WE MISSED MENTIONING NEW TO OUR SYNOD PASTOR FRED MILLIGAN, THE INTERIM AT CHRIST IN FAIRFIELD GLADE.

MANY OF YOU ARE HAVE MET HIM BECAUSE HE WORKED FOR REGION 9 IN STEWARDSHIP BEFORE COMING TO OUR SYNOD TO DO THIS INTERIM.

FRED IS ONE OF OUR COMPANION -- OR, NO, I JUST GOT BACK FROM THE GLOBAL MISSION BREAKFAST -- ONE OF OUR FULL COMMUNION

PARTNER PASTORS.

HE'S A MEMBER OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH USA AND HAS BEEN SERVING, AS I SAID, AT CHRIST IN FAIRFIELD GLADE.

ARE YOU HERE, FRED?

YES, THERE'S FRED.

[APPLAUSE]

SO WELCOME.

SEEMS LIKE YOU'VE BEEN AROUND FOREVER, BUT WELCOME ANYWAY, NEW TO THE SYNOD.

WE'RE GLAD YOU'RE HERE.

NOW WE CALL ON THE CHAIR OF THE CREDENTIALS COMMITTEE,

MS. LINDA LARSON, FOR THE REPORT OF THAT COMMITTEE.

>> BISHOP GORDY, THE SECOND REPORT OF THE CREDENTIALS COMMITTEE IS AS FOLLOWS:

CONGREGATIONAL LAY VOTING MEMBERS, 244.

CLERGY UNDER CALL, 130.

CLERGY ON LEAVE FROM CALL 2.

CLERGY RETIRED, 18.

DIACONAL MINISTERS UNDER CALL.

1.

DIACONAL MINISTERS ON LEAVE FROM CALL, 1.

DIACONAL MINISTERS RETIRED, 0.

ASSOCIATES IN MINISTRY UNDER CALL, 3.

ASSOCIATES IN MINISTRY ON LEAVE FROM CALL, 1.

ASSOCIATE IN MINISTRY RETIRED, 0.

DEACONESSES UNDER CALL, 0.

DEACONESSES ON LEAVE FROM CALL, 0.

DEACONESSES RETIRED, 0.

ECUMENICAL PASTORS, 3.

LICENSED LAY MINISTERS, 2.

LAY MEMBERS OF SYNOD COUNCIL, 11.

TOTAL VOTING MEMBERS, 416.

AM I TO ASK FOR A MOTION?

>> I BELIEVE THAT WE WERE JUST CONFERRING ABOUT THAT, BUT I BELIEVE THAT THIS IS FOR INFORMATIONAL PURPOSES ONLY, SINCE IT DOESN'T AFFECT A QUORUM AND WE STILL HAVE A QUORUM, UNLESS SOMEONE CHALLENGES THAT.

IF SO, WE'LL POINT YOU TO THE NEAREST MATH TEACHER.

[LAUGHTER]

THAT WAS OUT OF PLACE FOR THE CHAIR TO DO THAT.

[LAUGHTER]

BUT IF WE FIND OUT THAT WE SHOULD HAVE ACTED ON THAT, WE'LL ACT ON THE NEXT ONE.

WE'RE WORKING ON IT.

WE NOW MOVE TO SPEECHES BY CANDIDATES FOR SYNOD VICE PRESIDENT.

THE ORDER FOR THE SPEAKERS HAS BEEN DETERMINED AT RANDOM. EACH SPEAKER WILL HAVE EXACTLY 5 MINUTES FROM THE TIME THEY

BEGIN SPEAKING.

OUR TIME KEEPER WILL NOTIFY THE SPEAKERS WHEN THEY HAVE 2 MINUTES REMAINING AND THEN AGAIN WHEN THEY HAVE 30 SECONDS REMAINING AND THEN WE'LL TURN THE MICROPHONE OFF.

[LAUGHTER]

THAT'S WHAT THEY DID TO THE BISHOPS.

[LAUGHTER]

THE ORDER FOR SPEAKERS IS:

MR. WILLIAM ALDERFER, MS. MARY WINFREY.

MS. DORIS UNDERWOOD AND MS. EARLENE REEDER.

MS. REEDER WAS NOT ABLE TO ATTEND THE ASSEMBLY DUE TO A PRIOR COMMITMENT, AND SO HER SPEECH WILL BE READ BY MS. JACQUI EL TORRO.

MR. ALDERFER?

>> THE NOTE HERE SAYS, "TAKE OFF YOUR NAMETAG."

MY NAME IS BILL ALDERFER, AND I AM BLESSED.

WHEN I WAS ASKED TO RUN FOR VICE PRESIDENT THE FIRST TIME, I SAID NO.

WHEN I WAS ASKED AGAIN, I SAID: WELL, MAYBE I NEED TO PRAY ABOUT THIS AND DISCERN WHAT I SHOULD DO.

AND THEN I HAD THIS SOFT, QUIET VOICE SAYING: GO.

I HAVE BEEN INVOLVED WITH THE SOUTHEASTERN SYNOD OF THE ELCA SINCE IT WAS FORMED.

I PREVIOUSLY SERVED AS VICE PRESIDENT OF THE SYNOD, AND

SERVED ON THE SYNOD COUNCIL.

I SERVED ON THE BUDGET AND FINANCE COMMITTEE, I SERVED AS CHAIR OF THE MISSION TRANSFORMATION TEAM, WHICH IS OUR FIRST ATTEMPT AT WHO WE ARE.

I WAS THE CHAIR OF OUR FIRST CAMPAIGN FOR THE "WALKING TOGETHER" APPEAL, WHICH WE WERE LOOKING TO RAISE MONEY FOR OUR MISSION IN MINISTRY.

I NOW SERVE ON THE CONSULTATION COMMITTEE, AND THE PERSONNEL COMMITTEE.

AND I CONTINUE KNOW WHERE I'M GETTING ALL THIS TIME, BUT I DO HAVE SOME LEFT.

I'M ALSO ON, OR I WAS, PART OF THE SOUTHEASTERN SYNOD LUTHERAN HOLDING CORPORATION.

AND I SERVE ON THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF LUTHERAN CAMPUS MINISTRY AT GEORGIA TECH.

RIGHT NOW, WE ARE IN A TIME OF CHANGE, BOTH IN THE ELCA, IN OUR CONGREGATIONS AND IN OUR SYNOD.

MY VISION FOR THE SOUTHEASTERN SYNOD IS THAT WE CHANGE OUR FOCUS FROM, OR AT LEAST TO, WHAT WE WERE COMMISSIONED TO DO, AND THAT IS, MAKE DISCIPLES, BAPTIZE, TEACH.

AND I BELIEVE THAT MY BROAD EXPERIENCE WILL HELP ENABLE OUR MISSION IN MINISTRY, AND I WOULD BE ABLE TO FACILITATE AND ADVOCATE FOR THE CHANGES THAT ARE HAPPENING IN OUR SYNOD.

AND I WOULD CONSIDER IT AN HONOR AND I WOULD BE HUMBLLED TO

SERVE.

[APPLAUSE]

>> GOOD MORNING.

>> GOOD MORNING.

>> I AM MARY WINFREY, A CHILD OF GOD, THE WIFE OF JOHNNY WINFREY, THE MOTHER OF 4 SONS AND 3 DAUGHTERS BY MY SONS, AND THE GRANDMOTHER OF 11 CHILDREN -- GRANDCHILDREN.

I WANT TO THANK MY HUSBAND FOR NOMINATING ME FOR THE CONFERENCE 12 REPRESENTATIVE.

THANK CONFERENCE 12, AND CONFERENCE 3, TRINITY CONFERENCE, FOR ALLOWING ME TO SERVE YOU ON THE SYNOD COUNCIL.

THANKS TO THE BISHOPS AND MY FELLOW COUNCIL MEMBERS, SYNOD COUNCIL MEMBERS, WHO PERMITTED AN ATMOSPHERE FOR US TO AGREE TO DISAGREE IN LOVE, AND STILL CARRY OUT THE WORD OF GOD.

I KNOW SOME OF YOU MAY BE SURPRISED TO SEE ME RUNNING FOR VICE PRESIDENT, KNOWING MY VIEWS ON CERTAIN ISSUES AND THE CHURCH WIDE THE DECISION.

AT FIRST I WAS, TOO.

BUT SEVERAL PERSONS ENCOURAGED ME TO RUN, AND I HAVE HAD A DAMASCUS MOMENT.

THROUGH FASTING, PRAYING, AND SEEKING GOD'S DIRECTION, GOD ASKED ME: WHERE WAS I GOING TO GO?

WHAT MADE ME THINK THINGS WOULD BE DIFFERENT ANYWHERE

ELSE?

I DON'T KNOW, HE REVEALED TO ME THAT THIS BATTLE IS NOT MINE, IT IS HIS, AND FOR ME TO BE STILL AND KNOW THAT HE IS GOD.

LET THE CHAFF GROW WITH THE WHEAT AND HE WILL SEPARATE THEM.

ALL OF US HAVE SINNED AND COME SHORT OF THE GLORY OF GOD.

LET US CONFESS OUR SINS, REPENT AND DRAW CLOSER TO GOD, REGARDLESS OF WHAT OUR SIN MAY BE.

I WAS ALSO LED TO REREAD "PURPOSE DRIVEN LIFE."

THE AUTHOR STATES THAT LIFE IS NOT ABOUT US AND OUR PLEASURES, BUT ABOUT GOD AND WHY HE CREATED US.

GOD HAS A PURPOSE FOR EVERYONE, AND HE CAN USE EVERYONE.

HE EVEN USED JUDAS IN HIS PLAN.

GOD HAS A LOT OF WORK FOR US TO DO.

ALL OF OUR STATES HAVE BEEN HIT BY SOME DISASTER: FLOODING, HURRICANES, TORNADOES.

THE ETHIOPIAN MISSION, HAITI MISSION AND WE HEARD THIS MORNING OF OTHER MISSIONS THAT WE HAVE, AND MINISTRIES IN THIS SYNOD.

I WENT TO ETHIOPIA WITH THE GROUP IN MAY, AND THERE IS A GREAT NEED FOR CLEAN WATER.

AND WE ALSO HAVE MANY NEEDS THAT HAVE BEEN CREATED BY OUR ECONOMIC CRISIS.

MY BROTHERS AND SISTERS, I DON'T KNOW IF WE'RE HAVING A DANIEL MOMENT, AN ESTHER MOMENT, A PETER MOMENT OR A LAZARUS EXPERIENCE.

WHATEVER THE TASK, LET US UNITE.

STAND FIRM ON THE WORD OF GOD.

SUPPORT OUR SYNOD.

STOP WITHHOLDING OUR FUNDS.

IF THE ECONOMY HAS CAUSED US TO HAVE A REDUCTION IN OUR FUNDS, STILL STEP OUT ON FAITH, AND GIVE GOD HIS 10%.

HE WANTS HIS TIP SO THAT WE CAN CARRY ON THE WORK IN THIS SYNOD.

GOD REMINDED ME THAT I TAUGHT MY CHILDREN AND ALL OF THE THOUSANDS OF CHILDREN THAT I TOUCH DURING MY 29 YEARS OF TEACHING, I TAUGHT THEM THAT WE LIVE IN A DEMOCRATIC SOCIETY, THAT DECISIONS ARE MADE, AND THEY MAY NOT ALWAYS BE WHAT WE WANT, BUT LET THE DEMOCRATIC PROCESS WORK.

GOTTA SKIP ON.

I ASK YOU, MY BROTHERS AND SISTERS, LET ME BE YOUR VOICE AT THE TABLE AS THE VICE PRESIDENT OF THE SOUTHEASTERN SYNOD.

I BELIEVE THAT I CAN DO ALL THINGS THROUGH CHRIST WHO STRENGTHENS ME.

I BELIEVE THAT WITH MY LEADERSHIP TRAINING AND EXPERIENCE, I CAN PROVIDE LEADERSHIP FOR OUR FELLOW COUNCIL MEMBERS.

I CAN GIVE SUPPORT TO THE BISHOP.

AND I WILL PROMOTE FAIRNESS, HONESTY, OPEN MINDEDNESS, GOOD STEWARDSHIP.

AND LISTEN TO THE PEOPLE'S CONCERNS.

GIVE ME A CHANCE, VOTE FOR MARY WINFREY.

[APPLAUSE]

>> GOOD MORNING.

>> GOOD MORNING.

>> MY NAME IS DORIS UNDERWOOD, AND I'M A CANDIDATE FOR VICE PRESIDENT OF THE SOUTHEASTERN SYNOD.

THERE, I'VE SAID IT.

AND IT'S MORE FOR MY BENEFIT THAN FOR YOURS.

[LAUGHTER]

YOU SEE, MY JOURNEY OF FAITH IN THIS CHURCH HAS BEEN ONE THAT HAS GIVEN ME LOTS OF UNEXPECTED AND SURPRISING OPPORTUNITIES FOR SERVICE.

AND THIS IS SUCH A MOMENT, AND I FIND MYSELF FINDING IT HARD TO BELIEVE THAT I'M HERE.

I WAS RAISED IN THE AFRICAN METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH IN A LITTLE TOWN CALLED LOWER PEACHTREE, ALABAMA.

THERE WERE NO LUTHERAN CHURCHES IN MY COMMUNITY.

IN FACT, I NEVER EVEN HEARD OF A LUTHERAN UNTIL I WAS IN HIGH SCHOOL.

[LAUGHTER]

AND THEN ONLY BECAUSE THERE WERE NO HIGH SCHOOLS FOR PEOPLE OF COLOR IN MY COMMUNITY, AND I WAS BUSED 2 COUNTIES AWAY TO GO TO HIGH SCHOOL.

THERE I MET A YOUNG LADY WHO WAS A LUTHERAN, AND ON MY FIRST

VISIT TO HER CHURCH, I FELL IN LOVE WITH THE LITURGY, AND A NEW LUTHERAN WAS BORN THAT DAY.

IT TOOK ME SEVERAL YEARS TO FORMALIZE MY RELATIONSHIP WITH THIS CHURCH, AND THAT, TOO, HAPPENED IN A SMALL TOWN, RAND TOOL, ILLINOIS.

SINCE I WAS A MILITARY SPOUSE, I'VE LIVED IN A LOT OF PLACES, AND IN SOME PLACES THERE WERE NO LUTHERAN CHURCHES, AND IN SOME PLACES THERE WERE LUTHERAN CHURCHES WHERE I DID NOT ESPECIALLY FEEL WELCOME.

I'VE NEVER HAD A PASTOR THAT LOOKS LIKE ME, AND I'VE NEVER BEEN A MEMBER OF A CONGREGATION IN WHICH I WAS A MEMBER OF THE MAJORITY.

SO I THINK IT'S UNDERSTANDABLE, AND I THINK YOU CAN UNDERSTAND, WHY I'VE BEEN SURPRISED AT THE OPPORTUNITIES FOR SERVICE THAT I'VE HAD.

I'M AT THE MOMENT NOW WHERE I'M SURPRISED AT THIS OPPORTUNITY.

BUT EVEN THOUGH I'M SURPRISED, I'M DELIGHTED.

AND I WELCOME IT.

I HAVE BEEN INVOLVED IN THIS SYNOD FOR 10 YEARS NOW, AND IT'S BEEN A DELIGHT.

I SERVED 6 YEARS ON THE CANDIDACY COMMITTEE, 2 YEARS AS SECRETARY, AND 2 YEARS AS CHAIR.

I'VE HAD 2 CONSECUTIVE TERMS ON THE SYNOD COUNCIL, AND I'VE

HAD A TOTAL OF 3 YEARS ON THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF THE SYNOD COUNCIL.

I'VE SERVED ON THE SYNOD'S ANTI-RACISM TEAM, AND PROVIDED ANTI-RACISM TRAINING IN THE SYNOD, AS WELL AS AT LUTHERIDGE. AND I BELIEVE THAT THESE 10 YEARS OF EXPERIENCE GIVES ME A GOOD, SOLID BACKGROUND TO SERVE AS VICE PRESIDENT OF THIS SYNOD.

I TELL YOU, I KNOW YOU WANT TO KNOW SOME OF THE REASONS WHY I THINK YOU SHOULD VOTE FOR ME.

WELL, I TOOK THE "HOW LUTHERAN ARE YOU" QUIZ ON FACEBOOK.

[LAUGHTER]

AND IT SAID I WAS LUTHERAN THROUGH AND THROUGH.

[LAUGHTER]

BUT I THINK THERE ARE SOME OTHER REASONS TO VOTE FOR ME.

I'VE ALREADY MENTIONED MY EXPERIENCE IN THE SYNOD.

I'VE WORKED WITH THE SYNOD COUNCIL.

I KNOW SOME OF THE CHALLENGES THAT WE FACE IN THIS SYNOD, AND THERE ARE QUITE A FEW.

I THINK WE NEED A VICE PRESIDENT WHO IS ABLE TO WORK WITH A DIVERSE GROUP OF PEOPLE, AND STILL PROMOTE HARMONY AND CONSENSUS-BUILDING.

I WOULD WELCOME THE OPPORTUNITY TO WORK WITH BISHOP GORDY, AND WOULD GLADLY ACCEPT ANY TASK THAT HE MIGHT ASSIGN ME.

I BELIEVE THAT WE'VE GOT SOME STIFF CHALLENGES FACING US IN

THIS SYNOD AS WE GO FORTH FROM THIS PLACE.

BUT I THINK IT IS IMPORTANT THAT WE REMEMBER THAT ONE OF OUR TOP PRIORITIES MUST BE: HOW DO WE CONTINUE TO BE THE CHURCH IN THESE DIFFICULT TIMES?

I KNOW WE HAVE TO WRANGLE WITH OTHER ISSUES, BUT THAT IS AN IMPORTANT QUESTION.

AND I PROMISE YOU THAT THAT QUESTION WILL BE FOREMOST IN MY MIND IF I AM ELECTED TO SERVE AS YOUR SYNOD VICE PRESIDENT.

WE MUST FIND A WAY TO BE CONDUITS OF GOD'S GRACE, AND LOVE, IN THE PLACES WHERE WE HAVE BEEN PLANTED.

I FEEL CALLED TO THE TASK THAT I AM ASKING YOU TO ELECT ME TO.

AND I KNOW THAT WITH GOD'S HELP, I CAN DO IT.

THANK YOU.

[APPLAUSE]

>> GOOD MORNING.

>> GOOD MORNING.

>> I AM NOT RUNNING FOR SYNOD VICE PRESIDENT.

[LAUGHTER]

MY NAME IS JACQUI EL TORRO.

I'M STANDING HERE BECAUSE EARLENE REEDER ASKED ME TO REPRESENT HER, AS IT DOES NOT SHOW A LACK OF HER COMMITMENT TO THE CALL, BUT IT SHOWS A TIME CONFLICT.

SO AS I READ THIS PREPARED STATEMENT BY EARLENE.

EARLENE REEDER IS A CHILD OF GOD.

IT DOES NOT DESCRIBE WHO SHE IS, BUT MORE IMPORTANTLY WHOSE SHE IS.

SHE WAS BORN IN PANAMA CITY, FLORIDA, EDUCATED THERE AND THEN MOVED ON TO MICHIGAN WITH HER FAMILY.

BUT IT WAS IN FLORIDA THAT SHE MET AND MARRIED HER BELOVED SOUL MATE OF 46 YEARS, JAMES.

THEY HAVE THREE ADULT CHILDREN, 6 ADORABLE GRANDCHILDREN, AND ONE TO BE BORN AROUND THANKSGIVING.

FAMILY IS THE ESSENCE OF WHO WE ARE.

IT DOES NOT ONLY MEAN BLOOD RELATIVES, BUT ALL OF GOD'S CHILDREN.

HER JOURNEY BEGAN WITH CHRIST AS A YOUNGSTER.

SHE WAS MENTORED BY HER PATERNAL GRANDMOTHER.

SHE BELIEVES THAT NONE OTHER GREATER THAN THE GOD WE SERVE, THE CROSS IS CENTRAL TO WHO WE ARE.

IN THE 1980s, SHE STRUGGLED WITH WHAT CHRIST WOULD HAVE HER TO DO, AND BEGAN THE PROCESS OF DISCERNMENT.

LITTLE DID SHE KNOW THAT GOD HAD SUCH A STRANGE SENSE OF HUMOR, AND WOULD PLACE HER IN THE MOST UNFAMILIAR PLACES IN LIFE.

IT STARTED WITH BEING ELECTED TO THE METROPOLITAN DETROIT LUTHERAN PARISHES, AS IT WAS CALLED THEN, BUT LATER BECAME THE DETROIT COALITION -- LUTHERAN COALITION.

THAT WAS A 7-YEAR JOURNEY.

DURING THAT TIME, DETROIT WAS SEEING MANY OF THE SAME ISSUES WE ARE SEEING NOW IN THE SOUTHEASTERN SYNOD REGARDING RACE, FINANCES, ET CETERA.

IT WAS DURING THAT JOURNEY WHICH PREPARED HER FOR ALL OF HER FUTURE LEADERSHIP ROLES THAT SHE'S BEEN PRIVILEGED TO BE IN.

IN THOSE POSITIONS, SHE LEARNED THAT THERE IS NO "I" IN TEAM, AND IN ORDER TO GROW MINISTRY AND OUTREACH IN SMALL, STRUGGLING CONGREGATIONS, DOES THAT SOUND FAMILIAR, YOU HAVE TO ALIGN YOURSELF WITH THOSE WHO ARE LIKE YOU AND PULL TOGETHER.

COMING TOGETHER IS NOT EASY, NOR IS THERE ALWAYS GOING TO BE WITH 100% PARTICIPATION.

BUT THEY LEARNED IN DETROIT THAT -- WHAT THEY LEARNED IN DETROIT TAUGHT THEM UNITY, AND THAT UNITY DOESN'T MEAN WE DON'T HAVE DIFFERENT OPINIONS.

BUT WE CAN ARRIVE AT THE SAME GOAL IF WE REMAIN FAITHFUL TO BEING -- TO GOD WHO CALLED US AND THAT BEING IS THE CHURCH, TO LOVE AND CARE FOR GOD'S PEOPLE.

THEY LEARNED TO DO MINISTRY, TRAINING AND WORSHIP IN WAYS THAT THE SPIRIT WOULD BE FILLED, SPIRIT-LED AND GOD-HONORED CONTEXTUALLY.

THEY ALSO LEARNED RESPECT FOR OTHER COMMUNITIES THAT DIFFERED FROM THEIRS.

THEY WORKED ECUMENICALLY WITH OTHER RELIGIOUS GROUPS IN OUTREACH VENTURES, JOINT TRAININGS AND WORSHIP SERVICES.

HMM, I THINK WE NEED THAT HERE.

AS SOME CONGREGATIONS DWINDLED AND WERE UNABLE TO AFFORD FULL-TIME PASTORS, THEY DEVELOPED A DEACON TRAINING PROGRAM SO AS TO HAVE LEADERS TRAINED TO ASSIST THE PASTOR IN OUTREACH, SICK AND SHUT-IN AND HOSPITAL CALLS, AS WELL AS WORSHIP.

THE PROGRAM -- THE BISHOP AND THE SYNOD COUNCIL RECOGNIZED THAT THIS PROGRAM WAS MUCH NEEDED.

AS THE COALITION OF 15 CONGREGATIONS, THEY HAD A DIRECTOR, AND AN ELECTED BOARD TO OVERSEE THE BUSINESS OF THE BODY. THEY CREATED THE DETROIT THEOLOGICAL PROJECT IN CONJUNCTION WITH TRINITY SEMINARY, SO THAT THOSE WHO HAD BEEN CALLED TO MINISTRY AND WERE -- SORRY, Y'ALL, BUT I'M MESSING UP -- SO THAT THOSE WHO HAD BEEN CALLED TO MINISTRY AND WERE THERE BECAUSE OF -- UNABLE TO ATTEND BECAUSE OF FAMILY COMMITMENTS, JOBS OR WHATEVER REASONS, THEY COULD NOT GO AWAY TO SEMINARY -- OKAY, ONE MINUTE.

THEY COULD STUDY AT HOME AND HAVE CLASSES VIA INTERACTIVE VIDEO FROM THE TRINITY CAMPUS.

THEY DEVELOPED A LAY LEADERSHIP ACADEMY UNDER THE DIRECTION OF DR. RANDOLPH FEATHERSTONE.

AND SINCE MY TIME IS RUNNING OUT, EARLENE WAS WITH THE SOUTHEASTERN MICHIGAN SYNOD.

SHE WAS CALLED TO BE THE ASSISTANT TO THE BISHOP.

IN HER PORTFOLIO SHE HAD JUSTICE AND ADVOCACY, COMPANION
SYNODS, A TASK FORCE ON MULTICULTURALISM AND ANTI-RACISM,
CHURCH AND SOCIETY.

SHE'S A MEMBER OF ST. PAUL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN DECATUR.

SHE WILL CONTINUE TO SERVE WHEREVER GOD SENDS HER, AND IS
WILLING TO SERVE YOU.

HER GREATEST JOY WOULD BE SERVING THE PEOPLE OF THIS SYNOD
AND SEEING THE FRUITS OF HER LABOR COME TO LIFE.

THANK YOU.

[APPLAUSE]

>> THIS JUST IN: IF THERE'S ANYBODY WHO DOESN'T --

IF THERE'S AN EMPTY SEAT NEXT TO YOU, WOULD YOU RAISE YOUR
HAND?

I'M SUPPOSED TO ENCOURAGE YOU AGAIN TO, IF YOU'RE IN THE SIDES
AND IN THE BACK, TO SORT OF FILL IN SO THAT PEOPLE CAN FIND
PLACES.

SO THERE ARE LOTS OF THEM RIGHT DOWN HERE.

THERE ARE SEATS OVER HERE.

IT'S IN THE FRONT, FOLKS.

THERE ARE ALWAYS EMPTY SEATS IN ANY LUTHERAN GATHERING IN
THE FRONT.

YOU CAN ALWAYS FIND IT.

I ALSO WANT TO REMIND YOU THAT -- BEFORE I DO THAT, THANKS TO
ALL OF THE VICE PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATES.

WE ARE EXTREMELY BLESSED IN THIS SYNOD TO HAVE A CHOICE OF SUCH INSPIRING AND OFTEN HUMOROUS SPEAKERS TO CHOOSE A CANDIDATE FOR OUR VICE PRESIDENT.

THE FIRST BALLOT FOR VICE PRESIDENT IS SCHEDULED FOR THE END OF THE PLENARY SESSION.

PLEASE REMEMBER THAT ALL VOTING MEMBERS NEED TO BE IN FRONT OF THE CLOTH BARRIERS.

THIS ISN'T AS IMPORTANT RIGHT NOW AS IT WILL BE WHEN WE GO TO ELECTIONS LATER BUT YOU DO NEED TO BE IN FRONT OF THE CLOTH BARRIER SO IF YOU NEED TO COME DOWN FRONT, WE WON'T THINK ILL OF YOU IF YOU STILL WANT TO GET UP AND ROAM AROUND AND GO OUTSIDE.

I KNOW WHY PEOPLE SIT IN THE BACK AND ON THE EDGES SO YOU CAN LEAVE WITHOUT CREATING A RUCKUS.

BEEN THERE.

SHOULD TRY IT UP HERE.

IT'S REALLY HARD TO LEAVE.

[LAUGHTER]

WE HAVE 416 VOTING MEMBERS AND 460 SEATS SO THERE ARE PLENTY OF SEATS.

AT THIS TIME, WE TURN TO THE REPORT OF LUTHERIDGE/LUTHEROCK MINISTRIES FOR AN UPDATE.

AND TO DO THAT UPDATE MWE HAVE MR. KEITH JOHNSON, THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF LLMI AND MS. LIBBY BEDENBAUGH, THE

SENIOR DEVELOPMENT ASSOCIATE AT LLMI, AND THEY ARE MAKING THEIR WAY, I HOPE, TO THE DAIS AT THE MOMENT.

THEY ARE NOT.

OKAY.

WE HAVE A GLITCH HERE.

OH, EXPAND, OKAY.

I'M EXPANDING HERE WHILE WE'RE WAITING.

I DON'T THINK WE CAN GO TO THE NEXT THING, BECAUSE IT'S 20 MINUTES LONG.

SO A LUTHERAN, A CATHOLIC AND A --

[LAUGHTER]

SO JESUS IS WALKING ALONG WITH HIS DISCIPLES AND HE TURNS TO HIS DISCIPLES AND HE SAYS, HEY, GUYS, I'VE GOT A GREAT IDEA. AND THIS FIRST DISCIPLE, WHO WAS A BAPTIST, SAID, IS IT IN THE BIBLE?

AND THE SECOND DISCIPLE, WHO WAS A ROMAN CATHOLIC, SAYS, DOES THE POPE APPROVE THIS?

THE THIRD DISCIPLE IS A METHODIST, AND HE SAID, IS IT IN THE DISCIPLINE?

THE FOURTH DISCIPLE WAS A LUTHERAN.

AND THE LUTHERAN SAID, WAIT A MINUTE, IS THIS IN THE CONFESSIONS?

THE FIFTH DISCIPLE WAS AN EPISCOPALIAN.

HE SAID, IS THIS ARCHAIC AND IN GOOD TASTE?

AND JESUS SAID: OH, FORGET IT.

[LAUGHTER]

OKAY, I'M STILL EXPANDING HERE.

I MAY BE SHRINKING, I DON'T KNOW.

YEAH, OKAY, WE WERE TOLD, IN FACT, BEFOREHAND, WE WERE TOLD BY THE PARLIAMENTARIAN THAT THE CREDENTIALS COMMITTEE NEEDED TO BE ADOPTED BECAUSE THERE HAD BEEN CHANGES IN THE NUMBERS.

AND THAT, IN FACT, TURNS OUT TO BE THE CASE AND WE DIDN'T ADOPT IT, SO WE'LL ASSUME THE CREDENTIALS COMMITTEE REPORT WAS BROUGHT BY THE COMMITTEE, AND THEREFORE DOESN'T NEED A SECOND.

IS THERE AGREEMENT IN THE HOUSE THAT WE ADOPT THIS REPORT OF THE CREDENTIALS COMMITTEE?

ALL OF THOSE IN FAVOR PLEASE SAY AYE.

>> AYE.

>> ALL THOSE OPPOSED, SAY NO.

IT'S ADOPTED.

THANK YOU VERY MUCH, AND THANKS TO THE PARLIAMENTARIAN WHO, SO FAR, SHE'S NEVER BEEN WRONG.

NOW WE'RE READY.

WE'RE READY, WE'RE GOOD.

SO WE'RE GOING TO BRING MR. KEITH JOHNSON FROM LUTHERIDGE/LUTHEROCK MINISTRIES, INCORPORATED, TO BRING AN

UPDATE AT LLMI.

>> I APOLOGIZE FOR BEING LATE.

WE WERE OUT IN THE HALLWAY RAISING FUNDS FOR LUTHERANCH,
AND WE HAD A GOOD DONOR WE DIDN'T WANT TO LEAVE.

I'M KEITH JOHNSON, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF
LUTHERIDGE/LUTHEROCK.

PARDON?

>> TAKE YOUR NAMETAG OFF.

IT GLARES.

>> IT FLASHES IN THE LIGHT.

>> AND DO WE HAVE THE POWERPOINT PRESENTATION READY, GENE?

HOW DO I KNOW IF HE HAS THE POWERPOINT?

OKAY, VERY GOOD.

I'M PLEASED TO ANNOUNCE TO YOU THAT WE HAVE MET THE \$3.5
MILLION CAMPAIGN GOAL FOR LUTHERANCH.

[APPLAUSE]

AND HERE TO TELL YOU MORE ABOUT THAT IS LIBBY BEDENBAUGH,
THE DEVELOPMENT ASSOCIATE, AND LIBBY WAS ON THAT
FUNDRAISING CALL IN THE HALLWAY WITH ME, AND THAT'S WHY WE'RE
LATE.

YOU'VE GOT TO TAKE YOUR NAMETAG OFF, LIBBY.

>> HELLO.

NOTHING LIKE BEING IN THE RESTROOM WHEN YOU'RE ON, RIGHT?

HOW WONDERFUL THAT WE MADE THE GOAL AND WE APPRECIATE SO

MUCH WHAT YOU HAVE DONE, BECAUSE IT'S NOT US, IT'S YOU.

AND THANK YOU.

WE WANT TO THANK YOU FOR YOUR GIFTS, YOUR PRAYERS, AND YOUR PARTNERSHIP.

THIS IS A MAJOR ACCOMPLISHMENT, AND WE'RE SO EXCITED.

WE DIDN'T MEET OR REACH THE STRETCH GOAL, AS WE HAD HOPED, BUT IN TOUGH ECONOMIC TIMES, INDIVIDUALS AND CONGREGATIONS RESPONDED GENEROUSLY.

THANK YOU AGAIN.

PLEASE KNOW HOW MUCH WE APPRECIATE YOUR PARTNERSHIP.

BECAUSE OF THE REAL ESTATE BUBBLE, AND SUBSEQUENT COLLAPSE OF THE REAL ESTATE MARKET IN FLORIDA, A FORMER LLMI BOARD MEMBER WHO WAS MAKING 1.4 MILLION AVAILABLE FOR LUTHERANCH WAS NOT ABLE TO DO SO.

HIS PLAN HAD BEEN TO PURCHASE THE RANCH PORTION OF THE PROPERTY, AND THEN GIVE IT BACK THROUGH A LIFE ESTATE, BUT IT DID NOT HAPPEN.

IT'S DISAPPOINTING, BUT GOD TAKES CARE OF US, AND IT TOOK A SECOND LOAN TO BE TAKEN OUT FOR 1.4 MILLION TO FINANCE THE ENTIRE PROPERTY.

IT MEANS AS THE CHALLENGE CAMPAIGN CONCLUDES, WE STILL OWE \$2 MILLION ON THE LAND.

WHEN THE PLAN WAS TO HAVE IT PAID OFF AS THE END OF THE CAMPAIGN CAME.

HOWEVER, THE GOOD NEWS.

THERE IS ALWAYS GOOD NEWS IN SOMETHING LIKE THIS, AND YOU HAVE TO LOOK FOR IT TO FIND IT.

BUT THE GOOD NEWS IS THAT THE 519 ACRES IS AVAILABLE FOR USE, INCLUDING THE RANCH AND THE HOLY TRINITY RETREAT HOUSE.

ALREADY, HUNDREDS OF PEOPLE HAVE BEEN TO LUTHERANCH FOR A RETREAT, AND WE OWN THE ENTIRE PROPERTY.

[APPLAUSE]

RAISE YOUR HAND IF YOU OR A GROUP FROM YOUR CHURCH HAS BEEN TO LUTHERANCH.

HOW MANY OF YOU WERE THERE?

THEN YOU KNOW WHAT I'M SAYING WHEN I SAY WHAT A WONDERFUL PLACE AND OPPORTUNITY IT IS.

VOLUNTEERS ARE WORKING TO INCREASE THE CAPACITY OF THE HOLY TRINITY HOUSE TO 8 BEDROOMS NOW INSTEAD OF 5, TO SERVE 16 ADULTS OR 27 YOUTH AT ONE TIME.

A NEW MEETING ROOM IS ALSO BEING ADDED THAT OVERLOOKS KINGFISHER LAKE.

ADDITIONAL VOLUNTEERS ARE NEEDED TO HELP WITH THE PROJECT.

AS I SAID, ADDITIONAL VOLUNTEERS ARE NEEDED.

THAT'S AN OPPORTUNITY FOR YOU TO COME STAY IN THAT PROPERTY AND LET THE DUCKS WAKE YOU UP AT 7:00 IN THE MORNING.

PLEASE CONTACT OUR VOLUNTEER, KEN HYDE, HIMSELF ANOTHER VOLUNTEER, IF YOU ARE ABLE TO HELP.

SOME OF YOUR BEST TIMES ARE IN TIMES LIKE THAT.

PLANS ARE ALSO BEING FINALIZED FOR ANOTHER CAMPAIGN THAT WILL PAY OFF THE DEBT ON THE LAND AND TO PROVIDE FUNDS TO BEGIN SITE IMPROVEMENTS AT LUTHERANCH, AND YOU WILL BE HEARING MORE ABOUT THE CAMPAIGN NEXT YEAR.

IT'S EXCITING, AND IT'S A WONDERFUL OPPORTUNITY FOR EACH OF US.

THE FIRST FACILITY IS A MULTIPURPOSE RETREAT CENTER, A MULTIPLE-USE CENTER THAT WILL SERVE UP TO 50 ADULTS AND 40 YOUTH AT ONE TIME, OR 80 ADULTS, OR 100 YOUTH.

AND YOU CAN SEE THE SCALE OF IT THERE.

A TEMPORARY KITCHEN WILL ALSO ENABLE FOOD SERVICE TO THE FACILITY PRIOR TO THE DINING HALL BEING BUILT AT A LATER DATE.

WHILE THERE IS A SIGNIFICANT CHALLENGE REMAINING, THE FEASIBILITY STUDY INDICATED THAT THERE IS MUCH EXCITEMENT FOR LUTHERANCH.

PEOPLE ARE READY AND EAGER TO MOVE FORWARD.

GOD IS IN THIS WITH US, AND WE WILL BE SUCCESSFUL WITH IT.

TOGETHER, WE WILL RAISE THE NECESSARY FUNDS TO PAY OFF THE LAND AND BUILD THE RETREAT CENTER.

AND SOMEDAY, WE CAN ALL SAY WE WERE PART OF IT.

TOGETHER, WE'RE BUILDING A HERITAGE THAT WILL BENEFIT FUTURE GENERATIONS.

[APPLAUSE]

>> THANK YOU, AND JUST A NOTE TO THE A/V PEOPLE: WE DO HAVE A

SCRIPT FOR YOU TO FOLLOW AS WE GO THROUGH THE POWERPOINT PRESENTATION.

IF YOU'VE BEEN IN ALTAR MINISTRY AS LONG AS I HAVE, LIKE 36 YEARS, YOU LEARN TO BE FLEXIBLE AND TRUST THE HOLY SPIRIT.

I JUST DON'T KNOW IF WE CAN TRUST THE A/V FOLKS.

>> OH!

>> UH-OH, I GOT INTO TROUBLE WITH THAT ONE, HUH?

PLEASE KNOW THAT YOU CAN CONTINUE TO COUNT ON LUTHERIDGE AND LUTHEROCK, NOT JUST FOR THE LUTHERIDGE CAMPAIGN, BUT FOR ONGOING MINISTRY.

THERE'S A LONG HISTORY DATING BACK TO 1949 WHEN THE GEORGIA-ALABAMA SYNOD JOINED THE LUTHERIDGE VENTURE.

DESPITE CHANGES IN OUR WORLD, TURMOIL IN THE CHURCH, ECONOMIC SLUGGISHNESS IN OUR ECONOMY, LUTHERIDGE/LUTHEROCK REMAINS UNCHANGED.

THE TRADITION AND HISTORY OF LUTHERIDGE WILL BE CELEBRATED AT THE 60th ANNIVERSARY OF THE GROUNDBREAKING FOR EFIRD HALL, THE FIRST BUILDING AT LUTHERIDGE, THIS SUMMER.

WE SHOULD BE ON SLIDE 26 AT THIS POINT.

I DON'T THINK WE'RE THERE.

THAT SLIDE SAYS: WE ARE WHAT YOU COUNT ON US TO BE.

CHRIST CENTERED CAMP COMMUNITIES CONTINUE TO BE SAFE PLACES WHERE GOD USES THE POSITIVE CHRISTIAN ROLE MODEL OF COUNSELORS TO INSPIRE AND TOUCH THE LIVES OF CAMPERS.

ALL AGES CONTINUE BE TRANSFORMED BY GOD AND ARE EQUIPPED TO LIVE AS DISCIPLES OF CHRIST AT HOME IN YOUR CONGREGATIONAL FAITH COMMUNITIES.

CAMPFIRMATION HAS BEEN AN IMPORTANT PART OF THE PROGRAM AT LUTHERIDGE FOR 35 YEARS, SERVING AS MANY AS 1,000 YOUTH DURING THE SUMMER.

THERE'S STILL SPACE FOR PASTORS AND CONFIRMANDS TO BE PART OF IT.

FAITH ALIVE CAMPFIRMATION RETREATS WITH CURRICULA ARE NOW ON WEEKENDS IN THE NON-SUMMER, AND STARTING LAST SUMMER, FAITH ALIVE CAMPFIRMATION CAME TO SUMMER CAMP AT LUTHERIDGE, AND WITH THAT WEEK CAME BISHOP GORDY AND HIS STAFF.

THEY'LL BE BACK AGAIN THIS SUMMER STARTING ON SUNDAY AFTERNOON.

OTHER POPULAR PROGRAMS LIKE MUSIC WEEK, AUTUMN ADULTS, HAND BELLS, FAMILY CAMP, AND WILD WEEKENDS FOR WOMEN CONTINUE.

ANOTHER WILD WOMEN WEEKEND IS PLANNED THIS YEAR, SO WE'LL BE ABLE TO SERVE 700 WILD WOMEN AT LUTHERIDGE, SO SPREAD THE WORD.

YOU DON'T WANT TO MISS OUT.

WE ARE WHAT YOU NEED US TO BE.

LAST YEAR, THE BOARD AND STAFF WRESTLED WITH HOW TO RESPOND TO THE CHALLENGING ECONOMIC CLIMATE AND THE FAITH

FORMATION STIMULUS PACKAGE WAS BORN.

425 YOUTH RECEIVED FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE TO ATTEND CAMP.

THANK YOU FOR RESPONDING WITH SUPPORT TO PROVIDE FOR THESE YOUTH.

UNFORTUNATELY, THIS YEAR THE NEED IS STILL THERE, AND WE'VE CONTINUED THIS PROGRAM.

WE HAVE FORMS AT THE TABLE IN THE LOBBY.

IF YOU HAVE ANY YOUTH WHO NEED HELP TO ATTEND CAMP, BECAUSE WE WILL NOT TURN AWAY ANY YOUNG PERSON WHO NEEDS TO EXPERIENCE THE BENEFITS OF SHARING IN THE CHRIST CENTERED CAMP COMMUNITIES.

WE ARE WHAT CHURCH LEADERS NEED US TO BE.

THANKS TO A GRANT FROM THRIVENT FINANCIAL FOR LUTHERANS, LUTHERIDGE/LUTHEROCK IS ALSO ABLE TO HELP PASTORS, ASSOCIATES IN MINISTRY, CHURCH MUSICIANS, CHURCH OFFICE STAFF, AND OTHERS TO EXPERIENCE RENEWAL AND FOCUS ON PHYSICAL AND SPIRITUAL WELLNESS AS YOU LEAD MISSION IN YOUR CONGREGATION.

THE THRIVENT GRANT WILL HELP ANY CHURCH PROFESSIONAL, ANY CHURCH PROFESSIONAL WHO WORKS 15 HOURS A WEEK OR MORE TO ATTEND THESE PROGRAMS AT 1/2 PRICE.

YOUR ENTIRE FAMILY CAN JOIN YOU AT LUTHERIDGE/LUTHEROCK FOR THESE QUALIFYING PROGRAMS, AND WE HAVE A LIST OF ALL OF THESE AVAILABLE AT OUR BOOTH.

IT'S A JOY TO CONTINUE TO SERVE IN PARTNERSHIP WITH THE
SOUTHEASTERN SYNOD.

IN FACT, I THINK OUR PARTNERSHIP IS STRONGER NOW THAN AT ANY
TIME IN MY 17-YEAR TENURE WITH LUTHERIDGE/LUTHEROCK.

THE CHALLENGES THAT WE FACE CONTINUE TO BE SIGNIFICANT.

THE TURMOIL IN OUR CHURCH IS REAL, AND LIKE THE SYNOD, WE'VE
HAD TO MAKE SOME SIGNIFICANT CUTS.

BUT PLEASE KNOW THAT LUTHERIDGE/LUTHEROCK AND LUTHERANCH
CONTINUE TO REMAIN STRONG AND UNCHANGED.

WE REMAIN WHAT WE'VE ALWAYS BEEN.

WE ARE WHAT YOU COUNT ON US BE.

WE ARE WHAT YOU NEED US TO BE.

THANK YOU.

[APPLAUSE]

>> ALL RIGHT.

THANK YOU VERY MUCH.

GOOD REPORT.

GOOD TO HEAR WHAT'S HAPPENING AT LUTHERIDGE/LUTHEROCK.

I REMIND YOU THAT AT 10:00, AND WE HAVE TO BE REALLY CAREFUL
WITH THIS TIME, WE'RE GOING TO JOIN OUR SISTERS AND BROTHERS IN
OUR PARTNER SYNOD, THE LA CROSSE AREA SYNOD, AS THEY ARE IN
ASSEMBLY.

SO WE'LL BE KIND OF MAKING SURE THAT HAPPENS ON TIME IN THE
AGENDA.

BEFORE WE GET TO THAT, HOWEVER, WE HAVE ONE OF THE HIGHLIGHTS OF OUR ASSEMBLY TIME.

I WANT TO INTRODUCE PASTOR STAN OLSON, WHO IS OUR CHURCHWIDE REPRESENTATIVE FOR THIS ASSEMBLY.

PASTOR OLSON WAS BISHOP OF THE SOUTHWESTERN MINNESOTA SYNOD FROM 1994 UNTIL 2002, WHEN HE WAS APPOINTED TO SERVE AS THE ELCA EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR FOR VOCATION AND EDUCATION.

HE'S A GRADUATE OF WALDORF COLLEGE, ST. OLAF COLLEGE, LUTHER SEMINARY, ST. PAUL MINNESOTA, AND YALE UNIVERSITY, WHERE HE EARNED A Ph.D. IN NEW TESTAMENT.

HE TAUGHT NEW TESTAMENT FOR FOUR YEARS AT LUTHER NORTHWESTERN THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY IN ST. PAUL, MINNESOTA.

HE'S GOING TO LEAD A BIBLE DEVOTIONAL AND BRING INFORMATION ABOUT THE ELCA "LIVING INTO THE FUTURE TOGETHER," THE L.I.F.T. TASK FORCE, WHICH THE TASK FORCE HAS BEEN COMMISSIONED BY THE ELCA CHURCH COUNCIL TO DEVELOP AND RECOMMEND OPTIONS FOR THE FUTURE OF OUR CHURCH IN LIGHT OF ITS IDENTITY, CHANGES IN ITS ENVIRONMENT AND ITS CALL TO GOD'S MISSION.

PASTOR OLSON IS EXTREMELY HIGHLY REGARDED AND RESPECTED FOR HIS WISDOM, INSIGHT, AND HIS JUST REALLY GOOD, HARD WORK ON BEHALF OF THE CHURCH.

WE WELCOME YOU, STAN.

[APPLAUSE]

>> THANK YOU, BISHOP.

SETUPS LIKE THAT ALWAYS MAKE ME NERVOUS.

IT IS GREAT TO BE WITH YOU.

HAVING ONE OF THE CHURCH'S TRAVELING JOBS, AS DOES YOUR BISHOP, YOU BECOME EVER MORE AWARE OF ALL THE CONNECTIONS THAT THERE ARE.

FOR EXAMPLE, KEITH JOHNSON WAS THE DIRECTOR OF THE FIRST BIBLE CAMP THAT I WORKED WITH IN THE FIRST CALL THAT I HAD, LO THESE MANY YEARS AGO.

KEITH, WHEN WE WERE BOTH PROMISING YOUNG CHURCH LEADERS.

IT IS GREAT TO BE WITH YOU.

I WANT TO START WITH A LITTLE THOUGHT EXPERIMENT FOR YOU.

IT'S A LUTHERAN THEME THAT WE KNOW GOD THROUGH JESUS, THROUGH JESUS CHRIST, CRUCIFIED AND RAISED.

THAT'S HOW WE KNOW GOD.

AND I ASK YOU TO THINK: WHAT IS IT THAT WE KNOW?

WHAT IS IT THAT WE KNOW ABOUT GOD THROUGH JESUS CHRIST?

A MOMENT ON THAT.

WHAT DO WE KNOW ABOUT GOD?

ABOUT GOD THROUGH JESUS CHRIST?

AND THEN THERE'S ANOTHER LUTHERAN THEME THAT WE REPEAT IN EVERY BAPTISM, EVERY AFFIRMATION OF BAPTISM, IT'S THE VERSE, "LET YOUR LIGHT SO SHINE, THAT YOUR LIFE MAY GLORIFY GOD."

THE LUTHERAN THEME THAT SAYS: OUR LIVES WILL POINT TO GOD.

SO GIVEN THE GOD THAT YOU KNOW THROUGH JESUS CHRIST, THE

THINGS YOU KNOW ABOUT GOD, HOW DO OUR LIVES POINT TO GOD?

WHAT IS IT IN OUR LIVES THAT POINT TO THE GOD THAT WE KNOW

THROUGH JESUS CHRIST?

NOW I WANT YOU TO TALK WITH A NEIGHBOR FOR JUST A MINUTE

HERE.

NAME SOME TRAITS, SOME CHARACTERISTICS, SOME HABITS OF OUR

LIVES THAT POINT TO THAT GOD THAT WE KNOW IN JESUS CHRIST,

KIND OF EVERYDAY PRACTICAL THINGS THAT POINT TO GOD, JUST

QUICKLY WITH YOUR NEIGHBORS.

YOU DON'T GET MUCH TIME ON THIS.

[BREAK TO TALK WITH NEIGHBORS]

THANK YOU.

NOW, IF YOU HAVE SOME ONE-WORD CHARACTERISTICS OR TRAITS,

CALL THEM OUT FOR ME.

COMPASSION, LOVE.

FORGIVENESS.

FORBEARANCE.

RELATIONSHIP, TRUST, HUMILITY, SERVICE.

I MISSED THOSE.

SACRIFICE.

JOY.

ALL RIGHT, WONDERFUL!

[APPLAUSE]

"LOVE" GOT IN THERE, BUT WE COULD NAME IT AGAIN.

I WANT TO CONCENTRATE THIS MORNING WITH YOU ON TWO: TRUST AND HOPE.

LIVING AS PEOPLE OF TRUST, LIVING AS PEOPLE OF HOPE.

THE -- I NEED ALSO TO COMPLICATE THE PICTURE.

ALL THOSE QUALITIES WE NAMED, WE MIGHT HAVE NAMED PATIENCE, FORBEARANCE, WE DID GET FORGIVENESS IN THERE.

ALL THESE QUALITIES ARE IN THE REAL WORLD, NOT SOME IDEAL WORLD.

THIS IS ALSO PART OF OUR LUTHERAN NOTION THAT WE PAY ATTENTION TO THE WORLD IN WHICH WE LIVE, A REAL WORLD WHERE THERE ARE PROBLEMS AND DANGERS AND OPPORTUNITIES AND SET-BACKS AND LIMITS.

THE BISHOP INVITED ME TO TALK ABOUT PRACTICAL THEOLOGY THIS MORNING.

I THINK HE MUST HAVE INVITED EVON TO DO THE SAME THING.

THAT SOUNDED LIKE THAT WAS THE COMMISSION THAT WE GOT.

PRACTICAL THEOLOGY.

BE PRACTICAL ABOUT GOD.

PRACTICE OUR UNDERSTANDING OF GOD, PRACTICE LIVING OUT WHAT WE WANT TO POINT TO ABOUT GOD.

PRACTICE THEN AN UNDERSTANDING OF GOD AS TRUSTWORTHY AND GOOD, A GOD IN WHOM WE CAN PLACE TRUST.

SPEAKING PRACTICALLY, TRUST AND HOPE.

NOW THE TEXT, IF YOU HAVE YOUR BIBLE WITH YOU.

ACTUALLY, THERE ARE TWO TEXTS.

THE FIRST IS FROM NUMBERS CHAPTER 13, IF YOU OPEN TO THAT.

I'LL READ IT TO YOU, SO DON'T PANIC.

I KNOW WHAT WE LUTHERANS ARE LIKE.

WE DON'T CARRY OUR BIBLES IN OUR POCKETS.

I'D LIKE TO REFORM US ON THAT MATTER.

AND YOU CAN PUT YOUR FINGER IN ROMANS 8, AS WELL.

NUMBERS 13.

SORRY.

"THE LORD SAID TO MOSES, SEND PEOPLE TO SPY OUT THE LAND OF CANAAN WHICH I AM GIVING TO THE ISRAELITES.

FROM EACH OF THEIR ANCESTRAL TRIBES, YE SHALL SEND SOMEONE, EVERYONE A LEADER AMONG THEM."

SO 12 LEADERS.

NOW, WHEN WE LOOK AT THE BOOK OF FAITH, WE NEED TO ASK SOME LITERARY AND HISTORICAL QUESTIONS USUALLY.

LET ME JUST REMIND YOU, WE'RE IN NUMBERS HERE, THE 4th BOOK OF THE BIBLE.

THERE'S A COMPLEX LITERARY PATTERN.

WE'VE BEEN TALKING ABOUT EXODUS, WE'VE BEEN TALKING ABOUT PROMISED LAND, ABOUT GETTING THERE.

THE THEME HAS BEEN REPEATED.

PROMISES, PROMISES, EXODUS, SET-BACK.

PROMISES, PROMISES, EXODUS, PROMISED LAND.

THE PEOPLE ARE NOW HUNDREDS OF MILES FROM HOME.

SEVERAL YEARS AWAY FROM EGYPT.

BUT THE THEME, THE STORY, THE LITERARY THEMES, HAVE BEEN REPEATED.

NOW, AT THE BEGINNING, I ASKED YOU TO THINK ABOUT THE HUMAN CHARACTERISTICS THAT POINT TO GOD.

AND THAT'S WHAT I WANT YOU TO BE LISTENING FOR IN THE TEXT.

WHAT ARE THE HUMAN CHARACTERISTICS PORTRAYED IN THIS STORY?

AND DO THEY POINT TO GOD?

I'M NOT READING ALL OF CHAPTERS 13 AND 14.

I'LL SKIP DOWN TO VERSE 17 IN CHAPTER 13.

MOSES CHOSE THE 12.

THEN IT SAYS, "MOSES SENT THEM TO SPY OUT THE LAND OF CANAAN AND SAID TO THEM, GO UP THERE INTO THE NEGEB AND GO INTO THE HILL COUNTRY AND SEE WHAT THE LAND IS LIKE AND WHETHER THE PEOPLE IN IT ARE STRONG OR WEAK, WHETHER THEY ARE FEW OR MANY, WHETHER THE LAND THEY LIVE IN IS GOOD OR BAD, AND WHETHER THE TOWNS THAT THEY LIVE IN ARE UNWALLED OR FORTIFIED.

AND WHETHER THE LAND IS RICH, OR POOR, AND WHETHER THERE ARE TREES IN IT OR NOT.

BE BOLD AND BRING BACK SOME OF THE FRUIT OF THE LAND."

SKIPPING DOWN TO 21, "SO THEY WENT UP AND SPIED OUT THE LAND FROM THE WILDERNESS OF ZIN TO REHOB, NEAR LEBO-HAMATH.

AND THEY CAME TO THE WADI ESHCOL AND CUT DOWN FROM THERE A BRANCH WITH A SINGLE CLUSTER OF GRAPES, AND THEY CARRIED IT ON A POLE BETWEEN TWO OF THEM.

THEY ALSO BROUGHT SOME POMEGRANATES AND FIGS."

THIS VERSE WAS PROVIDED SO THAT EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION PROGRAMS WOULD HAVE A GREAT PICTURE TO COLOR OF THAT.

YOU ALL DID THAT, RIGHT?

THEY DID THEIR SPY WORK IN THIS PART OF THE STORY, WE'RE ONLY TOLD ABOUT DISCOVERING THE FRUITFULNESS OF THE LAND.

THERE'S NO MENTION YET OF PEOPLE OR WALLS.

BUT THEY COME BACK, AND PRESENT THEIR REPORT.

13:25.

"THEY BROUGHT BACK WORD TO MOSES AND AARON AND ALL THE CONGREGATION, AND SHOWED THEM THE FRUIT OF THE LAND, AND THEY TOLD MOSES, WE CAME TO THE LAND TO WHICH YOU SENT US. IT FLOWS WITH MILK AND HONEY, AND THIS IS ITS FRUIT.

YET THE PEOPLE WHO LIVE IN THE LAND ARE STRONG, AND THE TOWNS ARE FORTIFIED AND VERY LARGE, AND BESIDES, WE SAW THE DESCENDANTS OF ANAK THERE."

THEY NAMED ANAK AND OTHER GROUPS OF LEGENDARY POWERFUL PEOPLE, NAMES OF TERROR IN THEIR CULTURAL HISTORY.

SO IMAGINE THESE LISTENERS IN THE CONGREGATION, WIDE-EYED, CONCERNED, BEGINNING TO PANIC.

"WE CAN'T TAKE ONE MORE PROBLEM.

THINK OF WHAT WE'VE BEEN GOING THROUGH FOR ALL THESE YEARS,
THESE YEARS IN THE WILDERNESS."

CALEB WAS ONE OF THE SPIES.

ANY OF YOU NAMED CALEB?

AS I WAS READING THIS STORY, I WAS WONDERING WHY CALEB IS NOT
A POPULAR NAME.

CALEB IS A HERO.

LET'S GET THAT INTO THE BIRTH REGISTERS HERE.

STARTING WITH VERSE 30 IN CHAPTER 13.

"BUT CALEB," ONE OF THE 12 SPIES, "QUIETED THE PEOPLE BEFORE
MOSES, AND SAID, 'LET US GO UP AT ONCE AND OCCUPY IT, FOR WE
ARE WELL ABLE TO OVERCOME IT.'

THEN THE MEN WHO HAD GONE UP WITH HIM SAID, 'WE ARE NOT ABLE
TO GO UP AGAINST THIS PEOPLE, FOR THEY ARE STRONGER THAN WE
ARE.'

SO THEY BROUGHT TO THE ISRAELITES AN UNFAVORABLE REPORT OF
THE LAND THAT THEY HAD SPIED OUT SAYING, 'THE LAND THAT WE
HAVE GONE THROUGH AS SPIES IS A LAND THAT DEVOURS ITS
INHABITANTS, AND THE PEOPLE THAT WE SAW IN IT ARE OF GREAT
SIZE.'"

HOW WOULD YOU LIKE TO HAVE BEEN MOSES?

THERE WAS DISSENT AMONG THE SPIES.

HE WAS DOING HIS RESEARCH AND HE GETS MIXED DATA BACK.

DISPUTE ABOUT THE FACTS, AND CLEARLY DISPUTE ABOUT THE

APPROPRIATE ACTION IN LIGHT OF THE FACTS.

ONLY CALEB SPEAKS UP WITH CONFIDENCE.

NOW, YOU'RE THINKING PERHAPS HE WASN'T REALLY PAYING
ATTENTION.

MAYBE HE SLEPT LATE THE DAY THEY SAW THE DESCENDANTS OF
ANAK, OR MAYBE HE WAS ONE OF THOSE PEOPLE LIKE ME SOMETIMES
WHO IS JUST WAY TOO CONFIDENT.

I THINK I PROBABLY WOULD HAVE TRUSTED THE MAJORITY.

REMEMBER, THEY WERE ALL CHOSEN BECAUSE OF THEIR LEADERSHIP
GIFTS AND EXPERIENCE.

SO WHAT'S THE REACTION FROM THE PEOPLE?

14, VERSE 1.

"THEN ALL THE CONGREGATION RAISED A LOUD CRY, AND THE PEOPLE
WEPT THAT NIGHT, AND ALL THE ISRAELITES COMPLAINED AGAINST
MOSES AND AARON."

THE WHOLE CONGREGATION SAID TO THEM, "COULD BE WORSE,
BISHOP."

NOT EVERYBODY IN THE SYNOD IS EXPLAINING.

"THE WHOLE CONGREGATION SAID TO THEM, 'WOULD THAT WE HAD
DIED IN THE LAND OF EGYPT OR THAT WE HAD DIED IN THIS
WILDERNESS.

WHY IS THE LORD BRINGING US UP INTO THIS LAND TO FALL BY THE
SWORD?

OUR WIVES AND OUR LITTLE ONES WILL BECOME BOOTY.

WOULD IT NOT BE BETTER FOR US TO GO BACK TO EGYPT?'

SO THEY SAID TO ONE ANOTHER, 'LET US CHOOSE A CAPTAIN AND GO BACK TO EGYPT.'

WHAT CHARACTERISTICS ARE NOTING IN THE PEOPLE IN THE STORY?

THEY'RE CAUTIOUS.

THEY'RE FRUSTRATED.

THEY'RE WORRIED.

THEY'RE WONDERING IF THEY NEED TO FACE FACTS, IF THEY NEED A NEW START.

"PERHAPS WE'VE BEEN MISGUIDED," THEY THINK.

PERHAPS IT WAS A MISTAKE TO COME THIS FAR?

I'LL READ JUST ONE MORE SECTION OF THIS TEXT, THE MULTIPART STORY OF PROMISE AND PROMISED LAND GOES ON FOR A LONG TIME. ONE MORE.

BEGINNING WITH VERSE 5 IN CHAPTER 14.

"THEN MOSES AND AARON FELL ON THEIR FACES BEFORE ALL THE ASSEMBLY OF THE CONGREGATION OF THE ISRAELITES.

AND JOSHUA, THE SON OF NUN AND CALEB THE SON OF JEPHUNNEH WHO WERE AMONG THOSE WHO HAD SPIED OUT THE LAND, TORE THEIR CLOTHES AND SAID, 'THE LAND THAT WE WENT THROUGH AS SPIES IS AN EXCEEDINGLY GOOD LAND.

IF THE LORD IS PLEASED WITH US, HE WILL BRING US INTO THE LAND AND GIVE IT TO US.'

A LAND THAT FLOWS WITH MILK AND HONEY.

ONLY DO NOT REBEL AGAINST THE LORD.

ONLY DO NOT REBEL AGAINST THE LORD."

NOW, TAKE A MINUTE TO TALK TO YOUR NEIGHBOR ABOUT THIS STORY.

WHAT CHARACTERISTICS, WHAT VARIOUS CHARACTERISTICS IN HUMAN LIFE, DID YOU HEAR?

AND WHAT ARE THEY SAYING ABOUT GOD?

TALK TO YOUR NEIGHBOR FOR A MOMENT.

[BREAK TO TALK WITH NEIGHBORS]

OKAY.

MOSES.

WHAT WAS MOSES' CHARACTERISTIC HERE?

WAS THIS BUSINESS -- REMEMBER, WE STARTED THE STORY WITH THE LAND THAT GOD IS GIVING TO THE ISRAELITES.

THAT'S IN THE INITIAL BIG, I'M GIVING YOU THIS LAND.

SO WAS MOSES TRUSTING?

WAS HE OVERLY CAUTIOUS?

WAS THIS APPROPRIATE RESEARCH IN LIGHT OF THE PROMISE OF GOD?

I DON'T THINK WE CAN ANSWER.

WHAT ABOUT THE SPIES?

DIFFERENT REACTIONS?

THE PEOPLE SEEM PRETTY WELL UNITED IN THEIR REACTION.

CALEB THE CONFIDENT.

"WE CAN DO THIS."

HE DOESN'T SAY: THERE WEREN'T ANY STRONG PEOPLE.

HE DOESN'T SAY: THE CITIES DON'T HAVE WALLS.

BUT HE'S INTUITING WHAT THE PROMISE MEANT.

AND APPARENTLY, HE PERSUADED JOSHUA, BY THE TIME WE GET TO THE SECOND SPEECH.

THE FIRST TIME, IT'S JUST CALEB.

AND THEN IT'S CALEB AND JOSHUA.

AND THEY SAY, PASSIONATELY, CLOTHES RIPPING: DO NOT REBEL AGAINST THE LORD.

CLEARLY, WHAT THAT MEANS IS: TRUST THE GOD WHO HAS PROMISED.

DO NOT REBEL AGAINST THE LORD, MEANS TRUST THE PROMISE.

ADD THE PROMISE OF GOD TO WHAT YOUR SENSES TELL YOU, TO WHAT YOUR EARS HAVE HEARD ABOUT THIS LAND.

ADD THE PROMISE OF GOD.

GIVEN WHAT WE KNOW ABOUT GOD, WE CAN ACT IN CONFIDENCE.

IT IS A GOOD LAND.

THEY HAD DONE THEIR RESEARCH.

THEY KNEW THE REALITIES, AND CALEB AND JOSHUA POINTED TO THE RIGHT WAY TO RESPOND, THE RIGHT WAY TO TRUST GOD.

TRUST, NOT NAIVE TRUST, BUT TRUST THAT'S DONE ITS RESEARCH, TRUST THAT'S LOOKED AT PAST EXPERIENCE, AND TRUST THAT REMEMBERS WHAT GOD IS LIKE.

AND HERE WE WANT TO CALL TO MIND AGAIN THE LITERARY PATTERN OF ALL THE STORIES WE'VE HEARD MARCHING OUT OF EGYPT, AND

TOWARD THE PROMISED LAND.

THE DEPENDABILITY OF GOD, NO MATTER WHAT.

THIS STORY FROM NUMBERS ALWAYS TAKES ME BACK TO MY STUDENT PASTOR YEARS, TO MY FRIEND VIVIAN JENKINS NELSON AND THE CHILDREN'S CHOIR IN OUR CONGREGATION, PRINCE OF GLORY IN NORTH MINNEAPOLIS.

I'M SURE THEY SANG MANY SONGS, BUT THE ONE THAT I CAN STILL HEAR IS, "WE'VE COME THIS FAR BY FAITH, LEANING ON THE LORD, TRUSTING IN HIS HOLY WORD.

HE'S NEVER FAILED US YET.

HE'S NEVER FAILED US YET."

THAT WAS A CALL TO ACTION.

THE KIDS IN THAT CHOIR WERE GROWING UP IN THE PUBLIC HOUSING AREA OF NORTH MINNEAPOLIS, THE PROJECTS THAT SURROUNDED OUR CONGREGATION.

THOSE KIDS AND ALL OF US IN THE MIDST OF DIFFICULTY WERE BEING REMINDED TO ACT ON THE BASIS OF THE PROMISES.

IN THE OLD TESTAMENT, EXODUS, IN THE PROMISED LAND ARE PERSISTENT THEMES.

IN THE NEW TESTAMENT, SOMEWHAT PARALLEL TO THAT, IT'S CRUCIFIXION AND RESURRECTION.

THE APOSTLE PAUL DID NOT GO OUT AS A SPY, BUT HE DID GO OUT INTO THE WORLD AND HE PAID ATTENTION TO WHAT WAS HAPPENING.

HE PAID ATTENTION TO PEOPLE'S NEEDS, AND HE EXPERIENCED ALL

KINDS OF PROBLEMS AND RESISTANCE.

HE WAS WHIPPED, IMPRISONED, SHIP WRECKED, FACED CONFLICTS WITH OPPONENTS AND CONFLICTS WITH MISSION PARTNERS.

HE KNEW THE REALITIES.

LATE IN HIS LIFE -- I COULD QUOTE A NUMBER OF TEXTS HERE, BUT LATE IN HIS LIFE HE WROTE TO THE ROMAN CHRISTIANS, WHO ALSO KNEW SOMETHING ABOUT THE TOUGH REALITIES OF DAILY LIFE.

LET ME READ FROM ROMANS 8, BEGINNING WITH VERSE 35.

AND FLIP TO THAT IF YOU HAVE YOUR BIBLES OPEN.

"WHO WILL SEPARATE US FROM THE LOVE OF CHRIST?

WILL HARDSHIP OR DISTRESS OR FAMINE OR NAKEDNESS OR PERIL OR SWORD?

AS IT IS WRITTEN, 'FOR YOUR SAKE WE ARE BEING KILLED ALL DAY LONG; WE ARE ACCOUNTED AS SHEEP TO BE SLAUGHTERED.'

NO, IN ALL THESE THINGS, WE ARE MORE THAN CONQUERORS, THROUGH HIM WHO LOVED US.

FOR I AM CONVINCED THAT NEITHER DEATH NOR LIFE NOR ANGELS NOR RULERS NOR THINGS PRESENT NOR THINGS TO COME NOR POWERS NOR HEIGHT NOR DEPTH NOR ANYTHING ELSE IN ALL CREATION WILL BE ABLE TO SEPARATE US FROM THE LOVE OF GOD IN CHRIST JESUS OUR LORD."

PAUL'S ACTIONS, PAUL'S WORDS, SHOWED TRUST, AND HOPE, AND THOSE ACTIONS AND WORDS POINT TO THE GOD THAT PAUL KNEW THROUGH CRUCIFIED AND RISEN CHRIST.

WHAT ABOUT US?

INDIVIDUALLY AND AS CONGREGATIONS, AS SYNODS, AS A
CHURCHWIDE ORGANIZATION.

HOW DO WE SHOW HOPE AND TRUST IN GOD?

HOW DO WE POINT TO THE GOD THAT, IN FACT, WE CONFESS?

THERE'S NO SIMPLE TIMELESS ANSWER TO THAT IN DETAIL.

AND ON MANY POINTS, WE WILL NOT AGREE ON THE ANSWER TO THAT
QUESTION AS TO WHAT WE SHOULD DO TO POINT TO GOD.

BUT IT IS THE QUESTION THAT WE MUST CONTINUALLY ASK.

WHAT SHALL WE DO?

WHAT SHALL OUR CHURCH DO SO THAT WE POINT FAITHFULLY TO THE
GOD WHO IS SELF-REVEALED IN JESUS CHRIST?

BISHOP GORDY ASKED ME TO TELL YOU A BIT ABOUT THE L.I.F.T. STUDY
HE'S ALREADY INTRODUCED YOU TO.

IN FACT, IT'S THAT L.I.F.T. STUDY THAT MADE ME THINK OF THE
NUMBERS 13 AND 14 TEXT.

THIS STUDY THAT IS ABOUT LIVING INTO THE FUTURE TOGETHER,
L.I.F.T., LIFT.

RENEWING THE ECOLOGY OF THE ELCA.

THIS IS NOT A GREEN VENTURE EXCEPT IN THE BROADEST SENSE.

BUT ECOLOGY IN THE SENSE THAT WE ARE LIVING SYSTEMS RELATING
TO EACH OTHER, CONGREGATIONS, AGENCIES, INSTITUTIONS,
OUTDOOR MINISTRIES, CAMPUS MINISTRIES, SYNOD, CHURCHWIDE
ORGANIZATION.

HOW DO WE RENEW WHAT IS A WONDERFUL LIVING ECOLOGY?

HOW DO WE LIVE INTO THE FUTURE TOGETHER?

AND MY POINT IN LINKING THIS TO THE BIBLE VERSE IS: HOW DO WE DO THAT POINTING TO THE GOD THAT, IN FACT, WE DO BELIEVE IN, THE GOD WHO HAS BEEN REVEALED TO US, SELF-REVEALED IN JESUS CHRIST?

THE L.I.F.T. TASK FORCE IS A SMALL TASK FORCE FROM ACROSS THE CHURCH.

MOST OF THEM ARE NOT CHURCH PROFESSIONALS.

A COUPLE OF CONGREGATIONAL PASTORS, A PERSON FROM A SEMINARY, BUT MOSTLY PEOPLE WORKING IN ACTIVE -- LAY PEOPLE WORKING IN OUR EVERYDAY LIVES IN OTHER REALMS TALKING ABOUT THESE QUESTIONS.

FIRST THE INVITATION.

THURSDAY I HAD A CHANCE TO TALK TO YOUR COUNCIL MEMBERS AND GATHER SOME OF THEIR INSIGHTS.

TOMORROW MORNING, I HAVE A WORKSHOP, AND I'M GOING TO INVITE YOU TO COME TO THAT, AND SHARE ORALLY AND IN WRITINGS YOUR INSIGHTS.

IF YOU CAN'T COME TO THAT WORKSHOP, THERE'S ANOTHER ONE YOU'RE REALLY DYING TO TAKE PART IN.

CATCH ME AFTER LUNCH WHEN I WILL HAVE REMEMBERED TO BRING THE SHEETS WITH ME, AND I WILL JUST HAND YOU A SHEET AND INVITE YOU TO TAKE PART, OR YOU CAN JUST GO ONLINE.

IT'S A FAIRLY EASY WEBSITE TO FIND.

IT'S THE ELCA.ORG/LIFT.

OR GO TO THE ELCA WEBSITE, TYPE "LIFT" INTO THE SEARCH BOX, AND IT WILL TAKE YOU RIGHT THERE.

THERE'S A SURVEY YOU CAN FILL OUT ONLINE.

WE'RE ASKING ABOUT FAITHFULNESS FOR THE FUTURE.

THIS IS NOT A NEW IDEA, OBVIOUSLY.

IT'S BEEN DONE FOR GENERATIONS.

OUR GRANDPARENTS, GREAT GRANDPARENTS, GREAT, GREAT GRANDPARENTS HAVE BEEN ASKING THE SAME KIND OF QUESTION.

BISHOP HANSON, PRESIDING BISHOP MARK HANSON, HAS ENCOURAGED US NOW AS WE ENTER THE THIRD DECADE OF THE ELCA, TO ASK IT AGAIN.

A CAREFUL REVIEW IN THE INTERESTS OF THE BEST POSSIBLE STEWARDSHIP AND THE MOST EFFECTIVE POSSIBLE MISSION.

WHAT SHALL WE BE AND DO AS A CHURCH?

THE L.I.F.T. PROJECT IS ALL ABOUT PARTNERSHIP, AND IT'S PARTICULARLY ASKING ABOUT THESE RELATIONSHIPS: WHAT'S MOST IMPORTANT FOR A NATIONAL OFFICE OF THE CHURCH TO DO?

WHAT CAN WE DO BEST, WE AND THE OTHERS WHO ARE ON THE STAFF, I AND THE OTHERS WHO ARE ON THAT STAFF?

WHAT CAN THE SYNOD AS AN ORGANIZATION, AS A COLLECTIVE, AND THE SYNOD AS A STAFF, DO BEST?

WHAT DO CONGREGATIONS DO BEST?

WE KNOW A LOT OF THAT ALREADY.

IN A TIME OF TIGHT BUDGETS, WE NEED TO PROBABLY FOCUS ON IT AGAIN, DO WHAT WE CAN DO BEST.

I SHOULD SAY, THIS STUDY WAS NOT A RESPONSE TO THE ECONOMIC CRISIS OR TO THE CONTROVERSY.

IT WAS INITIATED BY THE BISHOP ABOUT 3 YEARS AGO ACTUALLY, AND IT'S BEEN MOVING FORWARD.

IT'S FORTUNATE THAT IT'S GOING ON AS WE FACE SOME OF THESE OTHER CHALLENGES.

BUT IT IS REALLY THAT BASIC NOTION OF: LET'S BE READY FOR THE FUTURE.

LET'S CONTINUE TO BE FAITHFUL.

IT'S A GOOD CONVERSATION.

I HOPE YOU'LL JOIN IN TOMORROW AND/OR ON THE INTERNET, OR CORNER ME.

I'M AROUND FOR THE DURATION HERE.

CALEB AND JOSHUA AND PAUL AND MIRIAM AND EUNICE AND PRISCILLA, THOSE ARE OUR MODELS, MODELS OF TRUST.

NOW, IF WE THINK ABOUT THOSE SPIES GOING INTO THE PROMISED LAND, YOU AND I HAVE THE BENEFIT OF HIND SIGHT.

AND WE KNOW THAT CALEB AND JOSHUA WERE RIGHT.

AND THE OTHER 10 SPIES WERE WRONG.

BUT LET'S NOT BE TOO HARD ON THOSE OTHER 10.

THEY DID THEIR RESEARCH.

THEY WERE LEADERS, THEY ALSO WERE TRYING TO TRUST GOD.

AT THAT POINT, THEY WERE WORRIED THAT MAYBE THEY HAD MADE SOME MISTAKES.

AND THAT MAYBE THEY HAD BEEN MISLED IN TRYING TO TRUST GOD. THAT'S UNDERSTANDABLE.

BUT WE SEE NOW THAT THEY WERE CAUGHT IN LOOKING AT THEIR OWN ACTIONS, THEIR OWN CAPACITIES, AND NOT SEEING GOD AT WORK IN THE WORLD.

CALEB AND JOSHUA POINTED THEMSELVES AND ALL OF US BACK TO THE DEMONSTRATED PROMISES OF GOD.

GOD WILL DO WHAT GOD HAS SAID.

IT STRIKES ME THAT WE MIGHT THINK OF HOPE AND TRUST AS DISCIPLINES.

DISCIPLINES CHARACTERISTICS, QUALITIES THAT WE SIMPLY PRACTICE IN OUR LIFE.

HOW CAN I TRUST TODAY?

REMEMBERING THE PROMISES.

HOW CAN I HOPE TODAY?

REMEMBERING THE PROMISES.

DEVOTIONS USUALLY END WITH PRAYER.

THIS ONE ENDS WITH BLESSING.

BENEDICTIONS.

TWO BENEDICTIONS, ACTUALLY.

ONE FROM LEVITICUS.

EXCUSE ME, ONE FROM NUMBERS.

ONE FROM ROMANS, THE TWO BOOKS, THE TWO PARTS OF THE BOOK OF FAITH, THAT WE'VE BEEN LOOKING AT THIS MORNING.

AND I'M GOING TO RAISE MY HANDS IN THE TYPICAL GESTURE OF BLESSING TO REMIND YOU OF ALL THOSE WHO HAVE LOOKED TO GOD IN CHRIST OVER THE GENERATIONS.

FIRST THE FAMILIAR FROM NUMBERS 6.

"THE LORD BLESS YOU AND KEEP YOU.

THE LORD MAKE HIS FACE TO SHINE UPON YOU AND BE GRACIOUS TO YOU.

THE LORD LIFT UP HIS COUNTENANCE UPON YOU, AND GIVE YOU PEACE."

AND MY FAVORITE FROM ROMANS: "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."

AND THEN IN HOPE AND TRUST, THE SIGN OF THE CROSS.

AMEN.

>> AMEN.

[APPLAUSE]

>> THANK YOU VERY MUCH, PASTOR OLSON.

HE WILL BE AROUND TO DO A WORKSHOP AND WILL BE ADDRESSING US AGAIN LATER, UPDATING US ON WHAT'S HAPPENING IN CHURCHWIDE.

WE'RE VERY PLEASED, BLESSED AND HONORED TO HAVE YOU HERE.

I THINK IT'S TIME NOW THAT WE'RE GOING TO GO TO THE LA CROSSE AREA SYNOD.

I'M GOING TO GO TO THE BACK OF THE ROOM HERE IN A MINUTE, TAKE MY CRIB SHEET WITH ME, AND WE WILL BE JOINING THE LA CROSSE AREA SYNOD.

IT WILL BE 9:00 THERE, SO THEY'RE EVEN EARLIER IN THE MORNING THAN WE ARE.

WE'RE GOING TO CONNECT BY WAY OF THE INTERNET, AND WE'LL BE SPEAKING WITH BISHOP JIM ARENDS BY WAY OF SKYPE.

AT LEAST THAT'S THE PLAN.

WE'LL SEE.

>> TRUST.

TRUST.

>> WHENEVER YOU'RE READY.

OUR BISHOP IS CURRENTLY WALKING.

WAIT JUST A SECOND.

>> EVERYONE IN OUR SYNOD IS WATCHING YOU.

[LAUGHTER]

EVERYONE IN THEIR SYNOD IS WATCHING ME, I GUESS.

>> HELLO, BISHOP GORDY.

[APPLAUSE]

>> HELLO, BISHOP ARENDS.

GOOD TO SEE YOU.

WE WERE WONDERING IF MAYBE A GOOD THING TO DO HERE WOULD

BE FOR YOU TO TELL US HOW THINGS ARE GOING AT THE LA CROSSE AREA SYNOD, AND THEN MAYBE A BIT ABOUT OUR PARTNER SYNOD, AND THEN WE'LL DO THE SAME.

>> THAT SOUNDS GOOD.

>> ALL RIGHT.

>> SO WE BRING YOU OUR GREETINGS.

WE'RE HAVE CROSSED FROM WISCONSIN, THROUGH THE SOUTHEASTERN CORNER OF MINNESOTA TO GATHER IN IOWA.

WE'VE BEEN HAVING A GOOD ASSEMBLY.

WE'RE GATHERING AROUND THE THEME OF BEING ROOTED IN THE WORD.

AND THE PRAYER REQUEST WE WOULD ASK OF YOUR SYNOD, I WANT TO TELL YOU RIGHT AWAY, IS WE WOULD ASK YOU TO HOLD US UP IN PRAYER AS WE CONTINUE TO GET OURSELVES BACK INTO THE BIBLE, AND TO MEET THE LIVING WORD IN THAT WRITTEN WORD.

>> WE WILL CERTAINLY DO THAT, YES.

AND YOU MAY NEED TO PRAY THE SAME FOR US.

WE'VE BEEN PRETTY DEEPLY AND RICHLY IN THE WORD SO FAR IN OUR ASSEMBLY.

WE JUST HEARD A WONDERFUL BIBLE STUDY FROM STAN OLSON FROM THE VOCATIONAL EDUCATION UNIT OF THE ELCA CHURCHWIDE.

>> WE'RE LOOKING FORWARD TO OUR STUDY A LITTLE BIT LATER TODAY FROM DR. ERIC KEEN FROM THE SCHOOL OF THEOLOGY IN PHILADELPHIA, AND HE'S BEEN PROVIDING SOME GREAT INSIGHTS FOR

US AT WORKSHOPS ALREADY.

WE'VE BEEN CONCERNED FOR YOU BETWEEN THE FLOODS IN TENNESSEE AND NOW THE BLACK CLOUD COMING TO YOU IN THE GULF.

HOW ARE THINGS GOING FOR YOU?

>> YOU PROBABLY REMEMBER IN THE CONFERENCE OF BISHOPS WE'RE KNOWN AS THE DISASTER SYNOD.

[LAUGHTER]

SOME PEOPLE THINK THAT'S ON ACCOUNT OF THE BISHOP.

[LAUGHTER]

BUT I THINK IT'S ACTUALLY THE TORNADOES, THE FLOODS, AND THE HURRICANES, AND NOW THE OIL SLICK.

WE ARE WORKING HARD.

LUTHERAN DISASTER RESPONSE IS ON THE SCENE WORKING THROUGH LUTHERAN EPISCOPAL SERVICES IN MISSISSIPPI AND LUTHERAN SERVICES IN TENNESSEE TO ADDRESS THE FLOODING IN THE METROPOLITAN NASHVILLE AREA.

AND WE ARE STANDING BY WITH HOUSING READY, AND MAKING PLANS FOR HOW TO RESPOND TO THE OIL SLICK OFF THE COAST, WHERE MANY OF OUR COMMUNITIES ARE FACING NOT ONLY THE ENVIRONMENTAL DEVASTATION, BUT ALSO ECONOMIC, SEVERE ECONOMIC DIFFICULTIES.

THERE ARE A LOT OF FISHING AREAS DOWN THERE THAT HAVE NOT -- THE SHRIMPERS AND OYSTERMEN HAVEN'T BEEN ABLE TO GO OUT TO

DO ANY FISHING FOR NOW OVER 6 WEEKS, AND NO ONE PAYS THEM WHEN THEY'RE NOT BRINGING IN THE FISH.

SO WE APPRECIATE YOUR PRAYERS FOR US, AS WE RESPOND TO THESE NATURAL AND HUMAN-MADE DISASTERS.

>> WE CONTINUE OUR PRAYERS.

WE CONTINUE TO SUPPORT THROUGH DISASTER RESPONSE, AND WHEN WE HEAR WORD THAT VOLUNTEERS MAY BE NEEDED WHO ARE TOTALLY UNSKILLED IN DEALING WITH THE GULF, WE MAY HAVE PEOPLE THAT WOULD LIKE TO JOIN YOU.

>> WE WILL WELCOME YOU, AND WE WILL HAVE HOUSING.

THANK YOU.

>> GREAT.

AS WE'VE BEEN TALKING INDIVIDUALLY, I WANT TO OFFICIALLY INVITE YOU TO JOIN US AT OUR THEOLOGICAL CONFERENCE THIS FALL IN OCTOBER.

>> THANKS, I PLAN TO BE THERE, AND WE WANT TO INVITE YOU.

I CAN TELL ALL OF THE ROSTERED FOLKS HERE, I DON'T THINK WE'VE ANNOUNCED THIS YET, BUT BISHOP ARENDS PLANS TO JOIN US AT LUTHERIDGE IN OCTOBER THIS YEAR, SO WE LOOK FORWARD TO SEEING YOU THERE.

THAT SOUNDS LIKE A GREAT PLAN.

ARE THERE ANY OTHER THINGS WE SHOULD BE TALKING ABOUT AS WE WALK TOGETHER ASSISTERS SYNODS?

>> WE'VE BEEN MEETING THIS YEAR IN CHATTANOOGA, TENNESSEE.

WHILE WE'RE PARTNER SYNODS, OUR SYNODS DON'T HAVE A LOT IN COMMON IN TERMS OF TERRITORY.

YOU'RE A RELATIVELY SMALL AREA WHERE LUTHERANS ARE FAIRLY -- LET ME THINK OF A WAY TO REPHRASE THAT -- WHERE THERE ARE MORE LUTHERANS THAN THERE ARE HERE.

STARTED TO SAY SOMETHING ABOUT DENSITY, BUT THAT CAN ONLY COME OUT BADLY.

>> IT'S PROBABLY MORE AN ISSUE FOR YOU THAN FOR US AT THIS MOMENT.

>> WE ACTUALLY HAVE ABOUT 170 CONGREGATIONS IN 4 STATES IN THE DEEP SOUTH.

THERE ARE 222,000 SQUARE MILES IN OUR SYNOD.

WE HAVE 4 METROPOLITAN AREAS OF A MILLION OR MORE.

AND ONE OF THE STATES IN OUR SYNOD, MISSISSIPPI, IS THE STATE IN THE UNITED STATES IN WHICH LUTHERANS ARE THE LEAST DENSE.

[LAUGHTER]

>> BRILLIANT LUTHERANS IN MISSISSIPPI.

>> THERE ARE MANY GOOD LUTHERANS IN MISSISSIPPI, BUT THERE ARE MANY PEOPLE IN MISSISSIPPI WHO ARE NOT LUTHERAN, AS IT TURNS OUT.

WE'VE BEEN MEETING HERE UNDER THE THEME OF "INTO ALL THE WORLD," AND YESTERDAY AT A WONDERFUL KEYNOTE ADDRESS BY JOHN ARTHUR NUÑES, THE PRESIDENT OF LUTHERAN WORLD RELIEF. AND I THINK WE WERE ALL INSPIRED AND READY TO LOOK AT HOW GOD

IS CALLING US TO SERVE THE WORLD.

WE ALSO HAVE WITH US THE BISHOP OF ONE OF OUR COMPANION SYNODS, BISHOP TERRY KEE, AND SALLY KEE, WHO ARE IN THE LUTHERAN CHURCH IN SINGAPORE.

THEY'VE ALSO BEEN POINTING US OUTSIDE OURSELVES, SO WE HOPE YOU'LL PRAY THAT WE'LL CONTINUE TO SEE WHERE GOD IS CALLING US IN THE WORLD.

>> OUR GUESTS ARE SUCH A BLESSING.

IN ADDITION TO DR. KEEN, WE HAVE CARLOS PEÑA, THE VICE PRESIDENT OF THE ELCA, WITH US SHARING THE WORK OF THE ELCA, AND WE HAVE THE PRESIDENT OF THE CENTRAL SYNOD AT THE ETHIOPIAN CHURCH WITH US AND HE BRINGS HIS PERSPECTIVE AND HIS BLESSINGS.

>> THAT'S WONDERFUL.

AND I'M GLAD TO SEE THAT WE'RE ALL LOOKING OUTSIDE OUR SYNODS AT THE MINISTRY THAT GOD IS CALLING US TO.

THERE SEEMS TO BE A GOOD SPIRIT OF HOPE, WHICH WAS WHAT STAN OLSON WAS JUST POINTING US TO IN HIS BIBLE STUDY: TRUSTING IN GOD AND HOPING FOR THE FUTURE, AND THAT'S WHERE WE ARE HERE.

>> THAT'S HERE, TOO.

I WONDER, MAY I OFFER A PRAYER FOR YOU AND THEN YOU OFFER ONE FOR US?

>> I'M HAPPY TO DO THAT.

THANKS.

>> LET US PRAY.

OUR LORD GOD, WE THANK YOU FOR BISHOP GORDY, FOR THE SOUTHEASTERN SYNOD, FOR OUR CONNECTION TO THEM.

WE PRAY FOR THEIR ASSEMBLY AS IT CONTINUES TO SEEK YOUR WILL AND YOUR GUIDANCE FOR THEM TO STEP OUT IN THE WORLD.

WE CONTINUE TO LIFT THEM UP AS THEY RECOVER FROM FLOODS, AS THEY SEE THE DEVASTATION IN THE GULF, AS IT AFFECTS THEIR WETLANDS AND THEIR INCOME.

WE PRAY FOR THEIR CONGREGATIONS AND THEIR MINISTRIES, THAT IN ALL, THEY WILL KNOW YOUR PRESENCE AND YOUR BLESSING.

AMEN.

>> AMEN.

WE ASK FOR YOUR BLESSING ON BISHOP ARENDS AND THE PEOPLE OF THE LA CROSSE AREA SYNOD.

WE PRAY THAT AS THEY RENEW THEIR COMMITMENT TO BE PEOPLE FORMED BY THE WORD, THAT YOUR WORD MIGHT DWELL IN THEM RICHLY AND DEEPLY.

WE PRAY THAT YOU MIGHT SHOW THEM WHERE YOU CALL THEM TO SERVE THOSE IN THEIR COMMUNITY AND AROUND THE WORLD IN JESUS' NAME.

AS THEY MEET TOGETHER, GIVE THEM A STRONG AWARENESS OF THE PRESENCE OF YOUR SPIRIT WITH THEM, AND THAT TOGETHER, WE BECOME CHURCH, THE PEOPLE OF GOD, GATHERED THROUGH THE WATERS OF BAPTISM, AND SENT OUT FOR THE SAKE OF THE WORLD.

WE PRAY THIS IN THE NAME OF CHRIST, WHO IS OUR SAVIOR AND OUR LORD.

AMEN.

>> AMEN.

>> THANK YOU SO MUCH, BISHOP GORDY.

WE'LL LOOK FORWARD TO SEEING YOU THIS FALL.

>> THANKS.

AND GOD BLESS YOU ALL AS YOU CONTINUE TO MEET THERE.

>> YOU, TOO.

[APPLAUSE]

>> I JUST LOVE THAT BACK THERE.

AFTER THAT WAS OVER, THE TECHNICAL STAFF WAS GOING: "IT WORKED!"

[LAUGHTER]

[APPLAUSE]

OKAY, I NEED TO FIND OUT WHERE WE ARE NOW.

THANK YOU.

I THINK IT WOULD BE A GOOD TIME, THOUGH, TO SAY THANKS TO THE TECHNICAL STAFF.

I THINK YESTERDAY, AS I SAID, WAS THE FIRST TIME WE'D EVER HAD ANYTHING HAPPEN TECHNICALLY WHERE THERE WAS NO SINGLE HITCH IN THE WHOLE DAY, AND THEY'RE DOING A GREAT JOB BACK THERE.

SO THANKS TO THEM.

[APPLAUSE]

WE NOW TURN TO CONSIDERATION OF PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO OUR CONSTITUTION AND BYLAWS.

OUR SYNOD SECRETARY, PASTOR TERRI STAGNER-COLLIER, WILL EXPLAIN, THANK GOODNESS, THE PROPOSED CHANGES MADE BY THE SYNOD COUNCIL.

PASTOR TERRI?

>> THANK YOU, BISHOP.

NOW FOR THE TRULY MUNDANE.

PROPOSED CHANGES TO THE CONSTITUTION AND BYLAWS ARE FOUND UNDER TAB F IN YOUR ASSEMBLY MATERIALS, TAB F.

ON PAGE F-1, THERE ARE PROPOSED CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENTS WHICH ARE RECOMMENDED BY THE SYNOD COUNCIL.

THESE AMENDMENTS ARE THE RESULT OF CHURCHWIDE ACTION.

THEREFORE, ONLY ONE VOTE IS REQUIRED FOR THEIR ADOPTION.

SINCE THE DETAILED AMENDMENTS ARE BEFORE YOU, I WISH TO OFFER ONLY A BRIEF SUMMARY OF THESE RECOMMENDED CHANGES.

PROPOSED NEW WORDING IS UNDERLINED AND PROPOSED DELETIONS ARE SHOWN BY THE STRIKE-OUT FONT.

PROVISIONS S7.22, S7.23, AND S7.26 DEAL WITH THE ISSUE OF VOICE AND VOTE PRIVILEGE AT SYNOD ASSEMBLY.

THE AMENDMENT TO S7.22 ADDS SUCH PRIVILEGE FOR ROSTERED PERSONS WHO ARE ON LEAVE FROM CALL, OR WHO ARE DISABLED.

S7.23 HAS EDITORIAL LANGUAGE CHANGES.

THE CHANGE TO S7.26 IS ALSO EDITORIAL IN NATURE WITH THE LATTER HALF OF THE OLD PROVISION BEING MOVED TO A NEW SECTION, S13.41, PRINTED AT THE BOTTOM OF PAGE F-1.

THE AMENDMENT TO S8.42 RESTATES PARAGRAPH F OF THAT PROVISION USING CLEARER LANGUAGE TO DESCRIBE THE TREASURER'S RESPONSIBILITY REGARDING THE SYNOD'S FIDELITY COVERAGE.

THE CHANGE TO S11.06 IS SIMPLY A MATTER OF RENUMBERING. AND NEW SECTIONS S13.40 AND S13.41 DEFINE SYNODICALLY AUTHORIZED WORSHIPING COMMUNITIES, MOVING PREVIOUS LANGUAGE TO A NEW SEPARATELY IDENTIFIABLE LOCATION WITHIN THE CONSTITUTION.

PAGE F-2 SHOWS PROPOSED BYLAW AMENDMENTS WHICH ARE ALSO RECOMMENDED BY THE SYNOD COUNCIL.

S10.06.01 INCLUDES A NUMERICAL CORRECTION.

THE PROPOSED AMENDMENT TO S10.07.11 ADJUSTS THE STRUCTURE OF OUR SYNOD COUNCIL IN RESPONSE TO THE CHURCHWIDE ASSEMBLY'S ACTION REQUIRING SYNOD COUNCILS TO HAVE AT LEAST ONE YOUNG ADULT MEMBER AMONG THEM.

YOUNG ADULTS ARE NOW DEFINED IN CHURCHWIDE AND SYNOD GOVERNING DOCUMENTS AS PERSONS BETWEEN THE AGES OF 18 AND 30 AT THE TIME OF ELECTION.

THE AMENDMENT TO S11.05.10 IS SIMPLY A NUMERICAL CHANGE, AND THE CHANGE FOR S12.01.11 CORRECTS A TYPO.

PAGES F-3 THROUGH F-5 ARE PROVIDED FOR YOUR REFERENCE ONLY,
AS THEY BECAME EFFECTIVE AS SOON AS THEY WERE APPROVED BY
THE 2009 CHURCHWIDE ASSEMBLY.

NO FURTHER ACTION IS REQUIRED BY THIS ASSEMBLY REGARDING THE
CHANGES PRINTED ON THOSE PAGES.

THESE ITEMS DEAL WITH THE YOUTH AND YOUNG ADULTS,
PREVENTION OF CONFLICT OF INTEREST, BACKGROUND CHECKS,
MAKEUP OF THE AUDIT COMMITTEE, AND RELOCATING
CONGREGATIONS AND UPDATES IN TERMINOLOGY.

>> THANK YOU, PASTOR TERRI.

I HOPE YOU WERE LISTENING.

THERE WILL BE A TEST ON THIS THIS AFTERNOON.

[LAUGHTER]

SO BE SURE YOU HAVE THOSE NUMBERS RIGHT.

WE WILL ADDRESS THE PROPOSED CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENTS
FIRST.

THIS IS THE PROPOSED ACTION.

RESOLVED, THAT THE CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENTS RECOMMENDED
BY THE SYNOD COUNCIL BE ADOPTED EN BLOC.

IT'S PRINTED IN YOUR AGENDA ON PAGE A-4, IF YOU WANT TO READ
THAT.

COMING FROM THE SYNOD COUNCIL, IT DOES NOT NEED A SECOND.
THERE WERE NO FORMS SUBMITTED BY LAST NIGHT'S DEADLINE OF
7:30 TO REMOVE ANY OF THESE PROPOSED CONSTITUTIONAL

AMENDMENTS FROM EN BLOC CONSIDERATION, THANK YOU, LORD.

THEREFORE, ALL OF THE PROPOSED AMENDMENTS ON PAGE F-1 ARE BEFORE YOU FOR DISCUSSION AT THIS TIME, AND WE WILL VOTE ON THEM AS A GROUP.

NOTE THAT IT IS NOT POSSIBLE TO CHANGE ANY OF THE PROPOSED AMENDMENTS FOR CONSIDERATION AT THIS ASSEMBLY.

THE AMENDMENTS THAT YOU WILL VOTE ON ARE THOSE THAT WERE RECOMMENDED BY THE 2009 CHURCHWIDE ASSEMBLY.

THOSE AMENDMENTS CAN BE ADOPTED BY A SIMPLE MAJORITY AT THIS ASSEMBLY.

IF YOU WISH TO CHANGE ANY OF THE PROPOSED AMENDMENTS, THE PROCEDURE FOR AMENDING THE CONSTITUTION -- EXCUSE ME, THEN YOU HAVE TO FOLLOW THE CONSTITUTIONAL PROVISION, WHICH IS S18.13 IN YOUR CONSTITUTION, WHICH DESCRIBES THE PROCEDURE FOR AMENDING THE CONSTITUTION.

TODAY, YOU CAN APPROVE OR DISAPPROVE THE PROPOSED CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENTS, BUT YOU CAN'T AMEND WHAT IS TO BE VOTED ON.

DOES THAT MAKE SENSE TO EVERYONE?

SO IF THERE ARE CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENTS YOU'D LIKE TO MAKE, PLEASE SEE CONSTITUTION -- SYNOD CONSTITUTION SECTION 18.13, AND THERE'S A PROCEDURE THERE.

IS THERE DISCUSSION OF THE PROPOSED ACTION HERE?

I SEE NO ONE GOING TO A MICROPHONE, SO I THINK WE'RE READY TO

VOTE.

IF YOU ARE IN FAVOR OF THE CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENTS
PRESENTED HERE, PLEASE INDICATE THAT BY RAISING YOUR GREEN
CARD.

THANK YOU.

IF YOU ARE OPPOSED, PLEASE RAISE YOUR RED CARD.

IT LOOKED UNANIMOUS TO ME.

NO?

NOT QUITE UNANIMOUS, BUT THEY ARE ADOPTED.

NOW THE PROPOSED ACTION ON THE BYLAW AMENDMENTS IS WHAT
WE WILL DISCUSS NEXT, PAGE F-2.

THE PROPOSED ACTION, RESOLVED THAT THE BYLAW AMENDMENTS
RECOMMEND BY THE SYNOD COUNCIL BE ADOPTED EN BLOC.

YOU CAN ALSO READ THAT IN YOUR AGENDA.

IT COMES FROM THE SYNOD COUNCIL AGAIN, DOES NOT NEED A
SECOND.

NO FORMS WERE SUBMITTED BY LAST NIGHT'S DEADLINE TO REMOVE
ANY SECTIONS OF THIS FROM THE EN BLOC CONSIDERATION.

THEREFORE, ALL THE PROPOSED AMENDMENTS ON PAGE F2 ARE
BEFORE YOU FOR DISCUSSION, AND WE'LL VOTE ON THEM AS A GROUP.

A 2/3 MAJORITY IS REQUIRED FOR ADOPTION.

IS THERE ANY DISCUSSION?

SEEING NO ONE RUNNING TO A MICROPHONE, I ASSUME WE'RE READY
TO VOTE.

SO IF YOU'RE IN FAVOR OF ADOPTING THE BYLAW AMENDMENTS AS DISTRIBUTED ON F-2, PLEASE INDICATE THAT BY RAISING YOUR GREEN CARD.

THANK YOU VERY MUCH.

YOU MAY PUT THOSE DOWN.

OPPOSED, RED CARDS.

THANK YOU VERY MUCH.

AND THEY ARE APPROVED.

WE NOW MOVE TO THE 2011-2012 MINISTRY FUNDING PLAN, FORMERLY KNOWN AS THE BUDGET.

IF YOU WOULD PLEASE TURN TO TAB-E IN YOUR ASSEMBLY MATERIALS.

THE MINISTRY FUNDING PLAN IS RECOMMENDED BY THE SYNOD COUNCIL, AND THEREFORE, NEEDS NO SECOND.

AND I CALL ON OUR SYNOD TREASURER, MR. JOHN LUCHT, TO PRESENT THE INFORMATION ABOUT THE PROPOSED MINISTRY FUNDING PLAN, AND HERE HE COMES.

JOHN?

WELCOME.

>> THANK YOU, BISHOP.

I GUESS WE'RE TURNED ON HERE.

I'M FROM TRINITY, LILBURN, BY THE WAY.

THANK YOU, AND YOU DO HAVE IN FRONT OF YOU IN TAB E THE MINISTRY FUNDING PLAN.

AND I THOUGHT MAYBE I'D JUST POINT OUT A COUPLE BRIEF POINTS,

AND THEN OPEN THE FLOOR FOR ANY QUESTIONS AND DISCUSSIONS.
FIRST OF ALL, I'D LIKE TO THANK ALL THE MEMBERS OF THE FINANCE
COMMITTEE.

IF YOU'RE HERE AND ON THE FINANCE COMMITTEE, PLEASE STAND.
THANK YOU.

AND, FRED, BE NEAR A MICROPHONE, PLEASE.

FRED IS THE CHAIRMAN, IN CASE WE HAVE ANY QUESTIONS.

FRED MAY NEED TO HELP US OUT.

SANDRA GUSTAVSON, I HOPE YOU'RE IN THE ROOM, AS WELL.

WE APPRECIATE HER HARD WORK IN PUTTING THIS TOGETHER.

IT'S AMAZING WHAT SHE DOES.

AS WELL AS THE CHURCH COUNCIL HAS BEEN VERY INTIMATELY
INVOLVED IN THE BUDGETING, AS WELL AS THE REVISIONS YOU'LL SEE
IN THE TAB, AND THANK YOU FOR ALL YOUR ASSISTANCE THERE.

BISHOP GORDY, YOU'VE PUT ENDLESS HOURS INTO THIS, AS WELL.

THANK YOU.

YOU'LL NOTICE THERE'S A COUPLE KEY POINTS IN THE MINISTRY
FUNDING PLAN AND THE CATEGORIES I'LL POINT TO, AND I'LL GO TO
THE RESOLUTION.

FIRST OF ALL, WE MET IN JANUARY AS A SYNOD COUNCIL TO DO A
REVISION TO THE 2010 MINISTRY FUNDING PLAN.

AND ALSO AT THAT TIME, WE THEN DID THE PROPOSED 2011 FUNDING
PLAN THAT'S IN FRONT OF YOU IN THE TAB.

AND WHAT YOU'LL BE AWARE OF IS THAT THE ORIGINAL BUDGET THAT

WAS PRESENTED LAST YEAR AT THIS TIME WAS REVISED DOWNWARD BY 21% IN THAT JANUARY MEETING.

THAT'S WHAT WE'RE OPERATING UNDER TODAY AS WE SIT IN THIS ROOM.

AND I THINK IT'S NOT A SURPRISE TO YOU THAT THAT WAS IMPACTED BY THE ECONOMIC HARDSHIPS, AS WELL AS THE, PRIMARILY, WE FEEL, FROM THE CHURCHWIDE DECISION AND THE IMPACT ON THAT -- FROM THAT, SO THOSE TWO PARTICULAR AREAS HAVE IMPACTED OUR RECEIPTS.

SO THEREFORE, YOU'LL NOTICE THAT THE SYNOD COUNCIL HAS BEEN MONITORING THE BUDGET REGULARLY.

WE'VE HAD SEVERAL CONFERENCE CALLS AND MEETINGS, AND WE'LL CONTINUE TO MONITOR OUR FUNDING, AS YOU'LL SEE IN THE CURRENT YEAR.

WE HAVE THE PROPOSED EXPENDITURES THERE FOR 2011.

A DETAILED LIST IS ON E-2.

THEN THE PROPOSED FUNDING FOR 2011 IS BASICALLY -- YOU'LL SEE THE TOTAL AMOUNT WE'RE LOOKING FOR FOR OUR FUNDING IS ABOUT 2 MILLION 4, WHICH IS BASICALLY SIMILAR TO WHAT WE'RE OPERATING UNDER RIGHT NOW ON THE 2010 BUDGET WE REVISED.

YOU PROBABLY SHOULD ASK YOURSELF: WHERE'S BURDEN OF THE FUNDING REDUCTIONS COME FROM?

AND E-3, I THINK, IS A VERY GOOD SUMMARY OF WHERE OUR REDUCTIONS HAVE COME, AND, YES, ALL AREAS HAVE TAKEN

SIGNIFICANT HITS.

THE AGENCIES AND INSTITUTIONS, THE COMMITTEES AND TASK FORCES, AS WELL AS SYNOD STAFFING, AND THE SYNOD STAFFING HAS HAD SIGNIFICANT ATTENTION TO IT DURING THIS YEAR.

THE BISHOP AND THE MUTUAL MINISTRY COMMITTEE AND THE COUNCIL ARE WORKING TOGETHER AND PRAYERFULLY TO BALANCE THE SYNOD NEEDS WITH OUR RESOURCES.

SO SHALL WE START WITH JUST PUTTING THE RESOLUTION ON THE FLOOR FOR DISCUSSION?

>> THE SPENDING PLAN IS ON THE FLOOR FROM THE SYNOD COUNCIL.

A SECOND IS NOT NEEDED, SO IF THERE IS DISCUSSION OF THE SPENDING PLAN, THIS IS THE TIME FOR IT.

PLEASE APPROACH A MICROPHONE, AND YOU'LL BE CALLED ON.

MICROPHONE 4, I BELIEVE.

>> MARK BEATTY, PRINCE OF PEACE, ALPHARETTA.

I AM SPEAKING -- I GUESS I NEED TO HAVE SOMETHING FOR OR AGAINST -- IN FAITHFULNESS FOR THE GROUP THAT I KNOW IT'S BEEN A REALLY HARD TIME TO COME ACROSS WITH SOMETHING -- I'M SPEAKING FOR, WITH A CAVEAT.

IT'S SOMETHING I REALLY HOPE WILL HAPPEN.

I HAD A DIFFICULT TIME LIVING WITH SOMETHING THAT OUR BISHOP SAID LAST EVENING, BUT I ALSO KNOW IT'S SOMETHING HE HIMSELF IS HAVING A DIFFICULT TIME LIVING WITH, THAT WAS HEARING ABOUT THE REALITY THAT CAME I BELIEVE IT WAS OCTOBER 1st, THE REALITY WE

HAD TO CUT DOWN TO 1 3/4 FOR THE POSITIONS FOR ASSISTANT TO THE BISHOP AND OVERALL CONTINUED STAFF REDUCTIONS.

I WAS HERE ACTUALLY IN '99 THROUGH '01 IN FIRST CALL.

I REMEMBER WHEN WE HAD A FULL-TIME ASSISTANT AND SEVERAL PART-TIME ASSISTANTS, AS WELL.

THAT WAS ABLE TO GROW.

BISHOP GORDY WAS A BIG PART OF THAT, HAVING THAT STAFF BE ABLE TO GROW.

I LEFT FROM HERE AND WENT TO OREGON, WHICH IS ALSO A LARGE GEOGRAPHIC SYNOD, AND THERE WAS A BISHOP AND JUST ONE ASSISTANT.

I KNOW FROM SERVING ON THE LEADERSHIP SUPPORT COMMITTEE FOR THEM AND MEETING WITH THE BISHOP AND ASSISTANT EACH MONTH, IT WAS VERY DIFFICULT TO DO MORE THAN JUST PUT OUT FIRES.

IF YOU THINK ABOUT HAVING TO DRIVE 5, 6 HOURS ACROSS THE SYNOD TO BE ABLE TO MEET WITH FOLKS, AND ALL THE DIFFERENT THINGS THAT COME UP IN CONGREGATIONS.

AND I'M SINCERELY WORRIED THAT HERE IT'S SO SIMILAR.

IF YOU LOOK AT JUST THE STATE OF GEORGIA, VERY MUCH LIKE OREGON, ONE LARGE METROPOLITAN AREA, PORTLAND-ATLANTA, LOTS OF RURAL AREAS, LOTS OF PLACES IN BETWEEN, VERY DIVERSE, AND THAT JUST THE STATE OF GEORGIA.

WHAT ABOUT TENNESSEE?

WHAT ABOUT ALABAMA?

WHAT ABOUT MISSISSIPPI?

HOW CAN WE DO MINISTRY WITH THIS?

SO I'M NOT READY TO LET GO OF THAT YET, AND THIS IS SOMETHING WHERE I WANT TO HANG MY HAT, AND I KNOW WE HAVE GIFTS FOR ELCA, I KNOW WE HAVE VARIOUS OTHER THINGS, AND I KNOW WE'RE TIGHT IN BUDGET.

I KNOW WE'VE HAD TO MAKE CUTS ALL KINDS OF PLACES, BUT THERE IS SOMETHING IMPORTANT ENOUGH WHERE I'M NOT WILLING TO GO DOWN WITHOUT A FIGHT, AND IT'S NOT OCTOBER 1 YET.

I DIDN'T KNOW UNTIL RECENTLY THERE IS A DESIGNATED FUND SET ASIDE WITH THIS SYNOD TO SUPPORT SYNOD STAFF.

I FORGET THE EXACT NAME OF IT.

BUT I'M PLANNING ON SUPPORTING THAT FUND, BECAUSE I'M NOT READY YET TO GIVE UP, AND I DON'T WANT TO SEE WHAT THE REALITY IS GOING TO BE LIKE IN THE SOUTHEASTERN SYNOD.

I HONOR WHAT OUR STAFF ARE DOING IN THE SYNOD, AND I HOPE TO HAVE THAT CONTINUE.

I WON'T MAKE ALL THE DIFFERENCE MYSELF WITH IT.

MY WIFE ACTUALLY KEEPS THE CHECKBOOK IN OUR HOUSE, BUT I HAVE A CHECK IN MY WALLET, AND THAT CHECK IS GOING TO GO TO THIS FUND, AND IT IS NOT GOING TO MAKE THE DIFFERENCE, BUT I'M LOOKING AROUND THIS ROOM.

EVEN IF SOME OF THIS FROM AN I STATEMENT BECOME A WE, WE CAN

MAKE A DIFFERENCE.

I'D LIKE TO ASK THE BISHOP OR STAFF ABOUT THE NAME OF THE FUND, THE SOURCE, HOW IT CAN BE GIVEN DIRECTLY HOW TO GO ABOUT DOING THAT, AND I WANT TO TAKE ONE STEP TODAY AND INVITE ANYBODY ELSE WHO ALSO SEES THAT AS SOMETHING WHERE YOU WOULD LIKE TO BE ABLE TO HANG YOUR HAT, TO JOIN, AND TO HOPEFULLY MAKE A DIFFERENT REALITY FOR OUR SYNOD STAFF COME OCTOBER 1st.

>> THANK YOU.

MICROPHONE 4.

>> GOOD MORNING.

MY NAME'S STEVEN SMITH.

I'M FROM ST. TIMOTHY'S LUTHERAN IN FOREST PARK, GEORGIA.

I HAVE A QUESTION ABOUT THE \$154,000 THAT'S SPENT ON THE SYNOD OFFICE, AND WHAT IS THE ALLOCATION OF THAT?

LIKE, WHAT DOES THAT MONEY GO TO DO EXACTLY?

DON'T HAVE TO HAVE A PRECISE BREAK DOWN, JUST ESTIMATES.

>> I THINK MAYBE SANDRA GUSTAVSON COULD BE THE BEST PERSON TO GIVE YOU AN ACCURATE AND DETAILED ANSWER TO THAT.

THANKS.

MICROPHONE 3.

>> SANDRA GUSTAVSON, CHRIST THE LORD IN LAWRENCEVILLE, GEORGIA, SYNOD FISCAL ADVISER.

WE SPEND ABOUT \$6500 A MONTH ON RENT, PLUS PARKING, PLUS

STORAGE, PLUS SUPPLIES, PLUS INSURANCE.

I CAN'T GIVE YOU DOLLAR AMOUNTS BROKEN DOWN AT THIS MOMENT. THEY'RE NOT IN MY HEAD, BUT THOSE ARE THE TYPES OF THINGS THAT GO INTO THAT.

LAST YEAR, I BELIEVE YOU'LL SEE IN YOUR PAGES THAT WE DID NOT HAVE TO SPEND ALL OF THAT.

MUCH OF THAT WAS BECAUSE OF ALMOST A MORATORIUM ON BUYING SUPPLIES.

THE RENT GOES UP BY 3% EACH YEAR.

AND IF THE MONEY -- IF ALL OF THAT IS NOT NEEDED, IT WILL NOT ALL BE SPENT, BUT THAT WAS THE BEST ESTIMATE OF BUDGET AND FINANCE IN JANUARY AS TO WHAT FEASIBLY WOULD BE NEEDED.

>> THANK YOU.

MICROPHONE 4.

>> I'M MEREDITH HENDRICKS.

I'M A MEMBER OF ST. JOHN'S IN ATLANTA, AND I'M ALSO A MEMBER OF THE SYNOD COUNCIL, AND I REGRETFULLY SPEAK IN FAVOR.

AND I SAY "REGRETFULLY" BECAUSE WE HAVE NO CHOICE, BUT IT'S NOT A GOOD THING.

IT'S NOT A GOOD POSITION THAT WE ARE IN RIGHT NOW.

AND I WOULD JUST ASK THAT WE ALL REMEMBER THAT WE ARE CALLED TO TITHE, NOT ONLY IN OUR PERSONAL LIVES, BUT WITHIN OUR CONGREGATIONS.

AND IT'S HARD.

IT'S HARD IN OUR CONGREGATIONS TO PASS ALONG THAT TITHE TO THE SYNOD.

FOR WHATEVER REASON THAT SOME CONGREGATIONS ARE NOT ABLE TO DO THAT, I WOULD ASK THAT THERE BE PRAYERFUL CONSIDERATION TO WE LOOKING AND MAYBE TAKING OFF THE TOP WHAT NEEDS TO GO TO THE SYNOD.

I DON'T THINK PEOPLE REALIZE THAT THE MONEY THAT COMES INTO OUR SYNOD, 50% OF THAT, WE PASS ALONG TO CHURCHWIDE.

WE NEED YOUR HELP.

THANK YOU.

>> THANK YOU.

ARE THERE OTHERS?

DON'T SEE ANYONE ELSE.

YOU HAVE BEFORE YOU THE RESOLUTION TO ADOPT THE MINISTRY FUNDING PLAN FOR 2011-2012 IN TAB E.

THIS COMES FROM THE SYNOD COUNCIL AND DOESN'T NEED A SECOND.

IF YOU ARE IN FAVOR OF ADOPTING THE MINISTRY FUNDING PLAN, WOULD YOU INDICATE THAT BY RAISING YOUR GREEN CARD?

THANK YOU VERY MUCH.

YOU MAY PUT THOSE DOWN.

IF YOU ARE OPPOSED, YOUR RED CARD.

THANK YOU.

THE MINISTRY FUNDING PLAN IS ADOPTED.

THANK YOU, MR. LUCHT.

LET'S EXPRESS OUR APPRECIATION TO JOHN FOR HIS SERVICE AS
TREASURER, TOO.

[APPLAUSE]

TALK ABOUT A THANKLESS JOB AT THIS TIME.

GOOD WORK IS DONE BY THE TREASURER, BY THE BUDGET AND
FINANCE COMMITTEE, AND BY OUR FISCAL ADVISER, DR. SANDRA
GUSTAVSON.

WE ARE WELL SERVED IN THAT AREA.

WE NOW TURN TO THE FIRST BALLOT FOR THIS ASSEMBLY.

AND I CALL UPON PASTOR JOEL EMERSON.

THE REVEREND DR. EMERSON IS CHAIR OF THE ELECTIONS
COMMITTEE, AND HE WILL INTRODUCE THE ELECTION PROCEDURE FOR
US.

>> GOOD MORNING.

>> GOOD MORNING.

>> BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION FOR YESTERDAY'S FLOOR NOMINEES
AND FOR THE NOMINEES FOR YOUNG ADULT SYNOD COUNCIL MEMBER
WAS PLACED ON THE TABLES THIS MORNING, AND THE FIRST BALLOT
WILL BE DISTRIBUTED MOMENTARILY.

ONCE AGAIN THIS YEAR, BALLOTS WILL BE COUNTED BY AN
ELECTRONIC SCANNER.

THEREFORE, YOU MUST USE A NUMBER 2 PENCIL IN ORDER TO
COMPLETE YOUR BALLOT.

YOU FIND THEM THERE ON YOUR TABLES.

THE SCANNER DOES NOT READ INK OR CRAYON.

[LAUGHTER]

EXTRA PENCILS HAVE BEEN DISTRIBUTED.

WE ASK THAT YOU SHARE THEM IF THERE'S NOT QUITE ENOUGH FOR EVERYONE.

FINALLY, AND MOST IMPORTANTLY, PLEASE DO NOT FOLD YOUR BALLOT AFTER YOU'VE COMPLETED VOTING.

THIS BALLOT CONTAINS THE FIRST VOTE FOR SYNOD VICE PRESIDENT, AND FOR YOUNG ADULT MEMBER OF THE SYNOD COUNCIL.

AND YOU'LL ALSO VOTE FOR SEVERAL CHURCHWIDE ASSEMBLY VOTING MEMBER POSITIONS ON THIS FIRST BALLOT.

PERSONS WHO ARE NOT ELECTED IN THESE INITIAL CATEGORIES FOR CHURCHWIDE VOTING MEMBER MAY BE ELIGIBLE TO BE INCLUDED ON A SUBSEQUENT BALLOT AFTER THE INCLUSIVITY GOALS HAVE BEEN MET.

THIS BALLOT ALSO BEGINS THE PROCESS OF ELECTING LAY MALE VOTING MEMBERS OF THE NEXT CHURCHWIDE ASSEMBLY.

>> ARE THERE ANY QUESTIONS ABOUT THE BALLOTING PROCESS?

I KNOW IT WILL BECOME CLEARER WHEN YOU ACTUALLY RECEIVE THE BALLOT.

PLEASE REMEMBER, IF YOU ARE A VOTING MEMBER AND YOU'RE SITTING BEHIND THE BLACK SCREEN, YOU NEED TO COME IN FRONT OF THE BLACK SCREEN.

THERE'S STILL PLENTY OF SPACE HERE DOWN FRONT.

OTHERWISE, YOU CAN'T VOTE.

OUR ELECTORS WILL BE GIVING BALLOTS ONLY TO PEOPLE WITH GREEN VOTING MEMBER BADGES, SO PLEASE HAVE THAT VISIBLE FOR THEM, IF YOU WILL.

AND I THINK WE'RE READY TO DISTRIBUTE THE BALLOTS.

[VOTING]

IF YOU HAVE FINISHED VOTING, PLEASE HOLD YOUR BALLOT UP SO THAT THE TELLERS CAN SEE THEM AND PICK THEM UP.

AS SOON AS YOU'VE FINISHED VOTING, PLEASE HOLD YOUR BALLOT HIGH.

THERE'S ONE UNDER NUMBER 3 OVER THERE.

IS THERE ANYONE WHO NEEDS ADDITIONAL TIME?

OKAY.

OKAY, ANYONE STILL WORKING ON A BALLOT?

OKAY, WE STILL HAVE A COUPLE.

ANYONE STILL NEED TIME TO VOTE?

RAISE YOUR HAND, IF YOU DO, BECAUSE I THINK WE'VE FINISHED.

ANYONE NEEDING TIME TO VOTE, PLEASE RAISE YOUR HAND.

OKAY, WE HAVE ONE MORE WORKING ON IT, OKAY.

ALL RIGHT, I THINK THAT'S THE LAST BALLOT.

ANYONE ELSE NEED TIME?

RAISE YOUR HAND REALLY HIGH.

WE'LL DECLARE THIS ELECTION CLOSED.

IF YOU WILL DIRECT YOUR ATTENTION BACK TO THE DAIS, PLEASE.

HAVING LOST YOUR ATTENTION, IT'S AWFULLY HARD TO GET IT BACK.
IT'S NOW TIME FOR OUR SYNOD VICE PRESIDENT, WES CRENSHAW, TO
GIVE US THIS MORNING'S ANNOUNCEMENTS.

BUT BEFORE HE DOES THAT, IF YOU HAVE A HABIT OF LEAVING DURING
THE ANNOUNCEMENTS, PLEASE WAIT, BECAUSE I WANT TO GIVE YOU
SOME INSTRUCTIONS ON OUR WORSHIP SERVICE BEFORE YOU LEAVE,
AND YOU'LL PROBABLY NEED TO HEAR THIS.

>> GOOD MORNING, EVERYBODY.

>> GOOD MORNING.

>> I WANT TO BRING YOUR ATTENTION TO THE WORKSHOP SESSION B
IS SCHEDULED FOR TODAY FROM 11:00 TO 11:45.

PLEASE REFER TO PAGE A-8 IN YOUR ASSEMBLY MATERIALS.

I BELIEVE THAT ONE OF THE SLIDES SHOWING ROOM ASSIGNMENTS
THAT WAS ROLLING ON THE SCREEN IS INCORRECT.

THE ACTUAL ROOMS ARE CORRECT UNDER A-8.

WE WILL BEGIN WORSHIP IN THE ASSEMBLY SANCTUARY AT NOON
TIME.

THERE'S A REMINDER THAT LUNCH TODAY IS ON YOUR OWN.

IN ADDITION TO THE ON-SITE CONCESSIONS AVAILABLE AT THE
SANDWICH SHOP, TODAY A CASH BUFFET IS SET UP FOR ASSEMBLY
ATTENDEES TO ENJOY JUST OUTSIDE THESE DOORS, ACROSS FROM
THE SANDWICH SHOP.

IT WILL FEATURE SALAD BAR, GAZPACHO SOUP, PASTA MARINARA, AND
A BEVERAGE FOR ONLY \$7.50.

THE SANDWICH SHOP WILL BE AVAILABLE.

ONCE YOU'VE HAD YOUR LUNCH, PLEASE NOTICE ROOMS H AND E ARE SET UP WITH ROUND TABLES, AND YOU'RE WELCOME TO TAKE YOUR LUNCH IN THERE TO EAT.

OUR LUNCH BREAK ENDS AT 2:30 P.M., WHEN WE RETURN HERE FOR PLENARY SESSION 3.

DURING TODAY'S WORKSHOP SESSION, PASTOR NANCY CHRISTENSEN WILL BE AVAILABLE IN PLAZA A TO MEET WITH MISSION DEVELOPERS. SHE WANTS YOU TO KNOW THIS GATHERING IS BOTH OPTIONAL AND INFORMAL, FOR MISSION DEVELOPERS IF THEY'D LIKE TO MEET WITH PASTOR CHRISTENSEN IN PLAZA A.

IF YOU'RE INTERESTED IN SINGING IN OUR ASSEMBLY CHOIR, IN OTHER WORDS, IF YOU KNOW A FEW VERSES OF "GREAT IS THY FAITHFULNESS," ET CETERA, FOR TOMORROW'S WORSHIP SERVICE, PLAN NOW TO MEET IN THE WORSHIP SPACE ACROSS THE HALL IMMEDIATELY AFTER THE AFTERNOON'S PLENARY SESSION.

THE REHEARSAL WILL BE BRIEF SO YOU CAN BE ON YOUR WAY TO ENJOY YOUR FREE EVENING.

PLEASE SAVE THE TABS FROM YOUR BEER CANS AND SOFT DRINKS, AND TAKE THEM TO THE WELCA TABLE.

OKAY, SO SOME OF US HAVE BEEN, OKAY.

OKAY.

[LAUGHTER]

AND TAKE THEM TO THE WELCA TABLE NEAR REGISTRATION.

THEY WILL BE GIVEN TO THE RONALD McDONALD HOUSE, AND THAT'S IT.

I WANTED TO SAY THAT I DID GO TO ARETHA FRANKENSTEIN'S YESTERDAY, AND NOT ONLY WAS THE FOOD VERY GOOD, WE GOT AN INDICATION OF THE GOODWILL OF THE PEOPLE OF CHATTANOOGA. FOR THOSE OF YOU WHO ARE UNAWARE OF IT, IT IS ON THE SIDE OF A HILL, AND IT'S A VERY SMALL RESTAURANT, AND WE HAD SOME DIFFICULTY GETTING THE WIFE IN THERE.

AND WHEN WE GOT IN THERE, THEY SAID TO US, "WELL, YOU'LL HAVE TO SIT AT THE BAR."

AND THE YOUNG COUPLE SAID, "NO, SHE CAN'T SIT AT THE BAR. WE'LL TAKE OUR FOOD FROM THE TABLE, AND YOU ALL CAN HAVE A TABLE."

SO WE HAD A TABLE, EVERYBODY WAS WONDERFUL.

THE FOOD WAS GREAT.

AND I'M JUST SORRY ALL OF YOU ALL COULD NOT MAKE IT.

LAST BUT NOT LEAST, WE HAVE A MORE FRIVOLOUS ANNOUNCEMENT. PASTOR CHILTON WANTS YOU TO KNOW IF YOU THINK THAT HIS BEING ON THE FRONT ROW IS OFFENSIVE AND YOU HAVE NOT WANTED TO SIT UP FRONT, HE'LL GLADLY MOVE SOMEWHERE ELSE SO YOU ALL CAN MOVE UP FRONT.

>> THANK YOU, MR. CRENSHAW.

DURING THE DISCUSSION OF THE FUNDING PLAN, A QUESTION WAS RAISED BY A VOTING MEMBER ABOUT THE NAME OF THE DESIGNATED

FUND FOR SYNOD STAFF.

THIS WAS A FUND THAT WAS SET UP WHEN WE WERE ADDING TO THE STAFF IN 2008.

THE NAME OF THE FUND IS THE "SYNOD STAFF DEVELOPMENT FUND," THE STAFF DEVELOPMENT FUND.

NOW, A COUPLE OF WORDS ABOUT TODAY'S WORSHIP, WHICH BEGINS AT 11 -- WHAT TIME IS IT?

AT NOON TODAY, YEAH, MIDDAY.

SAYS THAT RIGHT THERE, AT NOON.

THERE'S A WORKSHOP FIRST.

WE ARE GOING TO WORSHIP TODAY IN THE SAME SPACE AS YESTERDAY, BUT TODAY'S WORSHIP IS GOING TO BE WORSHIP BY HEART.

THERE WILL NOT BE ANY BULLETINS, AND THERE WILL NOT BE ANY SCREENS.

THIS WILL HELP US CARE FOR THE EARTH BY USING LESS PAPER.

BUT IT ALSO GETS LUTHERANS OUT OF OUR BOOKS AND FOCUSES US ON OUR CENTRAL -- THE CENTRAL THINGS OF OUR WORSHIP, WHICH ARE GOD AND THE GATHERED COMMUNITY OF GOD.

WE WILL HAVE TO LEARN TO PUT INTO PRACTICE WHAT PASTOR OLSON TALKED TO US ABOUT, THAT IS, WE'LL HAVE TO TRUST OUR LEADERS. THEY'LL GUIDE US IN PRAYER AND SINGING.

IF YOU KNOW THE RESPONSES, AND MOST OF YOU WILL KNOW MOST ALL THE RESPONSES IF YOU GO TO CHURCH NOW AND THEN, PLEASE

SPEAK THEM BOLDLY.

AND IF YOU DON'T KNOW THEM, DON'T WORRY ABOUT IT.

THAT'S OKAY.

SOMEBODY WILL BE SPEAKING THEM FOR YOU.

AND MOST OF ALL, THE WORSHIP TEAM WANTS YOU TO RELAX, ENJOY,
AND THE SERVICE, ENTER THE FLOW OF THE LITURGY AND BE BLESSED
BY THE HEALING PRESENCE OF CHRIST, AND OF ONE ANOTHER.

THIS ASSEMBLY IS NOW IN RECESS UNTIL THIS AFTERNOON AT 2:30

WHEN ALL OF YOU WILL COME AND SIT IN THE FRONT.

OH, EXCUSE ME.

DON'T LEAVE.

I FORGOT THE CHAPLAIN.

WHOOOPS.

YOU GET POINTS OFF FOR THAT, BIG POINTS OFF FOR THAT.

>> IT'S NOT ABOUT ME.

I HAVE AN ANNOUNCEMENT TO MAKE, AND BELOVED FRIEND OF MANY
OF YOU, GIVEN TO ME BY THE BISHOP, BY THE WAY.

BELOVED FRIEND OF MANY OF YOU, ART LEWIS, HAS BEEN TAKEN BACK
TO THE HOSPITAL AND HE'S NOT DOING WELL, AND HE'S A RETIRED
DIRECTOR OF OUR LUTHERAN THEOLOGICAL CENTER IN ATLANTA.

SO WE WANT TO OFFER HIS NAME IN PRAYER, AND I WILL DO THAT.

ALSO, I WANT TO MAKE SOMETHING VERY CLEAR: THE TECHNICAL
DIFFICULTY WITH THE SLIDE THIS MORNING IS MY OWN DIFFICULTY.

I HAD A VARIETY OF MATERIALS THAT I USED FOR THIS AND I DON'T

KNOW THE COMPUTER LANGUAGE, SO SOME OF THE MATERIAL I BROUGHT ON MY ZIP DRIVE IS NOT PICTURE-FRIENDLY, SO I WANT TO OWN THAT, OKAY?

I DON'T WANT ANYBODY ELSE TO THINK SOMETHING ELSE HAPPENED HERE.

[LAUGHTER]

LET US PRAY.

HOLY AND GRACIOUS GOD, THANK YOU FOR ROOTING US DEEPLY INTO YOUR HEART.

THE HEART OF LOVE AND LIFE AND PEACE, OF DEATH AND RESURRECTION, OF HEALING AND HOPE.

WE HOLD BEFORE YOU OUR BELOVED ART LEWIS, AND ASK YOUR MERCY TO HIM IN THIS PART OF HIS JOURNEY.

BE WITH ALL MEDICAL PERSONNEL, BE WITH HIS LOVED ONES.

WE ASK, GRACIOUS GOD, YOUR HEALING TENDERNESS FOR ALL PARENTS WHO HAVE HAD CHILDREN WHO HAVE DIED, THAT YOU WOULD BE PRESENT TO THEM IN THEIR GRIEF, WHICH IS LOVE MADE PRESENT IN THEIR BELOVED'S ABSENCE.

WE ASK, HOLY ONE, THAT WE MIGHT HAVE THE HEART OF MARY, WHO PONDERED HER SON'S LIFE AND DEATH.

THAT WE MIGHT BE TENDER TOWARD OUR NEIGHBORS WHO WALK THAT PATH, AND THAT WE MIGHT HAVE THE COURAGE TO SAY SOMETHING, OR TO PUT OUR ARM AROUND THEM.

HOLY GOD, BLESS THIS COMMUNITY, BLESS OUR DECISION-MAKING,

AND OPEN OUR HEARTS IN GENEROSITY THAT YOUR WORD IN CHURCH
MIGHT GO FORWARD ABUNDANTLY BLESSED, CONFIDENT AND
GRATEFUL AND JOY FILLED.

WE ASK THIS IN JESUS' NAME WITH LOVE AND LAUGHTER AND HOPE
IN OUR HEARTS, AMEN.

[END OF PLENARY TWO]

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