

2009 ELCA-SOUTHEASTERN SYNOD ASSEMBLY  
Renaissance Waverly Hotel, Atlanta, Georgia  
**SECOND PLENARY SESSION**  
**Friday, June 5, 2009**  
**7:00 p.m.**

**CART SERVICES PROVIDED BY**  
*EDUCAPTION, INC.*  
*ATLANTA, GEORGIA*  
*PUNTA GORDA, FLORIDA*

\* \* \* \* \*

Though this is being provided in a finalized format, Communication Access Realtime Translation (CART) is provided in order to facilitate communication accessibility and may not be a totally verbatim record of the proceedings.

\* \* \* \* \*

>> I CALL THIS SECOND PLENARY SESSION OF THE 22nd ANNUAL  
SOUTHEASTERN SYNOD ASSEMBLY TO ORDER.

PLEASE TURN TO TAB-A, PAGE A-3, IN YOUR ASSEMBLY MATERIALS.

WE ASK CHAPLAIN MICHAEL LIPPARD TO COME FORWARD NOW FOR  
OUR PRAYER.

PASTOR LIPPARD?

>> A READING FROM GENESIS.

"NOW, THE LORD SAID TO ABRAM, GO FROM YOUR COUNTRY AND YOUR  
KINDRED AND YOUR FATHER'S HOUSE TO THE LAND THAT I WILL SHOW  
YOU.

I WILL MAKE OF YOU A GREAT NATION, AND I WILL BLESS YOU AND  
MAKE YOUR NAME GREAT, SO THAT YE WILL BE A BLESSING.

I WILL BLESS THOSE WHO BLESS YOU, AND THE ONE WHO CURSES

YOU, I WILL CURSE.

AND IN YOU, ALL THE FAMILIES OF THE EARTH SHALL BE BLESSED.

SO ABRAM WENT, AS THE LORD HAD TOLD HIM, AND LOT WENT WITH HIM.

ABRAM WAS 75 YEARS OLD WHEN HE DEPARTED FROM HARAN."

THE LORD BE WITH YOU.

>> AND ALSO WITH YOU.

>> LET US PRAY.

O GOD, YOU HAVE CALLED YOUR SERVANTS TO VENTURES OF WHICH WE CANNOT SEE THE ENDING, BY PATHS YET UNTRODDEN, THROUGH PERILS UNKNOWN.

GIVE US FAITH TO GO OUT WITH GOOD COURAGE NOT KNOWING WHERE WE GO BUT ONLY THAT YOUR HAND IS LEADING US, AND YOUR LOVE SUPPORTING US.

THROUGH JESUS CHRIST OUR LORD, AMEN.

>> AMEN.

>> THANK YOU, PASTOR LIPPARD.

NOW I'LL CALL UPON THE CHAIR OF THE CREDENTIALS COMMITTEE, MS. LINDA LARSON, TO THE CREDENTIALS COMMITTEE REPORT FOR THIS SECOND SESSION.

>> THEY'RE PROBABLY STILL COUNTING.

>> OKAY.

WHAT DO WE DO?

WE'LL GET THEIR REPORT WHEN THEY GET BACK HERE.

I WANT TO CALL TO THE PODIUM MS. LIBBY BEDENBAUGH AND  
MR. KEITH JOHNSON FROM LUTHERIDGE/LUTHEROCK MINISTRIES.

I THINK THEY'RE NOT STRANGERS TO ANYONE HERE.

KEITH, COME ON UP, AND WELCOME.

>> GOOD EVENING.

WHEN THE PREVIOUS REPORT DID NOT ARRIVE BACK IN TIME, WE'RE  
STILL EN ROUTE.

SO WOULD YOU LIKE ME TO TELL A JOKE OR SOMETHING WHILE WE'RE  
WAITING?

DELMER, DO YOU HAVE A JOKE FOR THE GROUP?

WE HAVE A POWERPOINT PRESENTATION, AND I'LL DIRECT YOU TO THE  
MONITORS.

WE JUST NEEDED TO GET THE CLICKER TO BEGIN.

SHARING IN THE PRESENTATION IS LIBBY BEDENBAUGH, SENIOR  
DEVELOPMENT ASSOCIATE, WHO IS ALSO LEADING OUR CHALLENGE  
CAMPAIGN IN THE SOUTHEASTERN SYNOD.

THE LUTHERIDGE/LUTHEROCK AND LUTHERANCH STORY BEGAN BACK  
IN THE 1940s WHEN THE GEORGIA-ALABAMA SYNOD WAS AN EARLY  
PARTNER IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF LUTHERIDGE.

SINCE THAT TIME, TENS OF THOUSANDS HAVE JOURNEYED TO

LUTHERIDGE/LUTHEROCK.

RECENTLY, THE PROFESSIONAL LEADERS FROM THE SYNOD HAVE BEEN COMING TO LUTHERIDGE FOR THEIR FALL TRAINING CONFERENCE.

WE'RE EXCITED BISHOP GORDY WILL BE AT LUTHERIDGE STARTING SUNDAY TO SERVE AS ONE OF THE FACULTY FOR THE "FAITH ALIVE" CONFIRMATION CAMP.

NEARLY 100 YOUTH FROM THE SYNOD ARE COMING TO THIS EVENT, AND HUNDREDS OF OTHERS WILL PARTICIPATE IN OTHER CAMP WEEKS.

OVER THE YEARS, THE NEED FOR AN OUTDOOR MINISTRY SITE HAS BEEN IDENTIFIED BY SYNOD MEMBERS.

FINALLY IN 2006, A SITE WAS IDENTIFIED JUST ONE HOUR WEST OF ATLANTA.

WE NOW KNOW THIS PLACE AS LUTHERANCH.

A CAMPAIGN WAS LAUNCHED IN 2007 TO RAISE FUNDS FOR THE SITE, AND LIBBY WILL BRING YOU UP TO DATE ON PROGRESS WITH THE CAMPAIGN.

>> THE ORIGINAL GOAL WAS \$3.5 MILLION, WITH A STRETCH GOAL OF \$1.4 MILLION, BRINGING THE OVERALL GOAL TO \$4.9 MILLION.

I'M EXCITED TO ANNOUNCE THAT PROCEEDS HAVE REACHED \$3.2 MILLION IN THIS CAMPAIGN.

THIS INCLUDES GIFTS, RECEIVED AND PLEDGES.

WOULD EVERYONE WHOSE CHURCH HAS ALREADY CONDUCTED A  
CAMPAIGN, PLEASE STAND.

LET'S APPLAUD, PLEASE.

[ APPLAUSE ]

PLEASE REMAIN STANDING.

ALSO, IF YOU HAVE PERSONALLY MADE A GIFT, PLEASE STAND.

THANK YOU.

[ APPLAUSE ]

SO FAR IN THIS CAMPAIGN, 75 CONGREGATIONS HAVE CONDUCTED  
CAMPAIGNS ALREADY.

41 CHURCHES HAVE AGREED TO CONDUCT A CAMPAIGN.

WE HOPE THAT YOU WILL CONSIDER A CAMPAIGN, ALSO.

YOU KNOW THE VISION IN THE PAST HAS BEEN SUCH A BLESSING TO  
SO MANY OF US.

NOW IT'S OUR TURN, IT'S OUR TURN, AND YOU DON'T WANT TO MISS  
THIS OPPORTUNITY.

IT'S EXCITING, AND IT'S HISTORIC.

WE'RE STILL WAITING TO HEAR FROM THE REMAINING CHURCHES, WITH  
\$1.7 MILLION LEFT TO RAISE, WE REALLY NEED EVERY CHURCH TO  
PARTICIPATE, AND I THINK WE CAN DO IT.

COME AND SEE ME AT THE BOOTH IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO HELP.

YOU CAN ALSO PHONE ME OR EMAIL ME.

FOR OVER A YEAR, THE HOLY TRINITY HOUSE HAS BEEN OPEN AND SERVING RETREAT GROUPS.

UP TO 17 YOUTH CAN BE ACCOMMODATED IN BUNK BEDS OR 9 ADULTS IN THE LOWER BEDS.

ALL KINDS OF GROUPS HAVE ALREADY RETREATED AT THE HOLY TRINITY HOUSE, BOTH YOUTH AND ADULTS.

YOU CAN SEE HERE THE LIST OF SOME OF THOSE INDIVIDUALS OR GROUPS.

IF YOU HAVE A GROUP INTERESTED, THERE IS SPACE REMAINING THIS SUMMER, AND WEEKENDS ARE OPEN THIS FALL AND WINTER.

COME BY OUR BOOTH TODAY AND SIGN UP.

WE WILL BE GIVING AWAY A FREE WEEKEND AT LUTHERANCH.

>> THAT'S A FREE WEEKEND IN THE HOLY TRINITY HOUSE, WITH AS MANY PEOPLE AS YOU CAN PACK IN ACCORDING TO FIRE CODES.

STARTING IN 2008, A TEAM FROM AROUND THE SYNOD WAS CONVENED TO WORK ON THE PROGRAM VISION FOR LUTHERANCH.

IT STATES: LUTHERANCH WILL BE AN EASILY ACCESSIBLE MULTIPURPOSE CAMP AND RETREAT MINISTRY THAT WILL WELCOME AND CONNECT DIVERSE PEOPLE OF ALL INCHES.

IT'S BASED ON THE MISSION STATEMENT: A PLACE APART, CHRIST CENTERED COMMUNITY TO BE TRANSFORMED IN FAITH AND EQUIPPED

FOR MINISTRY.

LUTHERANCH WILL SERVE BOTH YOUTH AND ADULTS ALL YEAR LONG. IT WILL BE A DESTINATION PLACE WITH A STRONG LUTHERAN IDENTITY, A PLACE FOR RENEWAL, ENVIRONMENTAL FRIENDLY FACILITIES, AND A PLACE FOR CROSS-CULTURAL PEOPLE.

A SECOND TEAM IS WORKING ON A MASTER SITE PLAN TO PUT TOGETHER THE FACILITIES FOR THE MISSION.

LUTHERANCH ALREADY FEATURES A WORKING HORSE FARM.

THE LAKE WILL BE AT THE HEART OF THE INITIAL SITE PLAN.

PHASE 1 FOR THE PLAN FEATURES FACILITIES FOR 100 YOUTH AND 80 ADULTS ON THE 519-ACRE SITE.

A DINING HALL WILL FEATURE A WRAP-AROUND DECK WITH A GLIMPSE OF THE LAKE.

IT WILL INCLUDE DINING, MEETING ROOMS, BOOK STORE AND INFIRMARY, AND I THINK WE HAVE SOME DISAPPEARING INK ON THE MAP BECAUSE YOU CAN'T SEE THE DINING ROOM OR THE MEETING ROOM, BUT TRUST ME, THEY'RE THERE.

THE BUILDINGS ARE SET AS THE DARK SHAPE ON THE MAP.

THE NEXT FACILITY IS A HIGH-COMFORT ADULT RETREAT CENTER THAT WILL BE LOCATED ON A BLUFF ABOVE THE LAKE.

80 ADULTS WILL BE ACCOMMODATED IN 40 GUEST ROOMS.

THE DINING HALL AND THE RETREAT CENTER WILL BE CLOSE TO EACH

OTHER SCENICALLY SET ON THE HILLSIDE.

DUPLEX CABINS AND A QUAD CABIN WILL SERVE YOUTH AND BE FLEXIBLE ENOUGH TO ACCOMMODATE ADULTS.

THESE ARE THE FACILITIES OF PHASE 1 FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF LUTHERANCH.

AN OUTDOOR WORSHIP AREA WILL BE ADDED ON THE LAKE TO SERVE GUESTS AND CHURCHES WHO WANT TO COME TO LUTHERANCH FOR WORSHIP ON SUNDAY MORNING.

WE EXPECT THAT WILL BE READY BY NEXT SUMMER.

MORE INFORMATION WILL BE AVAILABLE AT THE WORKSHOP ON SUNDAY MORNING AT 9:30, AND WE'LL HAVE REAL COMPLETE INFORMATION FOR THOSE OF YOU THAT ARE INTERESTED.

THE CAMPAIGN IS PROJECTED TO RAISE AROUND \$4 MILLION, WHICH IS WELL OVER THE GOAL, BUT IT'S STILL SHORT OF THE \$4.9 MILLION STRETCH GOAL.

BECAUSE OF ADDITIONAL INTEREST EXPENSE WHEN THE CAMPAIGN CONCLUDES, WE COULD BE \$1.5 MILLION SHORT OF PAYING OFF THE LOAN FOR THE LAND.

SHORTLY YOU'LL HAVE THE OPPORTUNITY TO APPROVE A CAMPAIGN TO FINISH PAYING OFF THE REMAINING LAND DEBT, AND TO BEGIN SITE IMPROVEMENTS THAT I'VE OUTLINED.

WE NEED YOUR SUPPORT.

WE'RE REALLY EXCITED ABOUT LUTHERANCH.

BUT DON'T VOTE "YES," DON'T VOTE "YES" TO THE CAMPAIGN IF YOU'RE NOT PREPARED TO GIVE AND IF YOUR CHURCH IS NOT PREPARED TO BE INVOLVED.

HERE IS THE CAMPAIGN TIMETABLE THAT WE WILL FOLLOW.

THERE WILL BE A FEASIBILITY STUDY PROBABLY IN JANUARY-FEBRUARY OF THIS NEXT YEAR JUST LIKE THE FIRST CAMPAIGN AND IF ALL GOES ACCORDING TO PLAN, THE CAMPAIGN WILL BEGIN IN THE SUMMER-FALL OF 2010.

CONGREGATIONAL CAMPAIGNS WOULD BEGIN IN WINTER 2011, AND AS YOU CAN SEE FROM THE TIMETABLE, THERE WILL BE ENOUGH TIME FOR EVERY CONGREGATION TO PARTICIPATE.

TOGETHER, WE HAVE A HISTORIC OPPORTUNITY WITH LUTHERANCH.

THIS IS A ONCE IN GENERATION ENDEAVOR.

WE'RE LAYING A FOUNDATION FOR OUR CHILDREN AND OUR GRANDCHILDREN FOR A BIG PART OF THE FUTURE OF THE LUTHERAN CHURCH IN THE SOUTHEASTERN SYNOD, AND ACROSS THE SOUTHEASTERN UNITED STATES.

THERE IS STILL MUCH TO BE DONE, BUT WE WILL GET THERE TOGETHER, IF EACH OF US WILL DO OUR PART.

PLEASE JOIN US ON THE LUTHERANCH JOURNEY.

WE COVERED YOUR PRAYERS, YOUR GIFTS AND YOUR INVOLVEMENT.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR PARTNERSHIP IN MINISTRY.

[ APPLAUSE ]

>> THANK YOU VERY MUCH.

KEITH AND LIBBY BEDENBAUGH, WE APPRECIATE THAT.

IT'S GOOD TO SEE THAT COMING INTO BEING THERE.

AND LUTHERIDGE HAS HAD A POLICY MANY YEARS OF NOT BUILDING STUFF THEY COULDN'T PAY FOR, SO WE'RE HOPING TO GET THE LAND PAID FOR SO WE CAN BEGIN THE BUILDING OF THE MAGNIFICENT BUILDINGS, EVEN THE ONES IN THE DISAPPEARING INK THERE.

YOU HAVE A RESOLUTION BEFORE YOU FROM THE SYNOD COUNCIL THAT THE 2009 SYNOD ASSEMBLY APPROVE A MAJOR CAPITAL FUNDS APPEAL BY LUTHERIDGE/LUTHEROCK MINISTRIES BEGINNING IN JUNE 2010, AND CONTINUING FOR 3 YEARS.

LET ME MAKE ONE WORD OF EXPLANATION FOR THAT.

WE WILL BE FINISHED BY THAT TIME WITH THE CAMPAIGN WE JUST HAD FOR THE LUTHERIDGE/LUTHEROCK FACILITY.

OUR POLICY IN THE SYNOD IS ONLY ONE CAMPAIGN AT A TIME.

LUTHERIDGE AND LUTHEROCK ASKED TO CONDUCT A SECOND CAMPAIGN FOR THE PURPOSE OF PRODUCING THE FACILITIES THAT OBVIOUSLY WE'LL NEED IF WE'RE GOING TO BE USING THAT SPACE.

SO THAT'S THE MOTION BEFORE YOU.

IT DOES NOT NEED A SECOND BECAUSE IT COMES FROM THE SYNOD

COUNCIL.

IS THERE ANY DISCUSSION OF THE MOTION TO APPROVE A MAJOR CAPITAL FUNDS APPEAL FOR LUTHERIDGE/LUTHEROCK MINISTRIES, BEGINNING JUNE 2010, AND CONTINUING FOR 3 YEARS?

I'M NOT SEEING ANYBODY WALKING TO ANY MICROPHONES.

I'M ASSUMING THAT MEANS WE'RE READY TO VOTE.

THOSE IN FAVOR OF APPROVING THE MAJOR CAPITAL FUNDS APPEAL BY LUTHERIDGE/LUTHEROCK MINISTRIES BEGINNING IN JUNE 2010 AND CONTINUING FOR 3 YEARS, PLEASE INDICATE SO BY SAYING AYE.

THOSE OPPOSED, SAY NO.

SOUNDS LIKE IT WAS UNANIMOUS TO ME.

WE'LL HAVE ANOTHER APPEAL.

THANK YOU VERY MUCH.

[ APPLAUSE ]

WELL, I HOPE THAT WE HAVE SUCH UNANIMITY IN EVERYTHING WE TALK ABOUT THIS WEEK.

I THINK THE CREDENTIALS COMMITTEE CHAIR IS FINISHED WITH DINNER NOW AND IS HERE.

SO, LINDA, ARE YOU HERE?

GOOD, OKAY, THERE YOU ARE.

IT'S HARD TO SEE PEOPLE HERE.

THERE ARE LIGHTS IN THE EYES.

IT'S PROBABLY A GOOD THING, ACTUALLY.

>> BISHOP GORDY, THIS MAY COME AS SOMEWHAT OF A SURPRISE.

"THE SECOND REPORT OF THE CREDENTIALS COMMITTEE" -- AND I AM READING WORD FOR WORD -- "AT THE TIME OF THE FIRST BALLOT FOR BISHOP WAS CAST, IS AS FOLLOWS."

>> YEAH, THAT DOES COME AS A SURPRISE.

I'LL SEE YOU GUYS AROUND.

[ LAUGHTER ]

>> SO I SUPPOSE I SHOULD SAY, THE SECOND REPORT OF THE CREDENTIALS COMMITTEE IS AS FOLLOWS:

WE WON'T ELECT A BISHOP THIS TIME.

CLERGY UNDER CALL, 128.

CLERGY ON LEAVE FROM CALL, 5.

CLERGY RETIRED, 23.

DIACONAL MINISTERS UNDER CALL, 2.

DIACONAL MINISTERS ON LEAVE FROM CALL, 0.

DIACONAL MINISTERS RETIRED, 0.

ASSOCIATES IN MINISTRY UNDER CALL, 7.

ASSOCIATES IN MINISTRY ON LEAVE FROM CALL, 0.

ASSOCIATES IN MINISTRY RETIRED, 0.

DEACONESSES UNDER CALL, 1.

LICENSED LAY MINISTERS, 3.

LAY VOTING MEMBERS, 264.

LAY MEMBERS OF SYNOD COUNCIL, 13.

ECUMENICAL PASTORS, 2, FOR A TOTAL VOTING MEMBERS, 448.

AND I MOVE THAT THIS REPORT BE ACCEPTED AS READ.

>> THANK YOU.

I DON'T THINK WE HAVE TO MOVE THAT AGAIN AFTER HAVING DONE THAT, BUT WE WILL NOTE THE CHAIR NOTES THAT THERE IS A QUORUM, AND WE MAY CONTINUE WITH OUR BUSINESS HERE.

THANK YOU VERY MUCH.

WANT TO GO BACK TO JUST A BRIEF PART OF SOME UNFINISHED BUSINESS FROM THE FIRST SESSION AND INTRODUCE A FEW MORE PEOPLE TO YOU.

THERE ARE MORE YET TO BE INTRODUCED, BUT SOME WILL BE LEAVING SOON.

SOME OF THEM AREN'T HERE YET EITHER.

SOME THE FOLKS WHO ARE HERE WITH US, I'LL BEGIN WITH MS. LOUISE ICONIS, THE PRESIDENT OF THE SOUTHEASTERN SYNOD WOMEN OF THE ELCA.

IF YOU'RE HERE, LOUISE, WOULD YOU STAND?

AND THEN MR. HEBER RAST, WHO REPRESENTS LUTHERAN MEN IN MISSION IN THE SOUTHEASTERN SYNOD.

OKAY, SOME OF THESE FOLKS ARE OUT AT THEIR BOOTHS, AS WELL.

MS. ASHLYN NEAS, THE OUTGOING YOUTH OF THE SOUTHEASTERN  
SYNOD LUTHERAN YOUTH ORGANIZATION.

I'VE SEEN HER AROUND.

SHE'S WAVING HER HAND.

THANK YOU, ASHLYN.

REVEREND TORREY JOHNSON, INTERIM CAMPUS PASTOR AT ATLANTA  
UNIVERSITY.

THE REVEREND MEGAN JONES, WHO IS I GUESS THE OUTGOING  
LUTHERAN CAMPUS -- SHE'S VERY OUTGOING -- AT GEORGIA TECH.

MEGAN IS HERE SOMEWHERE.

THE REVEREND MICHELLE WARRINER BOLT, WHO IS THE CAMPUS  
PASTOR AT TYSON HOUSE AT THE UNIVERSITY OF TENNESSEE, WHO I  
THINK IS NOT HERE.

ALSO, MR. MEL BRACKMAN FROM LUTHERAN MINISTRIES OF ALABAMA.  
THE REVEREND GARY DANIELSEN, THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF  
LUTHERAN SERVICES IN GEORGIA.

I HAVEN'T SEEN HIM YET.

MS. KATHY AUTHOR SON IS THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF LUTHERAN  
SERVICES IN TENNESSEE, AND SHE'S NOT HERE ON ACCOUNT OF A  
DEATH IN THE FAMILY.

MR. MIKE HUSETH, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF LUTHERAN EPISCOPAL  
SERVICES OF MISSISSIPPI.

HE'S HERE SOMEWHERE.

HE'S NOT IN HERE NOW.

MIKE HAD A KNEE REPLACEMENT AND SHOWED UP FOR THE SYNOD COUNCIL.

HE SORT OF LIKE WENT ALMOST DIRECTLY FROM THE HOSPITAL TO THE SYNOD COUNCIL MEETING, SO I HOPE HE'S RESTING HIS KNEE.

MR. HAL SLOPE AND DR. MARY ANN ZOTTI, THE DIRECTORS OF ALL THINGS NEW MINISTRY.

THEY'RE PROBABLY OUT AT THEIR BOOTH BUT IF THEY'RE IN THE HALL, STAND.

WE'RE NOT DOING REALLY WELL HERE, ARE WE?

AND THE REVEREND DR. MARCUS MILLER, PRESIDENT OF LUTHERAN THEOLOGICAL SOUTHERN SEMINARY, WHO I THINK IS COMING TOMORROW.

THE REVEREND LARRY CLARK, THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, ALSO LEAVING SOON, OF THE LUTHERAN THEOLOGICAL CENTER IN ATLANTA.

MS. DORY CAMPBELL, WHO'S NOT HERE.

DR. DR. MITCHELL ZAIS PRESIDENT OF NEWBERRY COLLEGE, BUT JOHN DERYCK, WHO IS THE CHURCH RELATIONS PERSON FROM THE COLLEGE, HAS BEEN HANGING AROUND ALL WEEKEND, SO IF JOHN IS HERE, I THINK HE MAY BE OUT IN HIS BOOTH, AS WELL.

YOU JUST MET MR. KEITH JOHNSON, THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF

LUTHERIDGE/LUTHEROCK MINISTRIES, INCORPORATED.

MR. PETER WALLACE OF DAY ONE, FORMERLY KNOWN AS THE  
PROTESTANT HOUR -- IS NOT HERE.

OKAY.

WE'RE COUNTING ON THE REVEREND LELAND COLLINS.

AND HE'S HERE, I SAW HIM EARLIER.

[ APPLAUSE ]

GOD BLESS YOU, LELAND.

AND HE HAS TO LEAVE TO GO TO THE A.M.E. ASSEMBLY, BUT THE  
REVEREND LELAND COLLINS IS EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF THE GEORGIA  
CHRISTIAN COUNCIL.

HIS OFFICE IS IN MACON, AND IT'S AN ECUMENICAL ASSOCIATION  
THROUGHOUT THE STATE OF GEORGIA.

THANKS SO MUCH FOR BEING HERE, AND GOD BLESS YOU IN YOUR  
OTHER WORK.

THE REVEREND DAVID HARDY, WHO WAS HERE AND IS ACTUALLY  
SUPPOSED TO BE HERE IN THIS ROOM RIGHT NOW.

YES, HE IS.

DAVID HARDY IS FROM THE ALLIANCE OF LUTHERAN MINISTRIES OF THE  
SOUTHEAST, ALMS, THE UMBRELLA ORGANIZATION.

AND THE REVEREND DR. HARVEY HUNTLEY JR., THE REGION 9  
COORDINATOR.

THESE FOLKS ARE SPLITTING THEIR DUTIES.

ALSO WANT TO INTRODUCE TO YOU SOMEONE THAT EVERYONE KNOWS, BUT OFFICIALLY INTRODUCE TO YOU MR. WESLEY CRENSHAW, THE VICE PRESIDENT OF THE SYNOD.

[ APPLAUSE ]

YOU SHOULD APPLAUD HIM IN SPITE OF ALL THIS TRASH HE TALKS ABOUT SAVANNAH BEING MECCA AND ALL THAT.

AND MR. JOHN LUCHT, OUR TREASURER FROM TRINITY IN LILBURN.

[ APPLAUSE ]

JOHN.

MOST OF YOU KNOW THAT PASTOR JOHN STIREWALT, OUR SYNOD SECRETARY, RECEIVED A CALL FROM ANOTHER SYNOD NOT TO BE NAMED HERE.

THE REVEREND PAUL BAUMGARTNER FROM GOOD SHEPHERD LUTHERAN CHURCH IN WOODSTOCK HAD BEEN APPOINTED BY THE SYNOD COUNCIL TO SERVE AS INTERIM SECRETARY, UNTIL THE ELECTION.

UNFORTUNATELY, HE WAS CALLED OUT OF TOWN WHEN HIS BROTHER DIED EARLIER THIS WEEK.

AND SO WE ARE REALLY GRATEFUL TO HAVE MICHELLE ANGALET, AN ASSOCIATE IN MINISTRY AT GOOD SHEPHERD AND WAS APPOINTED BY THE SYNOD COUNCIL LAST NIGHT AS OUR I GUESS INTERIM, ACTING,

SECRETARY.

SHE WILL BE THE SECRETARY FOR THE ASSEMBLY, AN INCREDIBLE  
JOB.

BUT THANKS VERY MUCH FOR DOING THAT, MICHELLE.

[ APPLAUSE ]

AND SHE SHOWED UP AND EVERYTHING.

THAT'S AMAZING.

AND NEXT ON OUR AGENDA IS MS. SANDRA HOLLAND FROM LUTHERAN  
THEOLOGICAL SOUTHERN SEMINARY, WHO WILL TELL US -- THERE SHE  
IS -- TELL US ABOUT -- I HADN'T SEEN YOU YET.

I WAS KIND OF HOPING YOU WERE HERE.

SHE'S GOING TO TELL US ABOUT THE SOUTHERN SEMINARY'S NEW  
LIFELONG LEARNING PROGRAM.

>> THANK YOU.

GOOD EVENING.

I'M HAPPY TO BRING YOU GREETINGS FROM REGION 9 OF THE ELCA.

OUR OFFICE IS LOCATED ON THE CAMPUS OF SOUTHERN SEMINARY IN  
COLUMBIA.

PLEASE COME VISIT US WHEN YOU'RE THERE.

OUR REPORT IS IN YOUR BULLETIN OF REPORTS.

MY NAME IS SANDRA HOLLAND.

I SERVE AS ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR FOR MINISTRY IN REGION 9.

I'M ROSTERED AS AN ASSOCIATE IN MINISTRY CALLED BY THE SOUTH CAROLINA SYNOD TO SERVE THE REGION.

I SERVE WITH PASTOR HARVEY HUNTLEY, WHO WAS MENTIONED EARLIER, WHO IS THE COORDINATOR FOR MINISTRY LEADERSHIP IN REGION 9.

HE'S ROSTERED IN YOUR SYNOD, AND HE'S AT NORTH CAROLINA SYNOD RIGHT NOW.

I'M HERE TO THANK YOU FOR YOUR PARTNERSHIP IN MINISTRY IN THE REGION.

YOU'VE BEEN GENEROUS IN YOUR SUPPORT THROUGH FINANCIAL SUPPORT AND SUPPORT OF PROGRAMMING.

I'D LIKE TO THANK BISHOP GORDY AND WESLEY CRENSHAW, WHO SERVED ON THE REGION 9 COUNCIL REPRESENTING THE SOUTHEASTERN SYNOD.

OUR MAIN ROLE AS A REGION IS ONE OF HOSPITALITY AS WE FOSTER COOPERATION, COLLABORATION, AND COORDINATION THROUGH CHURCHWIDE UNITS AND SYNODS.

REGION 9 IS MADE UP OF THE SYNODS OF THE SOUTHEASTERN UNITED STATES.

SOME YOU KNOW THIS AND SOME OF YOU PROBABLY DON'T.

IT'S VIRGINIA, NORTH CAROLINA, SOUTH CAROLINA, YOUR SYNOD, FLORIDA, BAHAMAS, AND THE CARIBBEAN SYNOD.

WE ALSO WEAR ANOTHER HAT THESE DAYS.

SOUTHERN SEMINARY CONTRACTS WITH THE REGION TO HANDLE ALL OF LIFELONG LEARNING MINISTRIES, SO I NOW SERVE AS THE COORDINATOR FOR LIFELONG LEARNING, AND I WANT TO SHARE WITH YOU AN EXCITING NEW LIFELONG LEARNING OPPORTUNITY YOU'LL BE HEARING MORE ABOUT IN THE MONTHS AHEAD.

IF YOU ARE HERE TODAY, YOU'RE A LEADER IN YOUR CONGREGATION. I'M SPEAKING TO THE LAY PEOPLE HERE TODAY.

HAVE THERE BEEN TIMES WHEN YOU'VE FELT CALLED TO A DEEPER ENGAGEMENT IN THE CHRISTIAN FAITH, AND GOD'S MISSION IN THE WORLD, BUT HAVE NOT FELT PREPARED?

WE IN THE LIFELONG LEARNING OFFICE OF THE SEMINARY KNOW WE HAVE A WEALTH OF KNOWLEDGE TO OFFER THROUGH OUR GIFTED SEMINARY FACULTY, BUT WE DIDN'T HAVE A WAY TO GET THAT KNOWLEDGE TO THE PEOPLE OF YOUR SYNOD AND SURROUNDING SYNODS UNTIL NOW.

SOUTHERN SEMINARY IS OFFERING A SERIES OF COURSES DESIGNED FOR BUSY LAY PEOPLE WITH A FOCUS ON PREPARATION FOR LEADERSHIP IN AND BEYOND THE CONGREGATION.

I'D LIKE TO INTRODUCE THE INSTITUTE FOR CHURCH LEADERSHIP. FOUNDATIONS FOR BIBLE, THEOLOGY, AND LEADERSHIP WILL BE EXPLORED, WITH A FOCUS ON THE TOTALITY OF GOD'S MISSION IN

TODAY'S WORLD.

OVER A THREE-YEAR PERIOD, YOU COULD TAKE 6 COURSES WITH SEMINARY PROFESSORS, AND BE AWARDED A CERTIFICATE OF MISSIONAL LEADERSHIP UPON COMPLETION.

GROUNDING IN SCRIPTURE AND LUTHERAN THEOLOGY, THE INSTITUTE WILL EMPHASIZE LAY LEADERSHIP, BUT ROSTERED LEADERS ARE ALSO STRONGLY ENCOURAGED TO ATTEND AND BRING A GROUP FROM YOUR CONGREGATION.

THE FIRST COURSE WILL BE OFFERED THIS FALL LIVE ON THE CAMPUS OF THE SEMINARY IN COLUMBIA, BUT ALSO, THROUGH AN INTERACTIVE DVD, HERE IN THE ATLANTA AREA, AND HOPEFULLY IN KNOXVILLE, TENNESSEE.

DR. MICHAEL ROOT WILL TEACH THIS FIRST COURSE TITLED "FOUNDATIONS OF THEOLOGY."

BROCHURES ARE AVAILABLE ON THE SEMINARY TABLE OUT IN THE GATHERING SPACE.

FOR MORE INFORMATION AND SPECIFIC DATES, PLEASE SEE THE SEMINARY WEBSITE.

I'LL BE AROUND TONIGHT AND TOMORROW MORNING.

AND WE JUST SO APPRECIATE TIME TO -- GIVING US SOME TIME TO LET US TELL YOU ABOUT THIS NEW LEARNING OPPORTUNITY, AND HOPE YOU'LL TAKE ADVANTAGE OF IT.

THANK YOU SO MUCH.

[ APPLAUSE ]

>> THANK YOU, SANDRA.

THIS IS A GREAT OPPORTUNITY.

I HOPE ALL OF YOU PLAN TO TAKE ADVANTAGE OF IT.

IT WILL BE GOOD FOR OUR CHURCH.

WE ARE ABOUT TO HEAR A RESOLUTION FROM THE SYNOD COUNCIL THAT WOULD GO INTO A QUASI-COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE TO TALK ABOUT THE REPORT FROM A TASK FORCE THAT THIS ASSEMBLY SET UP LAST YEAR TO LOOK AT THE DATES AND DURATIONS OF SYNOD ASSEMBLIES.

BEFORE WE DO THAT, I WANT TO TAKE JUST A MINUTE TO TELL YOU WHAT A QUASI-COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE IS, IF YOU DON'T KNOW. WITH THE ASSEMBLY'S APPROVAL, THAT IS, IF YOU PASS THE MOTION THAT COMES TO YOU IN JUST A MINUTE FROM THE SYNOD COUNCIL, WE WILL GO OUT OF PLENARY SESSION, WE WON'T LEAVE, BUT WE'LL BE OUT OF PLENARY SESSION, AND WE WILL BECOME A COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE.

ACTUALLY, WE'RE GOING TO FIRST BECOME A QUASI-COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE, BUT MORE ABOUT THAT LATER.

WHAT WE'RE GOING TO DO IS THEN THE WHOLE ASSEMBLY WILL BECOME ONE LARGE COMMITTEE.

ALL OF THE MEMBERS OF THE ASSEMBLY WILL BE MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE, IF IT'S APPROVED.

AND THIS IS DONE SO THAT WE CAN HAVE A CONVERSATION, CAN HEAR ABOUT THE TASK FORCE RECOMMENDATIONS, AND THEN DISCUSS THOSE RECOMMENDATIONS IN A SOMEWHAT LESS FORMAL MANNER. RULES STILL APPLY, BUT WE WON'T BE MAKING MOTIONS AND SO FORTH.

THERE WILL BE NO BINDING VOTES TAKEN.

WE MIGHT CHECK WHERE THE ASSEMBLY IS, AND THAT WILL BE THEN REPORTED OUT AS INFORMATION FOR THE PLENARY WHEN WE GET BACK TOGETHER, WHICH WE WILL DO AT THE END OF THE ALLOTTED TIME.

NOW, THAT'S A QUASI-COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE, AND A COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE ARE THE SAME, EXCEPT FOR ONE DIFFERENCE.

IN A QUASI-COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE, THE CHAIR OF THE ASSEMBLY, THAT WOULD BE ME, REMAINS THE PRESIDERS.

THAT IS, THE CHAIR CONTINUES TO PRESIDE, WHILE DURING A COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE, THE CHAIR RELINQUISHES THE PODIUM, AND THE CHAIR, TO ANOTHER PERSON.

AND WE'RE GOING TO DO THAT ACTUALLY LATER TONIGHT WITH YOUR APPROVAL, AND WES CRENSHAW WILL THEN CHAIR THE ASSEMBLY.

THAT'S DONE WHENEVER THE CHAIR IS IDENTIFIED WITH ONE PART OF

THE ISSUE THAT WE'RE GOING TO TALK ABOUT.

IN THIS FIRST PART, I'M GOING TO BE, IF YOU APPROVE THIS, I WILL CONTINUE TO CHAIR AND WE'LL TALK ABOUT WHAT IS IN TAB-I, EXHIBIT 17, AND TAB-I, EXHIBIT 3, REGARDING THE TASK FORCE FOR THE STUDY OF THE DATES AND DURATIONS OF SYNOD ASSEMBLIES TO BE BROUGHT TO YOU BY PASTOR TERRY STAGNER-COLLIER, IF YOU DON'T MIND COMING UP WHILE I FINISH THIS BIT.

I WANT TO TELL YOU THE MEMBERS OF THIS TASK FORCE THAT YOU ASKED TO BE APPOINTED LAST YEAR.

PASTOR TERRY STAGNER-COLLIER HAS CHAIRED THE TASK FORCE.

PASTOR ANN BASSETT OF PEACE IN SPRING HILL.

MS. HOLLY LIERSCH AND DR. SANDRA GUSTAVSON FROM THE SYNOD STAFF, AND ALSO MS. ELAINE SCHWARTZ, WHO IS OUR ASSEMBLY COORDINATOR.

SO THIS IS THE MOTION THAT IS BROUGHT TO THE ASSEMBLY BY THE SYNOD COUNCIL.

>> THE MOTION: RESOLVED, THAT THE ASSEMBLY GO INTO A QUASI-COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE FOR A PERIOD OF UP TO 20 MINUTES TO DISCUSS THE SYNOD COUNCIL'S PROPOSED RECOMMENDATION ABOUT THE DATES AND DURATIONS OF SYNOD ASSEMBLIES.

THE DISCUSSION WILL BEGIN WITH A PRESENTATION OF THE STUDY REQUESTED BY THE 2008 SYNOD ASSEMBLY ON THIS TOPIC, FOLLOWED

BY DISCUSSION OF THE WHOLE ASSEMBLY.

NO MOTIONS WILL BE IN ORDER.

DURING THE TIME IN DISCUSSION BY THE WHOLE ASSEMBLY, EACH SPEAKER WILL HAVE UP TO ONE MINUTE TO SPEAK.

>> THANK YOU, MR. VICE PRESIDENT.

NO SECOND IS NEEDED BECAUSE THIS COMES TO YOU FROM THE SYNOD COUNCIL.

IS THERE DISCUSSION ON THE MOTION TO MOVE INTO A QUASI-COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE FOR THE PURPOSE OF DISCUSSING THE REPORT OF THE TASK FORCE FOR THE STUDY OF DATES AND DURATIONS OF SYNOD ASSEMBLIES?

OKAY, I TAKE THAT TO MEAN YOU'RE READY TO VOTE.

IF YOU'RE IN FAVOR OF MOVING OUT OF PLENARY AND INTO THE QUASI-COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE, PLEASE SAY AYE.

>> AYE.

>> ALL OPPOSED, SAY NO.

THEN WE WILL MOVE INTO THIS QUASI-COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE.

I'M GOING TO ASK PASTOR NANCY CHRISTENSEN TO TELL US WHEN 20 MINUTES IS UP, BECAUSE OUR TIME WILL BE UP AT THE END OF 20 MINUTES, AND CALL UPON PASTOR TERRY STAGNER-COLLIER TO GIVE US A REPORT.

>> THANK YOU, BISHOP GORDY.

I THINK THE HOUSE LIGHTS ARE DIMMED AND WE NEED TO BRING THEM UP, BECAUSE THIS WILL BE A LITTLE DRY IF EVERYBODY'S FALLING ASLEEP.

THE 2008 SYNOD ASSEMBLY CHARGED THE SYNOD COUNCIL TO APPOINT A TASK FORCE TO INVESTIGATE OPTIONS REGARDING THE DATES AND DURATIONS OF FUTURE SYNOD ASSEMBLIES.

SPECIFICALLY, A CONCERN WAS RAISED THAT PASTORS ARE REQUIRED TO CHOOSE BETWEEN MISSING THEIR SUNDAY CONGREGATIONAL RESPONSIBILITIES OF WORD AND SACRAMENT MINISTRY, OR MISSING THE SUNDAY PLENARY SESSION AT SYNOD ASSEMBLY.

OUR SUMMARY REPORT IS EXHIBIT 3 IN THE BACK OF YOUR NOTEBOOK. A FULL REPORT CAN BE FOUND ONLINE AT THE SYNOD ASSEMBLY WEBSITE, OR I HAVE ABOUT 20 COPIES WITH ME, IF YOU'RE INTERESTED IN STATISTICS.

IT'S GOT THEM ALL THERE.

THE TASK FORCE ON DATES AND DURATION OF SYNOD ASSEMBLIES RECOMMENDED THE FOLLOWING TO SYNOD COUNCIL, WHICH THEY NOW RECOMMEND FOR YOUR CONSIDERATION.

"RESOLVED, THAT IN MOST YEARS, SYNOD ASSEMBLIES CONTINUE TO BE SCHEDULED FOR HALF A DAY ON FRIDAY, A FULL DAY ON SATURDAY, AND A HALF DAY ON SUNDAY."

THE TASK FORCE CAME TO THIS CONCLUSION AFTER A PROCESS OF INFORMATION-GATHERING, DISCUSSION, AND REFLECTION.

WE BEGAN BY STUDYING THE RESOURCES ALREADY AVAILABLE IN THE SYNOD OFFICE, SPECIFICALLY A COMPILATION OF INFORMATION GATHERED FROM OTHER SYNODS ABOUT THEIR ASSEMBLY FORMAT, AND PAST ASSEMBLY STATISTICS FROM OUR OWN SYNOD.

THE ASSEMBLY STATISTICS CONFIRM THAT THE ORIGINAL CONCERN ADDRESSED IN THE RESOLUTION WAS GROUNDED.

EACH YEAR, SUNDAY ATTENDANCE DECLINED BY ABOUT 20%, EXCEPT THOSE YEARS WHEN WE WERE ELECTING A BISHOP, WHEN IT DROPPED LESS THAN THAT.

OR THE BIG 37% DECLINE WHEN SYNOD ASSEMBLY COINCIDED WITH PENTECOST.

NOT A GOOD YEAR.

WITH THIS REALITY IN MIND, THE TASK FORCE SET OUT TO ASSESS THE OPINION OF THE ASSEMBLY ATTENDEES.

A TOTAL OF 456 SURVEYS WERE MAILED IN MAY 2008 TO NEARLY ALL THE MEMBERS OF THE SOUTHEASTERN SYNOD ASSEMBLY WHO ATTENDED THAT 2008 ASSEMBLY.

OF THOSE, 229 SURVEYS WERE RETURNED, 58% FROM LAY PEOPLE, AND 42% RETURNED FROM PASTORS.

AND LIKE MOST ISSUES OUR SYNOD FACES, THERE WAS NO CLEAR

CONSENSUS AMONG RESPONDENTS REGARDING THE IDEAL DATES AND DURATION OF SYNOD ASSEMBLY, PARTICULARLY REGARDING WHETHER A THURSDAY-FRIDAY-SATURDAY TIME FRAME WOULD BE MORE PREFERABLE THAN A FRIDAY-SATURDAY-SUNDAY TIME FRAME. THERE WAS NO CONSISTENT MANDATE TO CONCLUDE PRIOR TO SUNDAY, AND SINCE 65% OF ALL RESPONDENTS LIVE MORE THAN 40 MILES FROM ATLANTA, A LATE-SATURDAY END TIME WOULD NOT HELP ALL CONGREGATIONS.

IN ADDITION TO THOSE STATISTICS, VALUE AND VALUES WERE MAJOR FACTORS IN THE TASK FORCE FINAL RECOMMENDATION.

FIRST, THE ISSUE OF VALUE.

IN MARKETS WHERE WEEKDAY BUSINESS OR CONVENTION TRAVEL IS PROMINENT, SUCH AS ATLANTA OR BIRMINGHAM, COSTS WOULD RISE SIGNIFICANTLY IF THE ASSEMBLY WERE MOVED TO A THURSDAY-FRIDAY-SATURDAY MODEL.

IF THE ASSEMBLY WERE TO MEET ON THOSE DAYS, THEN A MORE VACATION-ORIENTED LOCATION WOULD BE REQUIRED.

HOWEVER, THE INCREASED COST OF TRANSPORTING SYNOD STAFF, MATERIALS, AND EQUIPMENT MIGHT OFFSET SUCH SAVINGS.

SECONDLY, AND IN THE EYES OF THE TASK FORCE, FAR MOST IMPORTANT, OUR RECOMMENDATION REFLECTS OUR CHURCH'S PROFESSED VALUE OF THE PRIESTHOOD OF ALL BELIEVERS.

WHILE CONCERN FOR LEAVING ONE'S CONGREGATION IS VALID, BOTH OUR DOCTRINE OF MINISTRY AND ECUMENICAL EFFORTS PROVIDE MANY OPPORTUNITIES TO ASSURE THAT WORD AND SACRAMENT ARE PROPERLY ADMINISTERED WHILE A PASTOR IS AT ASSEMBLY.

WITH FULL COMMUNION WITH NEARLY 6 MAJOR DENOMINATIONS, THERE ARE PLENTY OF ECUMENICAL PARTNERS WHO CAN CELEBRATE THE SACRAMENT AND PREACH.

AND SINCE WE TRUST THAT GOD SPEAKS THROUGH THE LAITY AS WELL AS CLERGY, LAY PREACHERS PROVIDE ANOTHER OPTION.

THIS HIGH COMMITMENT TOWARD THE WORK OF THE LAITY IS ALSO EXPRESSED IN OUR CONSTITUTIONAL REQUIREMENT KEEPING ASSEMBLY REPRESENTATION AT A 60-40 LAY-CLERGY RATIO.

BECAUSE LAY VOTING MEMBERS ARE CURRENTLY REQUIRED TO TAKE ONLY ONE DAY OFF FROM WORK, THE FRIDAY-THROUGH-SUNDAY MODEL ENCOURAGES LAY PARTICIPATION IN THE ASSEMBLY.

IN FACT, 37% OF LAYPERSONS WHO DO NOT WORK FOR THE CHURCH STATED THAT THEY WOULD BE UNABLE TO ATTEND IF AN ASSEMBLY WERE MOVED TO A THURSDAY-FRIDAY-SATURDAY MODEL.

THEREFORE, IT IS WITH SUCH APPRECIATION FOR THE PRIESTHOOD OF ALL BELIEVERS IN MIND THAT THE TASK FORCE BELIEVES THAT ANY DIFFERENTIAL BURDEN OF GATHERING BE BORNE BY CLERGY WHO ARE HONESTLY PAID TO ATTEND, RATHER THAN LAITY, WHO MUST

TAKE VACATION TO ATTEND.

THEREFORE, TO REPEAT SYNOD COUNCIL'S RECOMMENDATION,  
"RESOLVED, THAT IN MOST YEARS, SYNOD ASSEMBLIES CONTINUED TO  
BE SCHEDULED FOR HALF A DAY FRIDAY, A FULL DAY ON SATURDAY  
AND HALF A DAY ON SUNDAY."

NOW, IF I WERE SITTING IN YOUR SEAT, I WOULD BE MAKING MY WAY TO  
THE MICROPHONE TO SAY: WHAT DOES "IN MOST YEARS" MEAN?  
IN INVESTIGATING THE OPTIONS ABOUT HOW WE GATHER, A HEALTHY  
DISCUSSION ABOUT THE PURPOSE AND THE FOCUS OF OUR SYNOD  
ASSEMBLY TOOK PLACE, THE PRACTICES OF OTHER SYNODS, AND  
FRANKLY, THE GREAT IDEAS THAT YOU SHARED IN YOUR RESPONSES  
TO THE SURVEY GOT US ALL THINKING.

AND IT RAISED THE OPTION OF HAVING A MORE FESTIVE  
MINISTRY-ORIENTED EVENT ON THE YEARS WHEN BUSINESS OR  
ELECTIONS IS LIGHT.

SIMILAR TO A "CATCH THE SPIRIT" -- MATT, AM I SUPPOSED TO SAY  
CATCHTHESPIRIT.ORG -- SIMILAR TO THAT MODEL, SUCH AN EVENT  
COULD FOCUS ON SHARING MINISTRY RESOURCES, NETWORKING FOR  
PARTICULAR MINISTRY AREAS, AND CELEBRATING THE THRIVING  
MINISTRIES WHICH TAKE PLACE AMONG US.

SINCE SUCH AN EVENT COULD SUCCESSFULLY BE COMPLETED ON A  
FRIDAY NOON TO SATURDAY EVENING TIME FRAME.

THE "IN MOST YEARS" LANGUAGE WAS INCLUDED IN THE RECOMMENDATION TO LEAVE FLEXIBILITY TO BE CREATIVE IN OUR FUTURE ASSEMBLY PLANNING.

IN FACT, THE SYNOD COUNCIL HAS CHARGED THE SYNOD ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE TO LOOK INTO SUCH POSSIBILITIES, REPORTING BACK TO THE JANUARY 2010 SYNOD COUNCIL MEETING.

A VOTE ON THE TASK FORCE AND SYNOD COUNCIL RECOMMENDATION WILL TAKE PLACE IN TOMORROW'S PLENARY SESSION.

ARE THERE QUESTIONS OR DISCUSSION?

THAT'S PROBABLY YOUR SENTENCE, ISN'T IT?

>> THAT WAS, BUT THAT'S OKAY.

THAT WAS AN EXCELLENT REPORT.

NOW, JUST TO MAKE SURE WE UNDERSTAND WHAT WE'RE DOING HERE, YOU'RE WELCOME TO ASK QUESTIONS, YOU'RE WELCOME TO ENGAGE IN DEBATE.

WE WILL NOT VOTE ON THIS.

YOU'LL ALSO HAVE AN OPPORTUNITY TO DEBATE THIS WHEN IT COMES ON THE FLOOR OF THE PLENARY.

WE'RE CURRENTLY IN THE QUASI-COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE, SO IF YOU HAVE A QUESTION -- YES, WE HAVE ONE.

>> I HAVE A QUESTION, AND I HAVE NO IDEA WHICH CARD.

OKAY?

[ LAUGHTER ]

>> I THINK YOU HAVE IT COVERED THERE, PASTOR.

>> OKAY, I'M RICK BARGER AT EPIPHANY IN SUWANEE, GEORGIA.

AND I'M THRILLED TO HEAR ABOUT THE PRIESTHOOD OF ALL BELIEVERS, SO MY ASSUMPTION IS, KEEPING IT LIKE IT IS, THAT LAYPERSONS IN OUR CONGREGATIONS WOULD BE AUTHORIZED TO CELEBRATE EUCHARIST ON THOSE SUNDAYS, CORRECT?

>> I'M NOT AUTHORIZED TO AUTHORIZE THAT.

SINCE WE'RE IN A QUASI-COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE, I COULD ANSWER MAYBE A LITTLE LONGER ON THAT.

OUR CURRENT UNDERSTANDING IN THE ELCA IS THAT A BISHOP MAY AUTHORIZE A LAYPERSON TO CELEBRATE THE SACRAMENTS IN A PLACE, IF THE MEMBERS OF THAT CONGREGATION WOULD OTHERWISE NOT BE ABLE TO RECEIVE THE SACRAMENT FOR AN EXTENDED PERIOD OF TIME.

ANOTHER ONE OF THOSE PHRASES THAT'S NOT ALL THAT CLEAR:

WHAT "EXTENDED PERIOD OF TIME" MEANS.

BECAUSE OF OUR ECUMENICAL RELATIONSHIPS WITH OTHER PEOPLE, MANY OF WHOM DO NOT THINK THAT'S KOSHER AT ALL, WE TRY TO DO THAT IN A LIMITED BASIS.

WE HAVE SOME EXCELLENT LICENSED LAY PEOPLE SERVING CONGREGATIONS.

SOME HAVE BEEN DOING IT FOR A LONG TIME.

WE HAVEN'T BEEN DOING THAT ON A ONE-SUNDAY BASIS AT THIS POINT.

WELL, LET ME REPHRASE THAT: WE HAVEN'T BEEN DOING THAT WITH PERMISSION ON A ONE-SUNDAY AT A TIME BASIS.

YES?

>> GARY SOOP FROM SPIRIT OF PEACE, RICHMOND HILL, GEORGIA, EBENEZER CONFERENCE.

INFORMATION.

I WOULD VERY MUCH LIKE THIS MODEL.

MY ONE REQUEST, BASED ON WHAT YOU WERE SHARING, TERRI, IS WE TRY NOT TO SCHEDULE ASSEMBLIES IN THE FUTURE THAT WOULD OVERLAP WITH THE FESTIVAL OF PENTECOST.

THIS IS ONE OF THREE GREAT FESTIVAL DAYS, AND I THINK IT'S SO IMPORTANT FOR US TO BE PRESENT.

WE WOULD NOT WANT TO HAVE AN ASSEMBLY ON EASTER DAY OR ON CHRISTMAS EVE.

LET'S AVOID PENTECOST.

>> YEAH, I THINK THAT POINT WAS AMAZINGLY POPULAR.

WHEN THAT DID HAPPEN -- I THINK IT WAS 2006, I BELIEVE -- THERE WEREN'T MANY PEOPLE, PERIOD, HERE ON SUNDAY MORNING.

I CAN'T REMEMBER WHETHER I STAYED OR NOT.

>> I DIDN'T.

>> ARE THERE OTHER QUESTIONS, COMMENTS, POINTS OF VIEW?

MICROPHONE 4.

>> THANK YOU, BISHOP.

DAVE HILKERT, MARIETTA.

THE REALITY IS FOR MOST OF US IN THE ORDAINED MINISTRY, WE  
WON'T BE HERE SUNDAY.

THE REALITY IS WE WOULD RATHER BE AT OUR CONGREGATIONS THAN  
HERE AT THE SYNOD ASSEMBLY.

THE REALITY IS, MY GUESS IS THAT YOU LOOK IN THIS GROUP ON  
SUNDAY, THERE WILL BE MANY EMPTY CHAIRS.

MY QUESTION TO THE SYNOD PLANNING COMMITTEE: IS IT  
APPROPRIATE AND WISE TO DISCUSS A BUDGET WHEN SO MANY OF US  
WILL BE MISSING?

I'M SURE YOU'VE HAD THESE CONVERSATIONS WITH ALL OF THE  
CONCERN FOR LACK OF REVENUE.

IT MIGHT BE WISE TO CONSIDER THE POSSIBILITY OF HAVING THAT  
BUDGET CONVERSATION WHEN MORE OF US COULD BE HERE.

THANK YOU.

>> THANKS.

WE'RE TAKING NOTES UP HERE, PASTOR.

YES?

>> VIOLET CULP, OUR SAVIOR LUTHERAN CHURCH, GATLINBURG.

WAS THERE EVER ANY CONSIDERATION GIVEN TO JUST HAVING OUR ASSEMBLY ON FRIDAY AND SATURDAY, THUS LETTING ALL OF US BE HOME AT OUR HOME CHURCHES ON SUNDAY, PASTORS AS WELL AS LAITY?

>> PASTOR?

>> THERE WAS DISCUSSION ABOUT THAT, BUT THEN IN THE SURVEY, WHEN IT CAME DOWN TO "WHAT DO YOU WANT TO LEAVE OUT," THERE WAS NOT A CLEAR CONSENSUS ON WHAT ITEMS WOULD BE LEFT OUT OF AN ASSEMBLY.

AND PARTICULARLY ON HIGH ELECTIONS OR LIKE THIS YEAR WITH A HIGH NUMBER OF RESOLUTIONS AND WEIGHTY DISCUSSIONS BEFORE US, IT'S JUST PROBABLY NOT FEASIBLE TO BE ABLE TO COMPLETE IT IN THAT MUCH TIME.

THE OTHER REALITY OF OUR SYNOD, SPEAKING AS SOMEBODY WHO'S ON THE GULF COAST OF MISSISSIPPI WITH A SATURDAY NIGHT SERVICE, THAT WOULDN'T HELP MANY OF US WHO HAVE A DISTANCE TO TRAVEL.

>> OTHER QUESTIONS, COMMENTS, POINTS OF VIEW, OPINIONS?

WE STILL HAVE A LITTLE TIME.

I THINK I SEE SOMEONE GOING TO MICROPHONE 2.

AND ANOTHER PERSON GOING TO MICROPHONE 2.

ASK AND YOU WILL BE GIVEN.

>> PASTOR DALE SILLICK, TRINITY LUTHERAN CHURCH, LEAVEN  
CONFERENCE.

I WOULD HOPE THAT CONVERSATIONS WOULD TAKE PLACE TO  
RECOGNIZE THAT ONE OF THE WAYS WE CAN RESOLVE THIS I THINK  
WONDERFULLY WELL IS TO RECOGNIZE THE NUMBER OF ECUMENICAL  
RELATIONSHIPS WE PRESENTLY HAVE WITH OUR CHURCH.

I KNOW FOR SEVERAL YEARS NOW, WE'VE CHOSEN TO BE HERE ON  
SUNDAY, TO BE A PART OF THIS COMMUNITY FOR THE FULLNESS OF  
THE ASSEMBLY.

WHETHER I PREFER TO BE AT MY CHURCH AT HOME OR NOT, THIS IS  
WHERE MY CHURCH ASKS ME TO BE.

WE'VE RELIED ON ECUMENICAL PARTNERS AND PASTORS TO COME  
AND BE WITH OUR PEOPLE AND HAVE AN EXPRESSION OF THAT.

I HOPE SOME CONGREGATIONS WILL TAKE INTO CONSIDERATION THAT  
THERE ARE FOLKS THAT CAN COME AND CELEBRATE THE SACRAMENT  
AND BE WITH US AND GIVE WITNESS TO THE GREATER CHURCH.

>> THANK YOU.

MICROPHONE 2.

>> EDWIN BRYANT, CHRISTUS VICTOR, OCEAN SPRINGS.

I DON'T WANT TO CREATE A GREAT ARGUMENT HERE, BUT I WANT TO  
SAY AS A LAYPERSON, WE LOOK TO OUR PASTORS, WE HIRE THEM TO

COME TO OUR CHURCHES, GIVE US LEADERSHIP IN ALL AREAS.

WE ASK THEM TO HELP IN OUR LEADERSHIP IN THE SYNOD.

AND AS A PERSON WHO HAS BEEN AT OTHER SYNOD ASSEMBLIES, I PERSONALLY HAVE FOUND IT DISTRESSING THAT SO MANY PEOPLE LEAVE ON SUNDAY MORNING, SPECIFICALLY ROSTERED PEOPLE.

WE LOOK TO THEM FOR THE LEADERSHIP, AS PASTOR SILLICK WAS JUST SAYING.

THE CHURCH ASKED YOU ALL TO BE HERE AND HELP US IN THESE DECISION-MAKING PROCESSES.

I KNOW THAT THERE ARE OFTEN SPECIFIC INSTANCES, BUT THIS IS THE MAIN DECISION-MAKING BODY OF THE SYNOD, AND YOUR PRESENCE HERE IS IMPORTANT.

>> THANK YOU.

MICROPHONE 1.

>> MY NAME IS SHARON BOST.

I'M ON SYNOD COUNCIL.

I GO TO HOLY TRINITY, MARIETTA.

EVERY PASTOR IN THIS ROOM TAKES VACATION EVERY YEAR.

IT'S PROBABLY MORE THAN ONE WEEK, SO YOU'RE NOT THERE THEN.

WHAT DO THEY DO ON THOSE SUNDAYS?

AND MY POINT IS, THOUGH, YOUR CHURCH CAN SURVIVE WITHOUT YOU FOR ONE WEEK.

WE HAVE HAD SOME WONDERFUL LAY MINISTERS AT OUR CHURCH.  
MAYBE WE DON'T HAVE COMMUNION THAT DAY, BUT IT'S JUST ONE  
SUNDAY.

I REMEMBER WHEN WE USED TO HAVE COMMUNION WHAT THREE  
TIMES A YEAR, FOUR TIMES A YEAR.

>> THANK YOU VERY MUCH.

HOW MUCH TIME DO WE HAVE?

>> STILL HAVE 5 MINUTES.

>> WE HAVE A LITTLE TIME, IF THERE'S ANYONE ELSE WHO WOULD LIKE  
TO TOP THAT?

IS ANYONE ELSE INTERESTED IN SPEAKING TO THIS?

OUR RESOLUTION SAID UP TO 20 MINUTES, SO IF I DON'T SEE ANYONE  
MOVING TO A MICROPHONE, I WILL DECIDE THAT WE HAVE SPOKEN  
ABOUT THIS AS MUCH AS WE NEED TO.

AND IF WE HAVE, AND I THINK THAT WE HAVE, THEN THE  
COMMITTEE -- THE COMMITTEE WILL NOW RISE AND MOVE BACK TO  
OUR REGULAR PLENARY SESSION.

THAT'S NOT TO BE TAKEN LITERALLY.

THAT'S PARLIAMENTARY JARGON FOR: THIS IS OVER NOW.

THANK YOU VERY MUCH, PASTOR TERRI STAGNER-COLLIER.

[ APPLAUSE ]

OKAY, THAT WAS GOOD PRACTICE.

WE'RE GOING TO DO IT AGAIN, ONLY THIS TIME, WE'RE GOING TO MOVE INTO A COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE, AND I WILL -- WITH YOUR APPROVAL, OF COURSE -- AND I WILL RELINQUISH THE CHAIR TO OUR VICE PRESIDENT.

I DO THAT BECAUSE I WAS INVOLVED IN THE DISCUSSIONS THAT LED TO THE NEXT -- TO THE MOTION WE'RE GOING TO TALK ABOUT, AND HAVING BEEN INVOLVED IN THOSE DISCUSSIONS, PROBABLY AM NOT AN ABSOLUTELY NEUTRAL CHAIR.

SO IF YOU WOULD PLEASE NOW LOOK AT TAB-I, EXHIBIT 17, AND TAB F, AND TAB-I, EXHIBITS 5 AND 6 -- IF YOU CAN HOLD ALL YOUR FINGERS IN THERE AT THE SAME TIME -- REGARDING THE REPORT OF THE TASK FORCE ON SYNOD RESTRUCTURING, WHICH WILL BE BROUGHT TO THE ASSEMBLY BY PASTOR RANDY JONES, WHO I'M SURE IS MAKING HIS WAY TO THE DAIS EVEN AS WE SPEAK.

LET ME INTRODUCE TO YOU WHO THOSE TASK FORCE MEMBERS WERE. PASTOR RANDY JONES FROM MESSIAH IN MONTGOMERY.

MS. MARLYN KELM FROM REDEEMER IN ATLANTA.

PASTOR DAVID KEENER FROM CHRIST THE KING IN EVANS.

PASTOR KEENER IS IN THE HOLY LAND.

MR. PAUL ARNE, OUR SYNOD ATTORNEY FROM ST. JOHN'S IN ATLANTA, WHO I THINK WILL JOIN US FROM THE DAIS IN CASE WE HAVE TICKY CONSTITUTIONAL QUESTIONS.

PASTOR JILL HENNING FROM TRINITY IN LILBURN, AND SANDRA GUSTAVSON, OUR STAFF LIAISON.

I THINK THAT I SPEAK FOR ALL OF YOU IN EXPRESSING THE GRATITUDE OF THIS WHOLE SYNOD ASSEMBLY FOR THE WORK THAT THESE FOLKS HAVE DONE.

IT HAS BEEN CONSIDERABLE, EVIDENCED BY THE NUMBER OF EXHIBITS THAT YOU NEED TO GET THROUGH IT.

THEY'VE DONE SOME REALLY CREATIVE AND DILIGENT WORK.

I ASKED THEM TO THINK AS CREATIVELY AS POSSIBLE.

I MADE THE MISTAKE SUGGESTING THEY THINK OUTSIDE THE BOX.

THAT'S WHEN WE DISCOVERED PASTOR DAVID KEENER DOESN'T KNOW THERE IS A BOX.

LOTS OF INTERESTING STUFF THAT WAS DONE BY SOCIAL NETWORKING ON THE INTERNET, A REALLY INTERESTING PROCESS.

AND SO THE SYNOD COUNCIL, HAVING READ THE REPORT, BRINGS THE FOLLOWING MOTION TO THE ASSEMBLY.

MR. VICE PRESIDENT.

>> "RESOLVED, THAT THE ASSEMBLY GO INTO A COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE FOR A PERIOD OF UP TO 60 MINUTES, UNTIL 8:55 P.M., WHICHEVER COMES FIRST, TO DISCUSS THE RECOMMENDED CHANGES TO SYNOD BYLAWS AND CONTINUING RESOLUTIONS.

THE DISCUSSION WILL BEGIN WITH THE PRESENTATION OF THE

PROPOSED CHANGES, FOLLOWED BY DISCUSSION OF THE WHOLE ASSEMBLY.

NO MOTIONS WILL BE IN ORDER.

DURING THE TIME IN DISCUSSION BY THE WHOLE ASSEMBLY, EACH SPEAKER WILL HAVE UP TO ONE MINUTE TO SPEAK."

>> THIS COMES TO YOU FROM THE SYNOD COUNCIL, AND DOES THEREFORE NOT NEED A SECOND.

IS THERE ANY DISCUSSION OF THE MOTION TO MOVE INTO A COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE FOR THE PURPOSE OF DISCUSSING THE TASK FORCE ON SYNOD RESTRUCTURING REPORT OR REPORTS, I GUESS?

I DON'T SEE ANYONE MOVING TO A MICROPHONE, SO I ASSUME WE'RE READY TO VOTE.

ALL THOSE IN FAVOR OF MOVING INTO A COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE FOR THE PURPOSE OF DISCUSSING THE TASK FORCE'S RECOMMENDATIONS, PLEASE SAY AYE.

>> AYE.

>> THOSE OPPOSED, PLEASE SAY NO.

THE MOTION CARRIES AND WE WILL NOW GO INTO A COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE UNTIL 8:55, BECAUSE THAT WILL BE WHICHEVER COMES FIRST.

WE'RE TRYING TO GET OUT OF HERE BY 9:00 SO WE DON'T HAVE TO

PAY OVERTIME FOR EVERYONE HERE.

I NOW RELINQUISH THE CHAIR TO SYNOD VICE PRESIDENT WESLEY CRENSHAW.

>> AT THIS TIME, WE'RE GOING TO CALL ON PASTOR RANDY JONES FOR HIS REPORT.

>> THANK YOU, WES.

I NOTICE YOU'RE WEARING JEANS.

I THINK I'LL START DOING THAT, TOO, SINCE YOU OBVIOUSLY MAKE IT OKAY.

>> IT'S OKAY.

IT'S A GOOD THING.

I HAD SHORTS LAST YEAR.

>> I'M NOT THAT FAR OUT OF THE BOX.

THE BISHOP HAS ALREADY TOLD YOU WHO IS A MEMBER OF THE TASK FORCE, BUT I WANT TO THANK THEM MYSELF FOR THEIR HARD WORK, BECAUSE IT WAS ARDUOUS AND WE DID A GREAT DEAL OF WORK, A GOOD BIT DONE OVER THE INTERNET ON A SOCIAL NETWORKING SITE CALLED "MING" MR. PAUL ARNE, OUR SYNOD ATTORNEY, FOUND FOR US.

FIRST QUESTION YOU MIGHT ASK IS: WHY WAS A TASK TEAM EVEN APPOINTED?

FIRST OF ALL, WHEN BISHOP GORDY WAS INSTALLED AS BISHOP, AS HE

MADE HIS WAY AROUND THE CONFERENCE, OR THE SYNOD, WHAT HE FOUND WAS THAT THERE WERE REALLY ONLY TWO CONFERENCES THAT WERE OPERATING IN SOME FORM OR FASHION IN SOME WAY THAT EVEN LOOKED AS THEY WERE SUPPOSED TO BY THE CONSTITUTION.

THAT'S 2 OUT OF 14 CONFERENCES.

MANY OF THE CONFERENCES WERE NOT MEETING AT ALL ON A YEARLY BASIS AS CONFERENCES.

MOST OF THE COMMISSIONS WERE NOT FUNCTIONING.

SOME OF THEM HAD BEEN DEFUNCT, HAD NOT BEEN STAFFED.

THE ONLY COMMISSION THAT WE KNOW OF THAT WAS REALLY OPERATING AS A COMMISSION WAS THE MULTICULTURAL COMMISSION.

MANY OF THE COMMITTEES THAT WERE WORKING THAT WERE AMONG THE COMMISSIONS HAD MEMBERS THAT WERE NOT CONSTITUTIONALLY LEGAL.

THEY WERE NOT REALLY ALLOWED TO BE SERVING ON THE COMMITTEES.

THEY'VE SERVED BEYOND THE NUMBER OF CONSECUTIVE YEARS THEY WERE ALLOWED TO SERVE.

THERE WAS ALSO, AS WE LOOKED AT IT AND AS MANY OF YOU MAY RECOGNIZE, INEQUITABLE REPRESENTATION ON SYNOD COUNCIL.

OF THE 14 CONFERENCES THAT WE HAVE, ONE CONFERENCE HAS 4

CONGREGATIONS.

AND ONE OF THE CONFERENCES HAS IN EXCESS OF 20

CONGREGATIONS.

AND EACH OF THOSE CONFERENCES HAS ONE REPRESENTATIVE TO  
THE COUNCIL, SYNOD COUNCIL.

SO IT'S NOT QUITE EQUITABLE REPRESENTATION.

SO YOU MIGHT ASK: WHAT DID THIS TASK FORCE DO?

BESIDES DRINKING A LOT OF COFFEE, WE CONSIDERED THE SITUATION  
THAT WE FOUND OURSELVES IN, WHICH INCLUDES A LOT OF ISSUES,  
AND THE BIGGEST ONE PROBABLY BEING OUR GEOGRAPHY, AND WHAT  
IS IT THAT WE'RE GOING TO DO ABOUT THAT?

WE'VE TALKED ABOUT THAT A GOOD BIT OVER THE YEARS.

WE LOOKED AT THE HISTORY OF THE SYNOD AND THE PREDECESSOR  
SYNODS, HOW THE SYNOD HAD BEEN ORDERED, AND IN THE PRIOR  
YEARS.

WE LOOKED AT OTHER SYNODS WITH SIMILAR GEOGRAPHIC ISSUES.

WE ARE THE LARGEST SYNOD EAST OF THE MISSISSIPPI.

THERE ARE SYNODS WEST OF THE MISSISSIPPI THAT ARE AS LARGE OR  
LARGER THAN WE.

SO WE LOOKED AT THEIR STRUCTURES.

WE SURVEYED THE CONFERENCE OF DEANS.

AND, DEANS, I MUST SAY, WE DIDN'T GET MUCH BACK FROM YOU GUYS.

WE CONSIDERED THE NEEDS OF THE SYNOD TODAY.

PROPOSED SOLUTION THAT WE CAME UP WITH AFTER A LOT OF BLOGGING, A LOT OF RESEARCH, A LOT OF TALKING AMONG OURSELVES, AND TWO MEETINGS, AND LISTENING TO THE BISHOP'S REPORT OF WHAT WAS GOING ON IN THE SYNOD, WHAT SORTS OF THINGS WEREN'T WORKING, WHAT SORTS OF THINGS WERE WORKING.

WE CAME UP WITH THIS:

THE FIRST THING IS TO RESTRUCTURE THE SYNOD CONFERENCES.

WE'RE GOING TO -- WE'RE PROPOSING WE GO FROM 14 CONFERENCES TO 9.

WE WANT TO ADD CLUSTERS, AND CLUSTERS ARE MERELY GROUPINGS OF CONGREGATIONS FOR THE PURPOSE OF PASTORAL CARE TO THE PASTORS.

A DEAN WILL ASSIGNED TO THE CLUSTER INSTEAD OF TO CONFERENCES.

REMOVE THE COMMISSIONS -- THEY'RE NOT WORKING.

THEY'RE NOT OPERATING.

THERE'S NO NEED TO HAVE THEM.

THEY'RE VERY POORLY DEFINED AS THEY ARE.

AND SO I THINK THAT MAY HAVE SOMETHING TO DO WITH THE FACT THAT THEY'RE NOT WORKING VERY WELL.

WE WANT TO GIVE THE BISHOP AND THE SYNOD COUNCIL THE ABILITY

TO CREATE SHORT-TERM TASK FORCES.

AND THERE'S PROVIDING AN APPARATUS IN THE CONSTITUTION TO CREATE TASK FORCES VIA CONTINUING RESOLUTIONS AND THE NEW CONSTITUTION THAT YOU'LL FIND BEHIND TAB F, S11.01.51 TAKES CARE OF THAT PROVISION.

WE ALSO WANT TO ENCOURAGE COALITIONS OF CONGREGATIONS TO ACCOMPLISH COMMON MINISTRY GOALS, AND COALITIONS ARE NOT TIED TO CONFERENCES OR CLUSTERS.

A CONGREGATION IN SAVANNAH, GEORGIA, MAY DECIDE TO CREATE A COALITION WITH A CONGREGATION IN MISSISSIPPI.

WE'RE LOOKING AT MINISTRIES, AND NOT ORGANIZATIONS.

THIS NEW STRUCTURE OF CONFERENCES IS PROBABLY THE MOST -- GOING TO BE THE MOST DIFFICULT, THE MOST PAINFUL FOR FOLKS.

AND WE WANT TO REALIGN THESE CONFERENCES TO ACHIEVE MORE EQUITABLE REPRESENTATION IN THE SYNOD COUNCIL.

WE WANT TO DISASSOCIATE THE DEANS FROM CONFERENCES AND TIE THEM TO CLUSTERS.

AND CLUSTERS WILL NOT BE TIED TO CONFERENCES.

THEY MAY, AND WILL, CROSS CONFERENCE BOUNDARIES.

CLUSTERS WILL BE FOR THE PURPOSE OF PASTORAL CARE, MAINLY, AND PERHAPS COMMON MINISTRIES.

I KNOW A LOT OF PASTORS AND CONGREGATIONS WILL DO CONFIRMATION AT LUTHERIDGE TOGETHER, AND THOSE SORTS OF THINGS WILL CONTINUE.

WE WILL EXPECT EACH CONFERENCE TO MEET AT LEAST ONCE PER YEAR, AND PREFERABLY TWICE A YEAR.

WE WANT THEM AT LEAST ONE MEETING FOR A BUSINESS MEETING WHERE YOU'LL ELECT WHATEVER OFFICERS ARE NECESSARY -- YOUR REPRESENTATIVE TO SYNOD COUNCIL, YOUR CHAIR, YOUR VICE CHAIR, YOUR TREASURER, YOUR SECRETARY, WHATEVER THAT MAY BE, ALSO TALK ABOUT ANY OTHER BUSINESS THAT THAT CONFERENCE MAY HAVE TO DEAL WITH AT THAT MEETING.

WE WANT TO ENCOURAGE WORSHIP AND FELLOWSHIP, AND EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES, IF YOU WILL HAVE A SECOND MEETING IN THAT YEAR.

IF YOU WILL LOOK BEHIND TAB-I, EXHIBIT 6, WE'LL SHOW YOU WHAT WE'RE LOOKING AT FOR REALIGNING THE CONFERENCES.

AT PRESENT, THERE ARE 14 CONFERENCES.

WE'LL GO TO 9, IF WE APPROVE THIS.

CONFERENCE NUMBER 1 WOULD ESSENTIALLY ENCOMPASS THE SOUTHEASTERN QUADRANT OF GEORGIA.

CONFERENCE NUMBER 2, THE SOUTHWESTERN

CONFERENCE -- SOUTHWESTERN QUADRANT OF GEORGIA.

CONFERENCE 3 WOULD BE WITHIN THE PERIMETER, WITHIN I-285, OF THE ATLANTA METRO AREA.

CONFERENCE 4, THE NORTHEASTERN QUADRANT OF GEORGIA.

CONFERENCE 5, THE NORTHWESTERN QUADRANT.

CONFERENCE 6, EASTERN TENNESSEE.

CONFERENCE 7, WOULD BE THE ENTIRE STATE OF ALABAMA.

CONFERENCE 8 WOULD BE CENTRAL TENNESSEE.

AND CONFERENCE 9 WOULD BE MISSISSIPPI, INCLUDING MEMPHIS, AS IT'S PROPOSED TODAY.

THIS GIVES US 9 GOOD-SIZED CONFERENCES, SOME OF THEM GEOGRAPHICALLY LARGE.

WHAT WE'RE HOPING IS THAT GOING BACK ESSENTIALLY TO THE MODEL THAT WAS BEING USED PRIOR TO THE REORGANIZATION THAT OCCURRED IN THE LATE 1990s, THAT WE WILL ENGENDER GREATER PARTICIPATION WITHIN THE CONFERENCES AS THEY'RE LARGER, WITH THE IDEA, AS I SAID, THAT EDUCATION AND WORSHIP AND FELLOWSHIP BE THE CENTER OF THOSE MEETINGS, WITH BUSINESS BEING THE SECONDARY ISSUES TO BE DEALT WITH.

CLUSTERS: CLUSTERS WILL BE CREATED WITH NO MORE THAN 10 CONGREGATIONS.

I AM A DEAN.

I HAVE 10 CONGREGATIONS FOR WHICH I'M RESPONSIBLE, 7

PASTORS -- THAT'S ALL I CAN HANDLE MYSELF.

ONE OF OUR DEANS HAS IN EXCESS OF 20 PASTORS FOR WHOM HE'S RESPONSIBLE AS PASTOR TO THE PASTORS.

HIS JOB IS ALMOST IMPOSSIBLE, I BELIEVE TO BE IMPOSSIBLE, SO WE WANT TO LIMIT THAT, AND LIMIT THE SIZE OF CLUSTERS TO BETWEEN 7 AND 10 CONGREGATIONS, 7 AND 10 PASTORS, FOR THE DEAN TO BE RESPONSIBLE FOR.

AND CLUSTERS WILL MOST DEFINITELY CROSS CONFERENCES.

CLUSTERS ARE NOT TIED TO CONFERENCES.

CLUSTERS WILL BE CREATED MOST LIKELY IN GEOGRAPHIC AREAS.

FOR INSTANCE, PRESENTLY THE GULF COAST CONFERENCE WOULD MOST LIKELY CONTINUE TO BE A CLUSTER.

IT WILL CROSS OVER THE ALABAMA AND THE MISSISSIPPI CONFERENCES, IF WE ADOPT THIS.

THE DEAN WILL HAVE TO APPOINT MORE -- THE BISHOP WILL HAVE TO APPOINT MORE DEANS, OBVIOUSLY.

AND THEY WILL BE PASTORS TO THE PASTORS, AND ALSO WILL PROVIDE COMMUNICATION BETWEEN THE BISHOP AND THOSE PASTORS.

CONTINUING WITH THE PROPOSED SOLUTION, THE SYNOD CONSTITUTION THEN MUST CHANGE.

I'D LIKE TO THANK MR. ARNE FOR HIS HARD WORK ON THAT.

HE REWROTE OUR CONSTITUTION AND WE CRITIQUED IT, AND HE REWROTE IT AND WE CRITIQUED IT.

HE'S DONE A GREAT DEAL OF WORK.

IT TAKES A VERY CLOSE, KEEN EYE TO DO WHAT HE'S DONE, AND I DON'T THINK ANYBODY ELSE COULD HAVE DONE ANY BETTER JOB THAN HE HAS, SO I WANT TO THANK HIM FOR THAT.

IN THIS NEW CONSTITUTION, OUR COUNCIL WILL BE REDUCED IN SIZE, BECAUSE WE'RE GOING FROM 14 CONFERENCES TO ONLY 9.

THEREFORE, WE'LL LOSE 5 MEMBERS OFF OF THE SYNOD COUNCIL.

THAT IS BEING TAKEN CARE OF IN THE NEW CONSTITUTION SECTION S10.07.11.

THIS PROVIDES A SMALLER COUNCIL, WHICH WILL SAVE SOME MONEY, AS LESS PEOPLE HAVE TO TRAVEL, AND LESS PEOPLE HAVE TO BE FED AND LESS PEOPLE HAVE TO BE KEPT IN HOTELS AND MOTELS.

IT ALSO PERHAPS WILL MAKE FOR A MORE STREAMLINED COUNCIL.

THE NEW CONSTITUTION ALSO PROPOSES A TWO-YEAR TURNOVER TO ACCOMPLISH THIS NEW SIZE.

WE DON'T WANT TO JUST HAVE PEOPLE JUST TAKEN OFF OF THE COUNCIL AND START ALL OVER.

THERE NEEDS TO BE A GOOD TRANSITION PERIOD THAT OCCURS SO THAT THERE'S CONTINUITY AND SECTION S10.07.12-A COVERS THIS.

IT PROVIDES FOR A TWO-YEAR TURNOVER OF THE EXISTING COUNCIL

MEMBERS TO THE NEW COUNCIL MEMBERS.

IT'S VERY CLEAR -- IF YOU LOOK AT THAT, IT'S A VERY CLEAR -- NICE, CLEAR TABLE THERE THAT SHOWS HOW THAT WILL BE DONE.

THE CONSTITUTIONALLY MANDATED COMMITTEES, THE COMMITTEES THAT ARE MANDATED BY THE ELCA CONSTITUTION, WILL BE MAINTAINED OBVIOUSLY.

THE CONSTITUTION HAS BEEN CLEANED UP.

MANY FORMATTING ERRORS HAVE BEEN TAKEN CARE OF.

RENUMBERING HAS OCCURRED TO MAKE IT MORE CLEAR, TO PUT THINGS WHERE THEY REALLY OUGHT TO BE, AND REARRANGE FOR THE SAKE OF CLARITY AND OF ORDER, AS I SAID.

THERE WILL BE SIDE EFFECTS, PASTOR, BUT I LIKE THINGS THE WAY THEY ARE.

THE 7 DEADLY WORDS: PASTOR, WE AIN'T NEVER DONE IT THAT WAY BEFORE.

TAKE A DEEP BREATH.

MY BROTHERS AND SISTERS IN CHRIST, THE WORLD IS CHANGING AT AN EVER-INCREASING RATE.

I USED TO BE AN ELECTRICAL ENGINEER.

WHEN I LEFT ENGINEERING IN 1995, ABOUT A MONTH BEFORE I WENT TO SEMINARY, I HAD A BRAND NEW COMPUTER ON MY DESK.

IT WAS A 75 MEGAHERTZ PENTIUM 1 WITH 32 MEGABYTES OF RAM

RUNNING WINDOWS 95.

IT SCREAMED!

TIM "THE TOOLMAN" TAYLOR'S GRUNT IS THE ONLY WAY TO PUT IT.

TODAY, ON MY DESK AT HOME, I HAVE A CORE 2 DUO COMPUTER,

RUNNING AT 3.2 GIGAHERTZ WITH 3 GIGABYTES OF RAM AND A

250-GIGABYTE HARD DRIVE.

AND, BOYS AND GIRLS, IT SCREAMS!

THE WORLD IS CHANGING, AND IT'S CHANGING AT AN

EVER-INCREASING PACE, AND THE SOUTHEASTERN SYNOD IS

GROWING FASTER THAN ANY OTHER AREA OF THE COUNTRY.

YOU HEARD THE BISHOP TALK ABOUT THE AFRICAN AMERICAN

POPULATION THAT HAS RELOCATED BACK TO THEIR HOME HERE IN THE

SOUTHEAST.

THE SYNOD NEEDS TO BE ABLE TO RESPOND TO THE CHANGES AS

THEY OCCUR, AND NOT REACT, BUT BE PROACTIVE.

I THINK THAT'S WHAT PASTOR BUBA WAS TRYING TO TELL US TODAY.

WE ARE, WE ARE, THE MYSTICAL BODY OF CHRIST.

I WILL QUOTE SOMETHING FROM ST. PAUL'S LETTER TO THE ROMANS,

THE 12th CHAPTER.

HE SAYS, "WE ARE IN ONE BODY.

WE HAVE MANY MEMBERS AND ALL THE MEMBERS DO NOT HAVE THE

SAME FUNCTION, SO WE THOUGH MANY ARE ONE BODY IN CHRIST, AND

INDIVIDUALLY, MEMBERS ONE OF ANOTHER, HAVING GIFTS THAT DIFFER ACCORDING TO THE GRACE GIVEN TO US, LET US USE THEM." WHAT THAT SAYS TO ME IS THAT WE NEED TO LOOK BEYOND OUR CONGREGATIONS.

WE HAVE, I THINK, BECAUSE WE LIVE IN THE SOUTHEAST, AND WE TEND TO BE NOT WELL KNOWN, ESPECIALLY WHERE I'M FROM IN MONTGOMERY, ALABAMA.

WE TEND TO TAKE ON, I THINK, A VERY PAROCHIAL ATTITUDE.

WE TEND TO LOOK WITHIN OURSELVES AND LOOK AT OURSELVES AS BEING NOTHING MORE THAN WHO WE ARE IN THAT CONGREGATION.

AND ST. PAUL SAYS "NO" TO THAT.

HE SAYS: YES, WE'RE INDIVIDUALLY MEMBERS, ONE OF ANOTHER, WHICH MEANS, MY BROTHERS AND SISTERS, THAT WE'RE MUCH BIGGER.

WE NEED TO BEGIN TO LOOK BEYOND OUR CONGREGATIONS, AND TO UNDERSTAND OURSELVES AS A CHURCH THAT IS CONNECTED, CONGREGATIONS CONNECTED TOGETHER TO DO THE MINISTRY THAT CHRIST HAS SENT US INTO THE WORLD TO DO.

OUR PURPOSE, AS YOU HAVE HEARD OVER AND OVER AND OVER, TO GO -- IS TO GO INTO THE WORLD.

I LIKE 1 PETER'S VERSION OF IT, THE SECOND CHAPTER.

HE SAYS, "BUT YOU'RE A CHOSEN RACE, A ROYAL PRIESTHOOD, A HOLY

NATION, GOD'S OWN PEOPLE, THAT YOU MAY DECLARE THE WONDERFUL DEEDS OF HIM WHO CALLED YOU OUT OF DARKNESS INTO HIS MARVELOUS LIGHT.

ONCE YOU WERE NO PEOPLE, BUT NOW YOU ARE, GOD'S PEOPLE.

ONCE YOU HAD NOT RECEIVED MERCY, BUT NOW YOU HAVE RECEIVED MERCY."

AND THAT IS THE MESSAGE THAT WE HAVE TO TELL THE WORLD, IS THE MESSAGE OF GOD'S LOVE AND GOD'S MERCY.

AND PASTOR BUBA SAID THE ONLY THING THAT IS VERY TRUE AND THE MOST IMPORTANT THING THAT IS TRUE: WE HAVE TO TELL THE WORLD IS THAT GOD LOVES THE WORLD WITHOUT ANY OTHER CONDITIONS. THAT IS THE TRUTH.

WE NEED TO BE ABLE TO DO THAT.

IN MY CLOSING, YOU RECENTLY HEARD ON ONE OF THE SUNDAYS NOT TOO LONG AGO JOHN CHAPTER 17, JESUS SAID THAT THEY MAY BE ONE, AS WE ARE ONE, AS HE PRAYED.

WE NEED A STRONGER SENSE OF UNITY IN THIS SYNOD.

IT'S A DIFFICULT THING TO DO BECAUSE OF OUR GEOGRAPHY.

WE'RE NOT A CONGREGATIONALIST CHURCH, AS WE OFTEN FALL BACK INTO THE MENTALITY OF THAT, I BELIEVE, SOMETIMES.

WHAT WE HOPE IS THAT THIS NEW STRUCTURE IS INTENDED TO HELP THE SOUTHEASTERN SYNOD TO LEARN TO TRULY WALK TOGETHER.

IT WILL REQUIRE COMMITMENT, AND IT WILL REQUIRE INTENTIONALITY.  
IT'S NOT SOMETHING THAT WILL HAPPEN BY ACCIDENT.

SO WHAT WE HAVE PLACED BEFORE YOU, AND WHAT WE'RE  
PROPOSING, WHAT WE HOPE THAT WILL DO, IS TO HELP FOSTER THAT  
INTENTIONALITY AND THAT COMMITMENT.

MAY GOD BLESS US ALL.

>> THANK YOU, PASTOR.

BROTHERS AND SISTERS, THE MICROPHONES ARE OPEN.

I WOULD ASK THAT YOU COME AND LET US HEAR WHAT YOU HAVE TO  
SAY, AND I WILL ASK: PASTOR CHRISTENSEN, COULD YOU PLEASE LET  
ME KNOW WHEN WE'RE 10 MINUTES OF THE HOUR, PLEASE.

I SEE TWO PEOPLE, THREE PEOPLE AT THE MICS.

LET'S GO WITH MICROPHONE NUMBER 2.

>> PASTOR MICHAEL HUNTLEY, HOLY TRINITY LUTHERAN CHURCH,  
DAPHNE, ALABAMA, IN THE GULF COAST CONFERENCE, ALSO AN  
ELECTRICAL ENGINEER IN RECOVERY.

[ LAUGHTER ]

AND AS SUCH, I HAVE A STRUCTURE TYPE OF QUESTION.

HOW DO THE CLUSTERS GET DEFINED?

WHO DEFINES THEM?

THAT'S HIS QUESTION, TOO.

>> THAT HAS NOT BEEN DETERMINED.

ULTIMATELY, THE SYNOD COUNCIL WILL MAKE THAT DECISION, BUT THEY'RE GOING TO ASK FOR SOME INPUT.

MOST LIKELY WHAT WILL HAPPEN IS THAT WHAT PRESENTLY A DEAN IS RESPONSIBLE FOR, FOR INSTANCE, THE CONFERENCE -- PASTORS I'M RESPONSIBLE FOR WILL MOST LIKELY REMAIN AS A CLUSTER FOR ME. THE GULF COAST WILL MOST LIKELY REMAIN.

WHERE IT WILL BE A CHANGE WILL BE IN THE METRO AREA.

WHERE THERE'S SO MANY CONGREGATIONS IN A CONFERENCE, THERE NEED TO BE A BREAKING UP OF THOSE.

AND THEY WILL ASK FOR INPUT FROM THOSE -- FROM THOSE AREAS AS TO WHAT THEY MIGHT WANT TO SEE AS A CLUSTER.

SO THERE WILL BE INPUT FROM THE PASTORS, THERE WILL BE INPUT FROM THE DEANS AND THAT SORT OF THING, AND THE SYNOD COUNCIL WILL ULTIMATELY MAKE -- PROBABLY, USE THE WORD HERE, MAYBE I'M RIGHT OR WRONG, RATIFY WHAT THE FOLKS, THE PASTORS, COME UP WITH.

>> CAN I ASK SOME FOLLOWUP QUESTIONS?

>> YES, PLEASE GO AHEAD.

>> LET'S SAY, SAY WE'RE IN THE GULF COAST CONFERENCE.

SO WE SAY: WAIT A MINUTE, THERE'S THIS OTHER CONGREGATION, THIS OTHER CLUSTER, THAT FUNCTIONALLY, AS OPPOSED TO GEOGRAPHICALLY, WE FEEL MORE CONNECTED TO.

COULD THAT BE CHANGED THEN?

>> CLUSTERS ARE NOT TIED TO CONFERENCES.

THEY DON'T HAVE TO BE GEOGRAPHIC.

IT MAY BE SOMETHING THAT EXTENDS FARTHER.

BUT ONE OF THE ISSUES YOU HAVE TO KEEP IN MIND IS THE DEAN NEEDS TO BE ABLE TO GET TO THESE CONGREGATIONS SO HE OR SHE CAN PROVIDE PASTORAL CARE TO THE PASTORS, AND ALSO SO THAT THE PASTORS CAN MEET ON A REGULAR BASIS.

YOU NEED TO KEEP THAT IN MIND.

>> MICROPHONE 3, PLEASE.

THE REASON I'M GOING TO GO ON, YOU CAN COME BACK TO THE MIC AS OFTEN AS YOU LIKE, AS LONG AS YOU DON'T SPEAK MORE THAN ONE MINUTE, SO IF YOU HAVE ANOTHER QUESTION, PLEASE COME BACK.

MICROPHONE NUMBER 3, PLEASE.

>> MY NAME IS CHAPLAIN ANDREW KREY.

I SERVE WITH THE MARITIME BETHEL AT SAVANNAH.

AND AS A SYNOD-AUTHORIZED COMMUNITY, I'M PRESENTLY A MEMBER OF CONFERENCE 10, BUT IN THE NEW STRUCTURING, I DON'T SEE SYNOD-AUTHORIZED WORSHIPING COMMUNITIES LISTED AT ALL.

WHAT IS THEIR STATUS IN THE NEW STRUCTURE, PROPOSED

STRUCTURE?

>> I'LL ASK MR. ARNE TO ANSWER THAT QUESTION FOR US.

>> THE SIMPLE ANSWER IS, WE DIDN'T TAKE ANY OF THOSE THINGS OUT.

SO TELL ME THE STRUCTURE OF IT, THE TYPE OF THING AGAIN.

>> SYNOD-AUTHORIZED WORSHIPPING COMMUNITY, BETTER KNOWN AS SWAC.

>> MICROPHONE 3, I THINK THE ANSWER TO THAT IS WE MISSED YOU.

I THINK THERE'S ONE OF THE AUTHORIZED WORSHIPPING COMMITTEES -- COMMUNITIES ALREADY IN ONE OF THE CONFERENCES. I DID NOT SEE YOU.

I FORGOT TO ASK THAT QUESTION.

I THINK WE JUST MISSED YOU.

>> DON'T FORGET US!

>> YOU WON'T BE FORGOTTEN.

>> I DID NOT FORGET YOU, SINCE I WORKED WITH YOU.

THANK YOU.

YES, MICROPHONE NUMBER 2.

>> PASTOR JILL HENNING, TRINITY LUTHERAN CHURCH, LILBURN, GEORGIA, CONFERENCE 11, A MEMBER OF THE TASK FORCE.

IN TERMS OF THE QUESTION ABOUT THE TWO DIFFERENT CLUSTERS COMING TOGETHER, THAT WOULD BE A PERFECT EXAMPLE HOW WE'D FORM A COALITION.

THE CLUSTERS WOULD ALLOW TO HAVE THE PASTORAL CARE, BUT IN TERMS OF SHARED MINISTRIES, THEN THOSE TWO CLUSTERS COULD COME TOGETHER, FORM A COALITION, AND WORK TOGETHER TO DO MINISTRY.

>> THANK YOU.

MICROPHONE 2.

>> PASTOR TERRI STAGNER-COLLIER, CHRISTUS VICTOR LUTHERAN CHURCH, OCEAN SPRINGS.

I WAS CURIOUS AS TO WHY ALABAMA AND MISSISSIPPI WERE TREATED VERTICALLY NORTH TO SOUTH AS A CONFERENCE, RATHER THAN CONNECTING THE TWO AND DOING A DIVIDING LINE IN THE MIDDLE AND DOING IT MORE GEOGRAPHICAL, AS THE FAR AS SOUTHERN ALABAMA AND SOUTHERN MISSISSIPPI, AND NORTHERN ALABAMA AND NORTHERN MISSISSIPPI.

>> ONE REASON I CAN THINK OF OFF THE TOP OF MY HEAD IS BECAUSE IT ALLOWS YOU, AS A CONFERENCE, TO SPEAK TO YOUR STATE'S ISSUES.

THE ISSUES THAT OCCUR IN ALABAMA AREN'T NECESSARILY THE ISSUES THAT ARE OCCURRING IN MISSISSIPPI ON A GOVERNMENTAL LEVEL.

SO WE WANTED TO -- WANTED THE CONFERENCES TO BE ABLE TO SPEAK TO THOSE ISSUES AS A CHURCH IN ALABAMA, OR AS A CHURCH

IN MISSISSIPPI.

>> OKAY.

ADDRESSING THAT 5 OF THE CONGREGATIONS THAT SOUTHERN MISSISSIPPI'S CONNECTED WITH ARE IN TENNESSEE.

>> YES, WE DID THAT FOR A GEOGRAPHIC REASONS.

BUT WE ALSO -- WE DID GET FEEDBACK FROM THOSE FOLKS, AND SOME OF THEM, I THINK ALL OF THEM, ARE INTERESTED ACTUALLY IN BEING TIED WITH THE CENTRAL TENNESSEE CONFERENCE.

BUT WHAT THAT'S GOING TO DO, THEN, IS IT WILL MAKE MISSISSIPPI A SMALL CONFERENCE AGAIN IN NUMBER OF CONGREGATIONS.

>> SO TOMORROW WOULD BE AN APPROPRIATE TIME TO SUGGEST A TRADE?

>> YES.

>> YES, IT WOULD BE TOMORROW.

>> IF I CAN MAKE A COUPLE OF COMMENTS.

FIRST OF ALL, THE -- UNDER THE CURRENT CONSTITUTION, THE SYNOD COUNCIL HAS THE ABILITY TO TAKE CERTAIN CONGREGATIONS THAT ARE IN CERTAIN CONFERENCES AND MOVE THEM TO OTHERS.

AND AS A MATTER OF FACT, THERE'S SOME EXAMPLES IN THE CURRENT CONSTITUTION -- AND BY THAT, I MEAN THE CONTINUING RESOLUTIONS -- WHERE THE SYNOD COUNCIL HAS DONE JUST THAT.

THE FLEXIBILITY OF THE SYNOD COUNCIL TO DO THAT IN THIS CONTEXT

IS STILL THERE.

NOW, IF YOU WANTED TO TAKE ALABAMA AND MISSISSIPPI AND YOU WANTED TO GO THIS WAY INSTEAD, THAT WOULD BE A BIG CHANGE. SO WE'D NEED TO TALK ABOUT THAT.

BUT YOU DO HAVE THE ABILITY TO GO FROM ONE TO THE OTHER, IF THAT'S SOMETHING THAT MAKES SENSE IN THE CONTEXT.

THE OTHER THING IS, YOU FOLKS CAN ASK QUESTIONS THAT TAKE LONGER TO ANSWER THAN THE ONE MINUTE.

BUT THERE IS A REFERENCE IN THE OLD CONSTITUTION TO SYNODICALLY AUTHORIZED WORSHIPPING COMMUNITIES.

THERE'S A SINGLE REFERENCE IN THE OLD CONSTITUTION.

IT IS AT CONTINUING RESOLUTION 7.26.A.01.

THERE CONTINUES TO BE A 7.26.A.01 THAT SAYS EXACTLY THE SAME THING, AND THERE ARE NO CHANGES, SO BASICALLY EVERYTHING THAT WAS IN THE CONSTITUTION, BYLAWS AND CONTINUING RESOLUTIONS RELATING TO SYNODICALLY AUTHORIZED WORSHIPPING COMMUNITIES IS STILL THERE UNCHANGED.

>> MICROPHONE 2, PLEASE.

>> I'M 2.

I'M PASTOR LARRY BARKSDALE, WITH ST. MATTHEW LUTHERAN CHURCH IN COLUMBUS, GEORGIA.

I SEE ONE POTENTIAL ISSUE THAT I WOULD LIKE TO ADDRESS.

THAT IS, THAT SINCE THE CLUSTERS WILL CONTINUE TO OPERATE AS THEY CURRENTLY DO -- THAT'S BASICALLY HOW I'M UNDERSTANDING THINGS AT THIS POINT -- THE DEANS WILL NOT -- YOU'RE SHAKING YOUR HEAD, SO MAYBE YOU CAN CLARIFY THAT FOR ME.

BUT THEN THE DEANS WILL NOT BE RESPONSIBLE FOR THE CONFERENCES AS SUCH, BUT TO THE CLUSTERS.

IT SEEMS TO ME THAT IT MAY BE RATHER DIFFICULT FOR THE ACTUAL CONFERENCES TO BEGIN TO BUILD THAT RELATIONSHIP BECAUSE THE CLUSTERS MAY CONTINUE THEIR RELATIONSHIPS, AS THEY HAVE BEEN IN THE PAST.

THE OTHER -- SO YOU CAN SPEAK TO THAT.

I WOULD APPRECIATE THAT.

BUT THE OTHER THING, TOO, IS -- MAYBE I HAVE MISSED THIS -- BUT WHO IS GOING TO HEAD UP THE CONFERENCES?

>> THE CONFERENCES WILL BE HEADED UP BY A CHAIR.

WE'RE HOPING THE CHAIR WILL BE A LAYPERSON.

THE CONFERENCES THAT ARE NOT OPERATING GENERALLY DON'T HAVE A CHAIR.

AND IF ANYTHING HAPPENS WITHIN, THE DEAN HAS ENDED UP BEING THE PERSON WHO INSTIGATES THAT.

THE DEAN'S JOB TODAY STILL IS NOTHING MORE THAN PASTOR TO THE PASTORS AND COMMUNICATION TO THE PASTORS FROM THE BISHOP.

IF A DEAN TAKES ON THAT TASK WITHIN THE CONFERENCE, THE DEAN DOES IT AS HIS OR HER OWN DECISION.

THE CONSTITUTION DOES NOT SAY THAT THE DEAN IS THE CHAIR OF THE CONFERENCES TODAY.

IT WON'T SAY EITHER.

SO BY DECOUPLING THE DEAN FROM THE CONFERENCE, IT WILL HOPEFULLY FORCE THE CONFERENCE TO ELECT A CHAIR AND A VICE CHAIR, SO THAT THE DEAN CAN'T TAKE THAT UP AND MAKE IT EASIER ON THE CONFERENCE TO NOT DO WHAT THEY OUGHT TO BE DOING.

>> WE'LL GO TO MICROPHONE 4.

THEN WE'LL COME BACK TO 1 AND 3.

MICROPHONE 4, PLEASE.

>> THANK YOU.

MY NAME IS TOM QUICKEL, AND I'M THE PASTOR AT FAITH LUTHERAN CHURCH IN BRISTOL, TENNESSEE, CONFERENCE NUMBER 1.

I HAVE A SERIES OF QUESTIONS RELATING TO THE CONFERENCE.

WHAT DO YOU ENVISION THE ROLE, OR THE FUNCTION, OF THE CONFERENCE TO BE?

DO WE NEED A CONFERENCE?

IS THAT CREATING ANOTHER LEVEL OF BUREAUCRACY?

WHAT IS IT THAT THE CONFERENCE CAN ACCOMPLISH THAT THE CLUSTERS WOULDN'T ACCOMPLISH?

AND IF THE GOAL IS GREATER PARTICIPATION, THEN I THINK THE MOVEMENT TOWARD SMALLER UNITS WOULD ACCOMPLISH -- THE MOVEMENT TOWARD THE LARGER UNIT WOULD SEEM TO DISCOURAGE PARTICIPATION.

I'VE GOT A LOT OF QUESTIONS.

>> PRESENTLY, THE CHURCH, THE SYNOD, THE LOWEST LEVEL OF GOVERNANCE IS ON THE CONFERENCE LEVEL.

PRESENTLY, THE CONFERENCES ARE THE ENTITIES THAT SEND REPRESENTATIVES AND POPULATE THE COUNCIL WITH THE MOST FOLKS.

THE CONFERENCE IS SUPPOSED TO BE THE PRIMARY SOURCE OF RESOLUTIONS TO THE SYNOD ASSEMBLY.

THERE ARE THREE PEOPLE OR THREE SOURCES THAT CAN BE -- THAT ARE AVAILABLE, BUT THE CONFERENCES SHOULD BE THE PRIMARY SOURCE.

MAKING THE CONFERENCES LARGER ALSO PROVIDES A BETTER CHANCE OF FINANCIAL RESOURCES THAT MAY BE NECESSARY.

ONE OF THE THINGS THAT IS HAPPENING IN THE ELCA IS DECENTRALIZATION.

AND ONE OF THE DECENTRALIZATION MOVEMENTS IS TO CHANGE WHERE NEW STARTS WILL BE FUNDED, AND THAT'S GOING TO BE WITHIN THE SYNODS, AND AT THE SYNOD IT WILL BE AT THE

CONFERENCE LEVEL.

THE CONFERENCES CONTINUE TO BE SMALL SUCH AS A 4-PARISH CONFERENCE.

IT WILL BE VERY DIFFICULT FOR THEM TO BE ABLE TO AFFORD THAT FINANCIALLY.

SO THE POINT IS TO MAKE THE CONFERENCES LARGER SO WE ENGENDER -- HOPEFULLY, IF YOU HAVE TO TRAVEL A WAYS, YOU'LL SPEND MORE TIME CREATING A GOOD AGENDA AND PROGRAMMATIC AGENDA FOR A CONFERENCE MEETING, IS OUR INTENTION, AND YOU'LL BE ABLE TO ALSO HAVE MORE FINANCIAL RESOURCES FOR THE THINGS SUCH AS STARTING NEW STARTS.

AND IT WILL, HOPEFULLY, IF THEY ARE MORE ACTIVE, MAKE IT EASIER FOR THE COMMITTEES THAT ARE NOT BEING STAFFED TODAY TO HAVE THE RESOURCES FROM THE CONFERENCES TO STAFF THEM.

AND SO ALL OF THESE THINGS PLAY TOGETHER, AND THAT'S OUR HOPE FOR THIS.

>> ACTUALLY, IF I CAN MAKE A COUPLE OF COMMENTS HERE.

IF YOU'RE LOOKING FOR A DESCRIPTION AS TO WHAT THE CONFERENCE IS INTENDED TO DO, IT IS IN 12.01.13.A.09.

THE BASIC CONCEPT BEHIND A CONFERENCE NOW IS TO PROVIDE INTERCONGREGATIONAL WORSHIP, MINISTRY AND EDUCATION.

IT DOES NOT HAVE THE MINISTRY TO ROSTERED LEADERS ROLE.

THAT GOES TO THE CLUSTERS.

ONE OF THE THINGS THAT ONE OF MY FORMER LAW PARTNERS USED TO SAY IS: LET'S MAKE SOME NEW MISTAKES.

AND THE BASIC IDEA IS, IF THE CONFERENCES NOW, THE VAST NUMBER OF CONFERENCES, HAVE NO INTERCONGREGATIONAL WORSHIP, MINISTRY, OR EDUCATION, THEN THE WORST THING YOU CAN GET FROM CHANGING IS WHAT YOU CURRENTLY HAVE.

AND SO YOU CAN'T GUARANTEE THAT THIS WILL WORK, BUT YOU CAN PRETTY MUCH GUARANTEE THAT WHAT YOU HAVE IS NOT WORKING. SO IF THIS DOESN'T WORK, THEN MAYBE WE SHOULD TRY SOMETHING ELSE.

BUT AGAIN, THE HOPE IS THAT BY GOING FROM AN AVERAGE OF ROUGHLY 12 CONGREGATIONS PER CONFERENCE, WHERE THE SMALLEST CONFERENCE CURRENTLY HAS 4, AND THE LARGEST CONFERENCE CURRENTLY HAS 26, THAT BY GOING TO WHERE THE SMALLEST CONFERENCE HAS I THINK 13 NOW WILL HOPEFULLY MAKE IT -- AND THE AVERAGE GOES UP BY ROUGHLY 50% FROM 12 TO 19. HOPEFULLY, BY HAVING ADDITIONAL RESOURCES, MAYBE THE CONFERENCES CAN PERFORM THE FUNCTION THAT THEY'RE INTENDED TO.

>> MICROPHONE 1, PLEASE.

>> OOH.

MY NAME'S LEWIS GROCE.

I'M THE PASTOR AT TRINITY CHURCH, TULLAHOMA CONFERENCE 3,  
SOON TO BE CONFERENCE 8.

WE'D JUST LIKE TO SAY WE THINK YOU DID A JIM DANDY JOB WITH THIS.  
THE ONLY QUESTION I HAVE IS -- AND I KNOW IT'S A CONSTITUTIONAL  
ISSUE -- THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THE BISHOP HISTORICALLY  
SERVING AS PASTOR TO THE PASTORS AND THAT RESPONSIBILITY  
GOING TO THE DEANS, WHETHER IT'S DEAN OF A CONFERENCE OR  
DEAN OF A CLUSTER.

COULD YOU ADDRESS THAT?

>> THE DEANS HAVE THE PRIMARY LOCAL RESPONSIBILITY FOR  
PASTORAL CARE TO THE PASTORS.

AND WE ARE -- IF SOMETHING OCCURS WITH A PASTOR IN A PARISH, WE  
ARE ALSO IMMEDIATELY SUPPOSED TO LET THE BISHOP KNOW SO  
THAT THE BISHOP CAN ALSO APPLY HIS PASTORAL CARE TO THAT  
PASTOR AS BEST HE CAN.

SO WE ARE TO BE THE BISHOP IN THAT MOMENT, AS PASTOR TO THE  
PASTORS, AS THE DEAN.

THAT IS OUR JOB TODAY.

THAT JOB IS NOT GOING TO CHANGE.

ALSO, AS A COMMUNICATION CONDUIT FROM THE BISHOP TO THE  
PASTORS.

THE BISHOP IS NOT -- IT'S NOT POSSIBLE FOR THE BISHOP TO PROVIDE PASTORAL CARE TO 170 PASTORS IN THE PARISHES, PLUS RETIRED PASTORS.

I DON'T KNOW HOW MANY RETIRED PASTORS WE HAVE IN THIS SYNOD, BUT THERE'S A GREAT NUMBER.

>> MICROPHONE 3, PLEASE.

>> YES, CHAPLAIN KREY, MARITIME BETHEL AT THE PORT OF SAVANNAH.

AGAIN, SYNOD AUTHORIZED WORSHIPING COMMUNITY.

I APPRECIATE THE LEGAL COUNSEL'S REFERENCE TO THE CONSTITUTION.

BUT IT STILL DIDN'T ANSWER THE QUESTION OF WHETHER OR NOT A SYNOD AUTHORIZED WORSHIPING COMMUNITY CAN SEND A DELEGATE TO THE CONFERENCE ASSEMBLIES IN THE NEW STRUCTURE AND ALSO SEND DELEGATES TO THE SYNOD ASSEMBLY.

>> YOU PRESENTLY MAY DO SO, AND THAT IS NOT BEING CHANGED.

>> MICROPHONE 2, PLEASE.

>> PASTOR MICHAEL HUNTLEY, HOLY TRINITY LUTHERAN CHURCH, DAPHNE, ALABAMA, GULF COAST CONFERENCE.

AND BY THE WAY, THE PACE OF CHANGE THAT WE HAVE, I HAVE A 1.5 TERABYTE HARD DRIVE IN MY COMPUTER.

>> YOU'RE WAY AHEAD OF ME.

>> THAT'S KIND OF MY CONCERN.

I ACTUALLY AM THINKING WHY DON'T WE GO FARTHER WITH THIS, INSTEAD OF TYING CONFERENCES TO THESE GEOGRAPHICAL AREAS? AND I UNDERSTAND TRYING TO GET CLUSTERS TO BE SMALLER. IF WE HAVE 10 TO A CLUSTER, 170, WE'RE TALKING 17, 18 CLUSTERS. WHY NOT JUST DEFINE A CONFERENCE AS, SAY, A COUPLE CLUSTERS, AND YOU'VE GOT 9 CONFERENCES THERE.

THEY'RE TOTALLY FLEXIBLE TO SET IT UP HOWEVER IT NEEDS TO BE DONE WITHOUT HAVING TO COME BACK HERE AGAIN IN 10, 15 YEARS TO DO THE SAME THING.

>> THAT'S AN OPTION.

AND PLEASE, IF THAT'S SOMETHING YOU'RE REALLY SERIOUS ABOUT, WHEN WE GET TO THIS POINT IN THE -- WHEN WE COME TO VOTE ON THIS, THAT'S CERTAINLY SOMETHING THAT MAY BE DONE. YOU HAD UNTIL 7:00 TONIGHT TO ACTUALLY MAKE THAT CHANGE.

>> 7:00 IN THE MORNING.

>> YOU HAVE UNTIL 7:00 TOMORROW MORNING, I'M SORRY, TO REMOVE THAT FROM THE EN BLOC PROPOSAL, IF THERE'S SOMETHING IN THERE.

SO IF THERE'S SOMETHING YOU FEEL STRONGLY ABOUT, PLEASE FILL OUT THAT PAPERWORK.

>> I'M ASKING: WHAT IS THE FEASIBILITY OF THAT?

IF IT'S SOMETHING THAT WOULD BE A GOOD IDEA TO DO, I'LL SIGN  
WHAT I GOTTA SIGN.

>> LET ME SUGGEST IT'S NOT FEASIBLE.

HERE'S THE REASON WHY: ONE OF THE THINGS YOU DO NOT WANT TO  
DO IS YOU DO NOT WANT TO HAVE THE SYNOD COUNCIL DECIDE WHO  
IS ON THE SYNOD COUNCIL, AND YOU DON'T WANT TO HAVE THE  
SYNOD COUNCIL DECIDE WHO GETS TO BE MEMBERS OF THE SYNOD  
COUNCIL IN TERMS OF REGION.

THAT'S THE FUNCTION OF THIS BODY, THE SYNOD ASSEMBLY.

THE WAY THE CLUSTERS ARE SET UP IS THAT THEY ARE ESTABLISHED  
BY THE SYNOD COUNCIL, AND SO IF YOU HAVE YOUR FRAME OF  
REFERENCE AS A CLUSTER, YOU, IN EFFECT, HAVE THE SYNOD  
COUNCIL ESTABLISHING WHO BECOMES ELIGIBLE TO VOTE FOR  
MEMBERS OF THE SYNOD COUNCIL.

AND SO THERE HAD TO BE SOME KIND OF REFERENCE THERE THAT  
EXISTS THAT ISN'T CONTROLLED BY THE SYNOD COUNCIL.

SO WE WEREN'T ACTUALLY THINKING THAT FAR OUT OF THE BOX, BUT  
WE'D HAVE TO VERY MUCH DO SOMETHING -- WE COULDN'T JUST FLIP  
CONFERENCE AND CLUSTERS AND MAKE THAT WORK, FOR THAT  
REASON.

DID THAT MAKE SENSE?

I'LL TRY TO EXPLAIN IT AGAIN.

BUT YOU DON'T WANT TO HAVE THE SYNOD COUNCIL DECIDING WHO'S ON THE SYNOD COUNCIL.

>> THANK YOU.

MICROPHONE 4, PLEASE.

>> MARY GOLNITZ, MOUNTAIN OF LIFE LUTHERAN CHURCH IN BLAIRSVILLE, GEORGIA, IN THE NORTH GEORGIA MOUNTAINS.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR WORK.

I HAPPENED TO BE ON THE TASK FORCE IN '93, I THINK, WHEN THIS ALL TOOK PLACE AND THE RESTRUCTURING, AND GOING FROM 6 CONFERENCES TO 14.

THE PASSION THAT WAS DESIRED BACK THEN WAS THE DREAM OF THE ELCA TO HAVE THE GRASSROOTS INVOLVED IN THE MINISTRY OF THE CHURCH AT LARGE, TO HAVE ALL THE BAPTIZED BEING A PART.

AND BEING A MISSION DEVELOPER, THAT IS MY DESIRE, IS THAT WE ENABLE PEOPLE TO BE INVOLVED IN THE MISSION AND MINISTRY OF THE CHURCH.

THAT CERTAINLY IS WHAT THIS ASSEMBLY IS ALL ABOUT.

IF THE STRUCTURE CHANGE WILL ENABLE THAT TO HAPPEN, THEN I SAY: GO FOR IT, WHATEVER WAY THAT CAN BE.

BUT I AM CONCERNED THAT MAYBE THE SAME-OLD-SAME-OLD MIGHT HAPPEN AGAIN, AND THAT'S MY CONCERN.

SO I WILL PRAY THAT WE CAN FOSTER THE MINISTRY OF ALL THE

BAPTIZED IN THIS RESTRUCTURING.

>> THANK YOU.

MICROPHONE 2, PLEASE.

>> KEVIN BRYANT, CHRISTUS VICTOR, OCEAN SPRINGS, MISSISSIPPI.

BEFORE I ASK MY REAL QUESTION, I'VE GOT TO SAY: SOMETHING WAS SAID ABOUT LETTING THE STATE OF MISSISSIPPI REPRESENT -- LETTING THE CONFERENCE REPRESENT THE WHOLE STATE.

MISSISSIPPI IS NOT A UNIFIED POLITICAL ENTITY, AND BELIEVE ME, SOUTH MISSISSIPPI AND NORTH MISSISSIPPI DON'T SHARE THE SAME ATTITUDES AND CONCERNS.

MY REAL CONCERN, WHEN I FIRST SAW THIS REPORT, MY REACTION WAS: I EXIST IN A CONFERENCE THAT IS ALREADY APPROXIMATELY 110 MILES BETWEEN THE EXTREME CONGREGATIONS.

WE'RE PROPOSED TO GO INTO A CONFERENCE THAT WILL HAVE SOME 400 MILES SEPARATING CONGREGATIONS, AND YET WE'RE TOLD THIS WHOLE THING IS TO FOSTER BETTER COOPERATION.

I JUST DON'T UNDERSTAND HOW THE NOTION OF A 400-MILE-LONG CONFERENCE IS GOING TO INCREASE OUR ABILITY TO COOPERATE AND GET TOGETHER.

>> WAS THERE A QUESTION?

DID YOU WANT ME TO ANSWER -- THAT WAS A STATEMENT.

>> ALL RIGHT, MY QUESTION IS: HOW IS HAVING A 400-MILE GEOGRAPHICAL SPREAD GOING TO FOSTER COOPERATION AND MEETING AND SHARING OF MINISTRY AND EDUCATION OR ANYTHING BETWEEN CONGREGATIONS?

>> THE CONFERENCES ARE ONLY REQUIRED TO MEET ONCE PER YEAR, AND THE BALD FACT OF IT IS THAT MOST CONFERENCES WERE ONLY MEETING AT THE CAUCUSES THAT OCCURRED HERE AT 5:00 ON FRIDAY AFTERNOON.

THE ONLY THING THEY DID WAS TO DECIDE WHO THEIR SYNOD COUNCIL REPRESENTATIVE WAS GOING TO BE.

THAT'S WITH CONFERENCES THAT ARE SMALLER RIGHT NOW.

SO WHAT WE'RE LOOKING FOR IS TO MAKE THESE INCLUDE MORE CONFERENCE CONGREGATIONS.

YES, THERE MAY BE MORE GEOGRAPHIC DISTANCE BETWEEN THEM, AND THE CONFERENCE THAT I SERVE RIGHT NOW, IT WOULD TAKE ME THREE HOURS TO DRIVE FROM ONE END OF IT TO THE OTHER.

WE'RE GOING TO DO THE SAME THING WITH ALABAMA.

I'M IN ALABAMA.

WE'RE GOING TO INCLUDE THE ENTIRETY OF THE STATE OF ALABAMA. THE CONFERENCE NEED TO MEET AT LEAST ONCE A YEAR.

IF WE HAVE TO DRIVE A GOOD WAYS, IF IT TAKES SOME PLANNING, THEN PERHAPS THERE WILL BE MORE OF AN INTENTIONAL ATTITUDE

TOWARDS BEING INVOLVED IN THE CONFERENCE MEETINGS, AND THAT'S OUR THOUGHTS AS WE THOUGHT ABOUT MAKING THESE THINGS LARGER.

WE RECOGNIZE THE GEOGRAPHIC PROBLEMS, AND ALABAMA HAS THE SAME POLITICAL PROBLEM AS MISSISSIPPI HAS.

I UNDERSTAND THAT.

BUT THERE ARE SOME STATEWIDE ISSUES THAT YOU CAN SPEAK TO THAT NEED TO BE SPOKEN TO BY OUR CHURCH.

WE NEED TO HAVE A VOICE IN OUR STATES.

THE SOUTHEASTERN SYNOD TO SPEAK AS A WHOLE TO THE STATE OF ALABAMA IS NOT GOING TO GET MUCH ATTENTION.

BUT IF THE ELCA CHURCHES IN ALABAMA SPEAK AS A WHOLE, IT'S LIKELY THAT IT WILL BE HEARD, MORE LIKELY THAT IT WILL BE HEARD THAN IF IT COMES FROM THE SOUTHEASTERN SYNOD.

AND THAT WAS OUR THOUGHTS ON THAT.

I HOPE THAT HELPS.

>> MICROPHONE 4, PLEASE.

>> MONROE HERRING FROM BLOUNTVILLE, TENNESSEE, A LAY MEMBER AT LARGE ON THE SYNOD COUNCIL.

THERE ARE INEQUITIES IN LIFE IN ALL GOVERNMENT STAGES.

FOR EXAMPLE, THE FEDERAL SENATE, THE SMALLEST STATE WITH THE SMALLEST POPULATION HAS THE SAME REPRESENTATION AS THE

LARGEST STATES IN THE SYNOD COUNCIL.

NOW, IT SEEMS LIKE MOST OF THE PROBLEM IS CLUSTERING TO ADDRESS THE DEANS' RESPONSIBILITIES.

RATHER THAN HAVE A DEAN FOR EACH CONFERENCE, HOW ABOUT JUST CLUSTERING FOR THE DEANS?

>> I'M NOT SURE I UNDERSTOOD.

THE CLUSTERS WILL BE FOR THE DEANS.

THE DEANS WILL SERVE A CLUSTER, AND NOT A CONFERENCE.

>> IF THE CHANGE IS NOT MADE, FOR EXAMPLE, HOLD 14 CONFERENCES AS PER, RATHER THAN HAVE A DEAN THAT WOULD HAVE 26 PASTORS TO LOOK AFTER, HAVE MORE DEANS TO LOOK AFTER LESS NUMBERS.

>> I AGREE WITH THAT.

AND THAT WOULD BE SOMETHING IF WE DON'T PASS THIS THAT WE MOST DEFINITELY WOULD NEED TO DO, I BELIEVE.

BUT THAT'S UP TO THE BISHOP TO MAKE THAT DECISION, AND THE SYNOD COUNCIL.

>> MICROPHONE 3, PLEASE.

>> PETER SAMUELSON, PASTOR EMMANUEL LUTHERAN CHURCH, CONFERENCE 12.

IT SEEMS TO ME THE CONFERENCES EXIST FOR KIND OF TWO PURPOSES.

ONE IS TO RUN THE SYNOD, AND THE OTHER IS TO COOPERATE IN MINISTRY.

AND ONE OF THE GENIUSES, I THINK, OF THE PLAN IS, IT ALLOWS AN EFFICIENT WAY FOR LAY REPRESENTATION TO RUN OUR SYNOD, IN OTHER WORDS, FOR US TO ELECT REPRESENTATIVES FROM ALL THE REGIONS OF THE SYNOD ON THE SYNOD COUNCIL.

BUT THEN ALSO, THROUGH THE CLUSTER SYSTEM, ALLOWS US SOME FLEXIBILITY TO COOPERATE, AND THEN, AS YOU SAID, POOL THE RESOURCES.

SO I JUST WANT TO MAYBE MAKE THAT DISTINCTION AND HELP GET YOUR RESPONSE TO THAT, BECAUSE WE DO HAVE THAT NEED TO RUN OUR SYNOD THROUGH REPRESENTATION, AND WE NEED THE CONFERENCES TO ELECT REPRESENTATIVES.

AND YET WE ALSO HAVE THIS NEED TO COOPERATE IN MINISTRY, AND SO YOU HAVE THE CONFERENCES WHERE YOU CAN COOPERATE IN MINISTRY, BUT THEN YOU ALSO HAVE THE CLUSTERS THAT DON'T NEED TO ELECT REPRESENTATIVES ANYWHERE.

IT CAN JUST FOCUS ON COOPERATION.

>> RIGHT.

WHERE MOST OF THE COOPERATION IS GOING TO OCCUR IS IN THE CLUSTERS, AS IT ALREADY DOES.

THOSE CLUSTERS LIKELY WILL BE EXACTLY WHAT THE CONFERENCES

ARE, IN SOME WAYS -- NOT ALL CASES -- AS THEY EXIST TODAY.  
SO THOSE SORTS OF MINISTRIES THAT ARE GOING ON SUCH AS  
CONFIRMATION.

THAT'S THE MOST COMMON ONE THAT OCCURS, WILL CONTINUE.  
BUT WE'RE ALSO ADDING COALITIONS, AS PASTOR HENNING SAID  
EARLIER, AND COALITIONS ARE SOMETHING THAT CAN CROSS STATE  
BOUNDARIES, CROSS CONFERENCE BOUNDARIES.

IT'S A GROUPING OF CONGREGATIONS THAT HAVE A COMMON MIND  
FOR MINISTRY, A COMMON GOAL FOR MINISTRY, THAT MAY COME  
TOGETHER, AS WELL, AND WORK TOGETHER IN MINISTRY.

>> MICROPHONE 2, PLEASE.

>> I'M MEREDITH HENDRICKS.

I'M A MEMBER OF ST. JOHN'S IN ATLANTA, AND I'M ALSO AN AT-LARGE  
MEMBER OF THE SYNOD COUNCIL.

MY CONCERN WITH DECREASING THE SIZE OF OUR CONFERENCES IS  
THAT WE'RE GOING TO, IN FACT, DECREASE OUR REPRESENTATION.  
WE HAVE 14 CONFERENCES RIGHT NOW, AND EACH CONFERENCE IS  
REPRESENTED ON THAT COUNCIL.

WE TAKE IT DOWN TO 9, AND I FEEL LIKE WE'RE TAKING -- WE'RE GOING  
TO BE TAKING SOME OF THE LEADERSHIP OUT OF THE HANDS OF OUR  
PEOPLE, AND I JUST WANTED TO MAKE THAT OBSERVATION.

>> BROTHERS AND SISTERS, WE HAVE ABOUT 6 MINUTES LEFT.

NOW IS THE TIME TO COME TO THE MICROPHONE, IF YOU HAVE A QUESTION.

MICROPHONE NUMBER 3 PLEASE.

>> JUST ONE REAL QUICK ONE.

I'M MARJORIE KELLER FROM LIVING GRACE HERE IN ATLANTA.

AND I'M WONDERING HOW SOON THIS WOULD HAPPEN, SHOULD WE GET THIS PROPOSAL VOTED ON?

>> MR. ARNE, HOW SOON WOULD THIS HAPPEN IF WE PASS THIS?

>> THE ANSWER IS, THE CHANGE WILL BE IMMEDIATE, BUT YOU WON'T FEEL IT IMMEDIATELY.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN IS THAT THE CLUSTERS WILL GET FORMED AS SOON AS THE SYNOD COUNCIL VOTES AS TO WHAT THE CLUSTERS ARE.

THE CONFERENCES ACTUALLY WILL BE GIVEN AN OPPORTUNITY TO MEET TOGETHER, AND THERE WILL BE NO CONFERENCE ELECTIONS THIS YEAR.

THE CONFERENCE ELECTIONS WILL BE FOR THE FIRST TIME -- WILL BE NEXT YEAR RATHER THAN THIS YEAR, SO THERE WILL BE A TIME OF PHASE THAT OCCURS.

BUT THE REST OF THE CHANGES CAN BE PRETTY MUCH MADE IMMEDIATELY.

AND THERE ACTUALLY ARE A COUPLE OF OTHER THINGS.

ONE IS THAT YOU WILL NOTICE, IF YOU'RE LOOKING AT THE CONSTITUTION, THAT THERE ARE CHANGES TO THE CONSTITUTION AS OPPOSED TO THE BYLAWS, AND THE CONTINUING RESOLUTIONS.

YOU'RE NOT VOTING ON CONSTITUTIONAL CHANGES.

THAT'S JUST FOR YOUR REFERENCE.

THAT'S TO FIX SOME TYPOS.

THE SECOND THING IS THE REASON FOR THE EN BLOC VOTING -- AND THAT IS BY 7:00 TOMORROW MORNING, IF YOU DON'T WANT -- IF YOU HAVE A PARTICULAR SECTION YOU WANT TO ADDRESS SEPARATELY, YOU NEED TO LET US KNOW.

THE REASON FOR THAT IS, FOR EXAMPLE, IF YOU DECIDED YOU REALLY WANTED TO TALK ABOUT HAVING CONFERENCES AND CLUSTERS KIND OF PUT BACK TOGETHER AGAIN, THERE ARE OVER 20 SECTIONS THAT WOULD NEED TO BE REVISED.

AND THAT WILL TAKE PROBABLY MORE THAN THE HOUR AND A HALF OR SO THAT WE HAVE ACTUALLY TO DO THAT.

SO WE NEED TO HAVE A SENSE OF WHAT WE'RE DEALING WITH TO TRY TO BE ABLE TO DEAL WITH THIS WHEN WE ACTUALLY HAVE THE PLENARY SESSION TOMORROW.

AND THEN ONE OTHER THING: WE HAVE A NEW CHURCH, LUTHERAN EPISCOPAL CHURCH OF THE ANNUNCIATION IN WIGGINS, MISSISSIPPI.

THEY'RE NOT ON THE LIST.

BUT THEY WOULD BE IN CONFERENCE 9 UNDER THE NEW PLAN.

>> BRAND NEW CHURCH.

>> THE MICROPHONES SEEM TO BE VERY, VERY QUIET.

WE STILL HAVE ONE OR TWO MINUTES.

NUMBER 4, THANK YOU.

>> I'M ED WOLFE, MISSION PASTOR OF CROSS OF GRACE LUTHERAN CHURCH IN JONESBOROUGH, TENNESSEE.

THAT NAME HAS BEEN LEFT OFF, ALSO, IF YOU COULD PLEASE ADD IT TO CONFERENCE NUMBER 1, THE NUMBER-1 CONFERENCE OF THIS SYNOD.

[ LAUGHTER ]

WHICH WILL, UNFORTUNATELY, BECOME NUMBER 6.

I'M A LITTLE CONFUSED.

THE COMMENT IS BEING MADE THAT IF WE HAVE TO GO FURTHER, WE MIGHT MAKE THE COMMITMENT.

AND YET AT THE SAME TIME, WE'RE SAYING THAT BECAUSE OF THE GEOGRAPHICAL DISTANCE OF THIS SYNOD, PEOPLE DO NOT MAKE A COMMITMENT, AND ARE MORE PAROCHIAL.

I GO TO "CATCH THE SPIRIT" EVERY YEAR, AND I CAN NEVER SEE ANY OF MY COMPATRIOTS FROM CONFERENCE 1, BECAUSE WE'RE SO FAR APART.

I FEEL, AND MAYBE YOU CAN ANSWER THAT QUESTION, THAT BY

CREATING A LARGER CONFERENCE, WE'LL BECOME MORE SEPARATED.

>> ONE OF THE THINGS THAT WE LOOKED AT AND ONE OF THE QUESTIONS WE ASKED WAS: WHAT WAS GOING ON PRIOR TO THE LAST CHANGE?

THERE WERE 6 CONFERENCES.

THEY WERE MUCH, MUCH LARGER.

AND ONE OF THE COMMENTS THAT WE HEARD MORE THAN ONE TIME WAS THAT IN THOSE DAYS, WHEN THE CONFERENCES WERE LARGER, THERE WAS MUCH GREATER PARTICIPATION IN THOSE CONFERENCES.

AND SOME OF THE ANSWERS TO THE QUESTION OF WHY WAS: WELL, THERE WAS MORE COMMITMENT BECAUSE THEY WERE BETTER PLANNED, BECAUSE THEY KNEW FOLKS HAD TO GO SO FAR, AND THEY DIDN'T WANT TO WASTE PEOPLE'S TIME.

SO PEOPLE WOULD COME TO SOMETHING THAT HAD BETTER PLANNING, BETTER PROGRAMMING, AND ALSO THEY'D COMMIT THEMSELVES TO THAT GREATER DISTANCE, IF THAT WAS SO.

SO WE'RE LOOKING BACK AT WHAT WAS WORKING, WHAT WAS WORKING, WITHIN THE EXISTING SYSTEM PRIOR TO THE LAST CHANGE. AND THAT'S WHERE WE GOT -- WHERE THIS THOUGHT PATTERN AROSE.

>> MICROPHONE NUMBER 2, PLEASE.

>> BILL DIAMOND, VALDOSTA, GEORGIA.

JUST A POINT OF CLARIFICATION OR CORRECTION.

I NOTICED THAT IN THE EXHIBIT, YOU HAVE GLORIA DEI LUTHERAN CHURCH PROPOSED TO BE IN CONFERENCE NUMBER 1 BUT IN THE CHANGE IN THE CONSTITUTION ITSELF, IT LISTS THAT CONGREGATION AS BEING IN CONFERENCE NUMBER 2.

>> THANK YOU.

WE WILL TAKE NOTE OF THAT.

>> MICROPHONE NUMBER 1, PLEASE.

>> PHILLIP, EBENEZER CONFERENCE.

I THINK IT'S GREAT FOR THE EBENEZER CONFERENCE TO GO BACK TO BEING CONFERENCE NUMBER 1.

[ LAUGHTER ]

>> WE'LL PASS THE TORCH TO YOU.

>> MICROPHONE NUMBER 4, PLEASE.

>> PASTOR GINNY KREKLING, CELEBRATION OF GRACE MISSION IN CANTON.

I JUST WANT TO MAKE THE COMMENT THAT SOMETIMES -- I AM NOT AGAINST THIS.

IT'S FINE WITH ME IF WE DO THIS.

BUT I WANT TO MAKE THE COMMENT THAT SOMETIMES WE MAKE STRUCTURAL CHANGES BECAUSE WE'RE NOT DOING WHAT WE'RE SUPPOSED TO BE DOING.

AND IT SEEMS TO ME THE ISSUE OF INVOLVEMENT IS THE ISSUE OF

PLANNING AND COMMITMENT AND WORKING TOGETHER.

WHETHER WE HAVE CLUSTERS OR COALITIONS OR CONFERENCES  
DOESN'T REALLY MATTER.

IF I NEED HELP FROM SOMEBODY, I'M GOING TO CALL THEM.

OR IF I WANT TO WORK WITH SOMEBODY, WE'RE GOING TO GET  
TOGETHER AND DO THAT.

WE NEED TO WORK ON THAT PROBABLY AS MUCH AS ANYTHING.

AND I'M NOT AGAINST OR FOR THIS IN PARTICULAR.

I JUST THINK WE BETTER FOCUS ON WHAT OUR MINISTRY IS, AND  
REMEMBER THAT THAT SOMETIMES IS THE ISSUE, AND NOT SOME  
STRUCTURE.

>> THANK YOU.

[ APPLAUSE ]

>> MICROPHONE NUMBER 1, PLEASE.

>> PASTOR TERRI STAGNER-COLLIER, CHRISTUS VICTOR.

JUST A POINT OF CLARIFICATION.

IF WE'RE SUGGESTING MOVING FROM ONE PROPOSED CONFERENCE  
TO A DIFFERENT PROPOSED CONFERENCE, IS THAT A PIECE OF EN  
BLOC THAT NEEDS TO BE REMOVED FROM THE EN BLOC BEFORE  
TOMORROW MORNING, OR IS THAT AN AMENDMENT THAT CAN BE MADE  
SEPARATELY AS WE'RE DISCUSSING THE PROPOSAL?

>> WELL,- AND ONE OF THE QUESTIONS I HAVE, IF YOU'RE LOOKING AT

CHANGING -- LET'S SUPPOSE THE WHOLE THING PASSES AND YOU'RE  
LOOKING AT TAKING A SINGLE CONGREGATION AND MOVING IT FROM  
ONE TO ANOTHER.

IS THAT WHAT YOU'RE TALKING ABOUT?

>> 6 FOR 6, AN EVEN TRADE.

>> SO YOU'RE TALKING ABOUT 2 CONGREGATIONS.

>> NO, 6 CONGREGATIONS FOR 6 CONGREGATIONS.

>> SHE'S TALKING ABOUT THE ALABAMA HORIZONTAL --

>> THE GULF COAST.

>> THEN WE SHOULD DISCUSS THAT SEPARATELY.

>> OKAY, THANK YOU.

>> 3 MINUTES AND COUNTING.

I THINK WE HAVE TIME FOR ONE MORE QUESTION.

CAN WE GET JUST ONE MORE QUESTION?

>> ACTUALLY, I'VE GOT JUST A COUPLE OTHER THINGS, FOR WHATEVER  
IT'S WORTH.

I CAN GUARANTEE THAT THERE IS ABSOLUTELY NOTHING THAT A PIECE  
OF PAPER CAN DO TO INCREASE ONE'S ACTIVITY AND INVOLVEMENT IN  
AN ORGANIZATION, SO JUST FORGET ABOUT THAT.

THAT JUST DOESN'T WORK.

AND SO THE PURPOSE OF THIS -- ACTUALLY, A LOT OF THE BEGINNING  
OF THIS WAS, THE PROBLEM THAT THE SYNOD WAS HAVING RELATED

TO COMMISSIONS IN THAT THE COMMISSIONS WERE KIND OF GETTING IN THE WAY BECAUSE THEY COULDN'T FIGURE OUT WHERE TO PUT THINGS, AND THEN THE COMMISSIONS WEREN'T ACTUALLY ACTIVE. SINCE THEY WEREN'T ACTIVE, THEN WHY WERE YOU PUTTING THEM IN A COMMISSION IN THE FIRST PLACE?

SO THINGS JUST GOT REALLY CONFUSING.

SO THE ORGANIZATION ACTUALLY WAS GETTING IN THE WAY OF THE MINISTRY.

THEN AS WE LOOKED AT CONFERENCES, WE REALIZED THAT THE EDUCATION AND THE INTERCONGREGATIONAL MINISTRY AND THE WORSHIP AND THAT TYPE OF THING ACTUALLY WASN'T HAPPENING AT THE CONFERENCE LEVEL.

SO THE QUESTION WAS: IF IT'S NOT WORKING, WHAT SHOULD WE DO? AND SO WE CAME UP WITH THIS IDEA OF SAYING, THE DEAN THING SEEMS TO BE WORKING PRETTY WELL, SO LET'S KIND OF KEEP THAT THE SAME, OR ROUGHLY THE SAME SIZE, BUT LET'S DO SOMETHING WITH CONFERENCES THAT'S DIFFERENT.

AND AGAIN, NOBODY KNOWS WHETHER IT WILL WORK OR NOT.

WE JUST KNOW THAT WHAT WE HAVE DOESN'T REALLY SEEM TO BE WORKING VERY WELL.

AND SO THE HOPE IS THAT BY INCREASING THE NUMBER, THAT YOU CAN MAKE THE EVENT GET MORE PEOPLE WHO ARE INTERESTED IN

DOING IT AND HAVING A BIGGER EVENT, WHICH THEN BECOMES MORE RELEVANT TO PEOPLE, WHICH THEN RESULTS IN PEOPLE ACTUALLY PARTICIPATING.

>> MICROPHONE 2.

>> PAUL WRIGHT, ST. LUKE LUTHERAN CHURCH IN CORDOVA, TENNESSEE.

JUST SEEMS LIKE, FROM WHAT I'VE GATHERED HERE IN THE LAST FEW MINUTES, IF PARTICIPATION WAS REALLY THE MAIN ISSUE TO GET THE REALIGNMENT, THEN OBVIOUSLY DEANS ARE GETTING OVERWORKED IN SOME ASPECTS, TOO.

BUT IF IT IS ACTUALLY THE PARTICIPATION THAT'S THE ISSUE, THEN HOW WILL THE RESTRUCTURING HELP THAT ASPECT?

WHY DON'T WE LOOK AT INFUSING IDEAS OR TRAINING OUR LAY PEOPLE, OUR PASTORS, ET CETERA, TO ORGANIZE BETTER TO INCREASE AND ENCOURAGE PARTICIPATION?

>> THAT IS THE MAIN FOCUS THAT NEEDS TO BE DEALT WITH, THUS MY COMMENTS OF BEING INTENTIONAL AND BEING COMMITTED.

WHAT MR. ARNE SAID IS TRUE: MAKING A CHANGE FOR THE SAKE OF CHANGE WON'T FIX ANYTHING.

HOWEVER, ONE OF THE THINGS I'VE LEARNED AS A PASTOR IS IN A TIME OF CRISIS IS WHENEVER, YOU HAVE YOUR BEST OPPORTUNITY TO DO SOME OF YOUR BEST MINISTRY.

IN SOME SENSE, YOU MAY SEE THIS AS A SHUFFLING AROUND OF THE DECK CHAIRS ONE MORE TIME.

THAT MAY BE TRUE.

BUT THIS DECK CHAIR SHUFFLING CAUSES A GREAT DEAL OF CONSTERNATION, AND THAT CONSTERNATION IS ENERGY THAT'S RELEASED, AND MAYBE IN THE RELEASING OF THAT ENERGY, WE CAN REFOCUS THAT ENERGY WHERE IT NEEDS TO GO.

IT'S GOING TO BE UP TO THE CONFERENCES TO DO THAT.

>> PASTOR JONES, I HATE TO TELL YOU, BUT THE TIME IS UP.

THE TIME LIMIT FOR THE COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE HAS ARRIVED. THE COMMITTEE WILL NOW RISE, AND WE'LL MOVE BACK INTO OUR REGULAR PLENARY SESSION.

AT THIS TIME, I RELINQUISH THE CHAIR BACK TO BISHOP GORDY.

>> THANK YOU, WES.

BUT DON'T GO ANYWHERE EXCEPT RIGHT TO THAT PODIUM THERE, BECAUSE WE NOW TURN TO YOU FOR ANNOUNCEMENTS, SIR.

>> FOLLOWING THE PLENARY SESSION TONIGHT, THERE WILL BE ,A, FELLOWSHIP RECEPTION IN THE GARDEN COURT, JUST OUTSIDE THE PLENARY HALL, AND IT WILL GO UNTIL 10:00 P.M.

EVERYONE IS INVITED TO JOIN US.

TOMORROW MORNING THOSE NOT GOING TO THE GLOBAL MISSION BREAKFAST, REMEMBER: THERE'S A LIGHT CONTINENTAL BREAKFAST

AVAILABLE FOR ASSEMBLY ATTENDEES IN THE GARDEN COURT, THE AREA RIGHT OUTSIDE WHERE THE EXHIBITS ARE LOCATED, AND THE TIME TO TAKE ADVANTAGE OF THE CONTINENTAL BREAKFAST IS 6:45 TO 8:00 A.M.

A REMINDER: SUBMISSION OF NOTICE TO REMOVE SPECIFIC BYLAW/CONTINUING RESOLUTION CHANGES FROM EN BLOC CONSIDERATION TO SYNOD SECRETARY IS 7:00 A.M. TOMORROW MORNING.

THE FORM IS FOUND IN YOUR ASSEMBLY MATERIALS UNDER TAB-I, EXHIBIT 16.

I'M SORRY, TAB-I, THANK YOU.

THERE'S AN ENVELOPE ON THE DOOR OF THE ASSEMBLY OFFICE, THE WILTON ROOM, JUST OUTSIDE THE HALL HERE ON YOUR LEFT, TO TURN IN YOUR FORMS.

REMEMBER, 7:00 A.M., NOT 7:05, SO IF YOU HAVE CHANGES, YOU NEED TO GET THAT IN.

THE OTHER THING IS YOU'RE INVITED TO A CASUAL CONVERSATION WITH DR. DAVID FREDERICKSON.

WILL MEET TOMORROW FROM 1:30 TO 1:30 P.M. IN THE CHANCELLOR 2 ROOM.

IF YOU'D LIKE TO PRE-ORDER LUNCH FOR THIS, SEE PASTOR MEGAN JONES.

IF YOUR ROSTERED PERSON FROM YOUR CONGREGATION WAS UNABLE TO BE HERE TO RECEIVE HIS OR HER CERTIFICATE AND YOU'D LIKE TO TAKE IT FOR THEM, PLEASE SEE JEANETTE AFTER THIS SESSION.

IT'S TIME FOR OUR FIRST DRAWING.

THOSE WHO FILLED OUT CARDS FOR THE eNEWS OR YOUTH MINISTRY NETWORKS ARE ELIGIBLE.

OH, NO, YOU SAY, I USED MY CARD TO JOT DOWN IMPORTANT POINTS FROM BISHOP GORDY'S SERMON.

TOUGH LUCK.

I'M SORRY, NO, IT'S NOT WRITTEN DOWN.

NOT TO WORRY.

MORE CARDS ARE AVAILABLE, AND WE HAVE 2 MORE DRAWINGS TO COME.

SO ON WITH THE DRAWING.

MOBLEY AND NANCY CHRISTENSEN WILL CONTINUE.

FOR THOSE OF YOU WHO USED YOUR CARDS TO JOT DOWN IMPORTANT THINGS FROM THE BISHOP'S SERMON, GOD WILL BLESS YOU.

YOU DON'T NEED TO WORRY ABOUT THE DRAWING.

[ APPLAUSE ]

>> AND THE WINNER OF OUR FIRST PRIZE IS: BOB GIBELING FROM

REDEEMER ATLANTA.

EXCUSE ME?

AND YOUR PRIZE IS IN THE OFFICE JUST RIGHT OUT THIS DOOR TO YOUR RIGHT.

>> THANK YOU.

ONE FINAL QUICK ANNOUNCEMENT.

PAUL ARNE AND RANDY JONES WILL -- WELL, PAUL AGREED.

RANDY, WOULD YOU PLEASE STAY AROUND HERE FOR JUST A BIT IN CASE THERE ARE SOME MORE QUESTIONS FOR CLARIFICATION ABOUT THE PROPOSAL?

I'LL NOW CALL UPON OUR CHAPLAIN, PASTOR MICHAEL LIPPARD.

>> A READING FROM MATTHEW.

"COME TO ME, ALL YOU WHO ARE WEARY AND ARE CARRYING HEAVY BURDENS, AND I WILL GIVE YOU REST.

TAKE MY YOKE UPON YOU, AND LEARN FROM ME, FOR I AM GENTLE AND HUMBLE IN HEART, AND YOU WILL FIND REST FOR YOUR SOULS.

FOR MY YOKE IS EASY, AND MY BURDEN IS LIGHT."

LET US PRAY.

ETERNAL GOD, BE PRESENT, WE PRAY, WITH THOSE WHO LABOR IN THESE HOURS OF NIGHT, ESPECIALLY THOSE WHO WATCH AND WORK ON BEHALF OF OTHERS.

GRANT THEM DILIGENCE IN THEIR WATCHING, FAITHFULNESS IN THEIR

SERVICE, COURAGE IN DANGER, AND COMPETENCE IN EMERGENCIES.  
HELP THEM TO MEET THE NEEDS OF OTHERS WITH CONFIDENCE AND  
COMPASSION.

SUPPORT US ALL THE DAY LONG OF THIS TROUBLED LIFE, UNTIL THE  
SHADOWS LENGTHEN AND THE EVENING COMES, AND THE BUSY  
WORLD IS HUSHED.

THE FEVER OF LIFE IS OVER, AND OUR WORK IS DONE.

THEN IN YOUR MERCY, GRANT US A SAFE LODGING, AND A HOLY REST,  
AND PEACE AT THE LAST.

THROUGH JESUS CHRIST OUR LORD, AMEN.

>> AMEN.

>> THE ASSEMBLY IS IN RECESS UNTIL TOMORROW MORNING AT 8:00.

[ END OF PLENARY TWO ]

\* \* \* \* \*

Though this is being provided in a finalized format, Communication Access Realtime Translation (CART) is provided in order to facilitate communication accessibility and may not be a totally verbatim record of the proceedings.

\* \* \* \* \*