

Proceedings of the 2004 General Conference of The United Methodist Church

The Committee on Journal

The Committee on Journal hereby certifies as accurate the proceedings as printed in the *Daily Christian Advocate* for Friday April 30, 2004 with the following corrections:

P. 1586, column 2, last paragraph:

Pamela Kutcher is actually Pamela Couture.

Kathleen Grider should be spelled Kathleen Greider.

P. 1586, column 3, first full paragraph, line 9:

Change to “to be elected are to be nominated...”.

Reported by Lin Doyle
Chair, Committee on Journal

(D4, Seat 10)

Tuesday Afternoon, April 27, 2004

(Continued from page 1664)

BISHOP RUEDIGER MINOR: Thank you. I would entertain a speech for the motion, if there is one. For the motion to amend. (pause) No other speech? Then I ask the chair.

JEROME DEL PINO: Bishop, for the sake of brevity, I believe (*unintelligible*) comments are germane to the reason for the committee’s retention of what has been traditional.

BISHOP MINOR: Thank you. Are you ready to vote on the amendment? Please vote now. [*Yes, 295; No, 589; Abstain, 31*]

295, yes; 589, no; 31 abstentions. The amendment is lost. Further amendments? Over there, mic 5.

Proposed Change in Voting Procedure

LONNIE D. BROOKS (Alaska Missionary): Lonnie Brooks, lay, Alaska Missionary Conference. On page 126, Rule 15, Part 2 . . . go ahead.

BISHOP MINOR: Can you say it again, please?

BROOKS: Yes sir. Page 26, Rule—I’m sorry, 126.

BISHOP MINOR: 126?

BROOKS: Yes, sir. Rule 15, Subpart 2. Bishop, I move to amend that rule to strike the language that says “the same number of” and substitute their language “no more”; and then to strike the word later that says “as” and to substitute the word “than,” so that it would read, if it were amended, “It contains votes for no more nominees than there are vacancies to be filled.” And if there’s a second, I’d like to speak to that.

BISHOP MINOR: Is it seconded? It is seconded.

BROOKS: In the jurisdiction where I live, if the assembly has three seats available and 10 candidates, and if I as a voter know one of those candidates extremely well and choose to vote for her for one of those seats, and choose not to vote for anyone else, my ballot does not become invalid, therefore. And I believe that we should follow the same process when we’re voting for multiple candidates for multiple seats. If we choose to vote for fewer than the number of seats that are available, our ballot should not be invalid.

BISHOP MINOR: Thank you. We had a speech for this amendment. Is there a speech against it? Over here, mic 3.

JAMES EHRMAN (East Ohio): James Ehrman, James Ehrman, East Ohio. I would speak, I would speak against this—

BISHOP MINOR: Speak up, please.

EHRMAN: I would speak against this amendment. When the opportunity

is presented to vote for fewer than the total number to be elected, it creates the greater possibility of factionalized voting, so that people with an extreme candidate can essentially enhance the value of their vote by not voting for anyone else. If I’m forced to vote for, for instance, my top three choices, I need to be thinking about how the body will be voting as a whole so that people representative of the entire body are more likely to be elected.

BISHOP MINOR: Thank you. Someone for the motion to amend? Are we ready to vote? Over there, please. Mic 2.

VINCENT WALKUP (Tennessee): Vin Walkup from Tennessee Conference. I have question, Bishop. Is our voting system set so that if we were to approve this motion, it would keep on a single box a person voting for the same person using the scenario of three vacancies as was raised—keep one of us from voting for the same person three times on the same ballot? We need to be sure that our boxes would not allow that to happen if we were to approve this motion.

BISHOP MINOR: I turn to Dr. Del Pino to help us.

JEROME DEL PINO: Bishop, (*unintelligible*), but what we were told when we were crafting this portion of the rules is that the computer system will not tolerate this. And so for that reason, we crafted this rule. I believe that if I’m in error, I will certainly stand corrected, but that’s what my colleagues tell me who considered this and indeed spoke with the developer of the program that we are using for this General Conference.

BISHOP MINOR: Thank you, Dr. Del Pino. Can we see this as your speech? No. It was an answer to the question. I have still . . . can still entertain . . . is this for the motion? For the amendment? Mic No. 4.

BECKY HAASE (California-Pacific): Becky Haase, California-Pacific. Actually, Bishop, I am still wavering, honestly, because I think there are several principles involved here. One is, I don't think a vote, a ballot, should be invalidated if you choose to vote for only one. However, I deplore the fact that people use that as a strategy, to get a person elected by not voting for others. But my last point is that I think it's very unfortunate if we are going to rely on whether or not a computer will take this kind of balloting or not. I think we need to decide whether we want to have this principle in place or not, and if it takes a paper ballot, I think we should vote that way.

BISHOP MINOR: Thank you, Ms. Haase. Is there a speech against? Way back on the right, over here, mic No. 8. *(pause)* Is this against the . . . yes, No. 8.

WILLIAM T. MCCLENDON (South Carolina): Yes, Bishop. Tim McClendon, South Carolina. The maker of the amendment stated—

BISHOP MINOR: Could you please go closer to the microphone.

MCCLENDON: Yes, Tim McClendon, South Carolina. The maker of the amendment stated that the rationale was so that persons could vote for people that they knew more about. In our process of electing members for the Judicial Council, our process of electing persons for the University Senate, those biographical sketches will be printed in the *DCA*. So I think, in speaking against his amendment, I would use the argument that his very rationale is not properly accurate. The biographical sketches will let us know who we're voting for. So I speak against the amendment.

BISHOP MINOR: Thank you. Are there further speeches to the Brooks movement, Brooks amendment? For, would be now. Over there—yes, please, mic 4.

GREGORY D. VAN DUSSEN (Western New York): Greg Van Dussen, Western New York Conference. I think the rationale of the, my immedi-

ate predecessor speaker is exactly correct when it comes to not knowing enough about the candidates, but I think it should never be incumbent upon us to vote for someone that we would choose not to vote for simply to fulfill the requirements of the balloting process. So I think we, I speak in favor of this motion.

BISHOP MINOR: Anybody against, that's the last speech I can entertain. Over there, against the Brooks motion, please. Mic 1. *(unintelligible)* Yes, mic 5, but please, when you are speaking your name, please do this with the full name as it is presented in the list, otherwise the secretary has problems to identify you.

EWING WERLEIN JR. (Texas): Ewing Werlein, Texas delegation. It's—no one, in answer to the brother that just spoke—would be required to vote for anyone they did not want to vote for; they simply do not have to vote on that ballot at all. The point made by the first speaker against this very *(unintelligible)* point, there is a distortion in the *(unintelligible)* process if, for example, they're electing three people, and some of the delegates vote only for one person, and we're supposed to vote for—where there're three slates open, and others are voting for three. What this does, is, by withholding votes on two positions, the relative strength of that one candidate looks stronger than it in proportion, or in relation to, the other candidates. This is the way this single-ballot voting can distort an election when there are multiple positions open, all to be elected at the same time. And so, for that reason, I would urge that we vote against this amendment.

BISHOP MINOR: Thank you, Judge. Now, the chair.

DEL PINO: Bishop, the immediate previous speaker is correct. It will in fact negatively inform the process for election by permitting one candidate to appear to have a relatively stronger position than she or he does in relationship to the total. And therefore, in order to be fair the rules committee has

brought this rule and would still implore the body to uphold it.

BISHOP MINOR: Thank you. The Brooks motion is before us for the vote. Please vote now. [*Yes, 161; No, 742; Abstain, 18*]

161, yes; 742 no; 18 abstained. The amendment is lost.

Proposal for Providing Voice to Alternates

I now recognize you again, for your second motion that you were bringing. It's not very fair to the others to come with a laundry list of motions. Therefore, now you are—mic 1.

LONNIE D. BROOKS: I figured it would save time if I got up and just did my thing all at once, Bishop. I'm sorry. This one is on page 120, Section VIII.D, "Membership of Standing Legislative Committees." I want to add a Section 4, below Section 3. Page 120. It's under Section VIII.D, "Standing Legislative Committees," I want to add a Section 4 under Section 3. It reads as—I guess I need a second. Basically, I'm asking for better rights for first reserves than we had in 2000.

BISHOP MINOR: Could you speak—say this again. I could not understand you.

BROOKS: Page 120.

BISHOP MINOR: Yes.

BROOKS: There's three sections to that—or three points, I want to add a fourth point.

BISHOP MINOR: Yes?

BROOKS: I believe the third point talks about people with voice but no vote . . .

BISHOP MINOR: Could you speak—say this again. I could not understand you.

LONNIE D. BROOKS: Page 120.

BISHOP MINOR: Yes.

BROOKS: There's three sections to that—or three points—I want to add a fourth point.

BISHOP MINOR: Yes.

BROOKS: I believe the third point

talks about people with voice but no vote. In General Conference.

BISHOP MINOR: Yes.

BROOKS: I want to add a fourth one, that basically would read that annual conference with less voting delegates than the number of legislative committees, the first reserve delegates may submit to the secretary of the General Conference a choice of legislative committee. The first reserve has the right to participate in the committee with voice but no vote. The first reserve may only select a committee not selected by the annual conference voting delegates or their other first reserve.

BISHOP MINOR: You are very hard to understand.

BROOKS: Would you like me to give you my—

BISHOP MINOR: Read it again slowly.

BROOKS: Would you like me to give you my second copy? And then, if you have a—

BISHOP MINOR: No, no, please . . . the body needs to understand you. Please read it again, slowly.

BROOKS: For annual conferences with less voting delegates than the number of legislative committees, the first reserve delegates may submit to the secretary of the General Conference a choice of legislative committee. The first reserve shall have the right to participate in that committee with voice but no vote. A first reserve may only select a committee not selected by their annual conference's voting delegates or their other first reserve.

BISHOP MINOR: Thank you. Is this seconded? It's a second? Then you can speak to it. And, please, again, speak slowly.

BROOKS: I will try, Bishop. My other bishop tells me to speed up to get off the floor. (*laughter*) This would provide an opportunity for greater participation by annual conferences in the legislative committees, where they don't have a vote. I happen to be from the committee—or a conference—where we only have six voting dele-

gates. By having the first reserves having full voice recognition, we would then have full voice in two other of the committees here. In 2000, when I sat on Finance, my subcommittee gave me full access and full voice; but the chairman of the committee read the rule differently and barred me from saying anything until the full-voting delegates had their say, and if there was some time. This basically gives our first reserves the same status as other non-voting people here in General Conference and would guarantee that every legislative committee would treat the first reserves equally.

BISHOP MINOR: Thank you. Now I ask for speeches. Is there a speech against it? No speech against it? Over there. Mic 1.

HANNS-ULRICH MEISEL (Germany East): The floor might have in mind, sometimes—

BISHOP MINOR: Please state your name and conference.

MEISEL: Yes, Ulrich Meisel, East German Conference. The floor must have in mind that in this case, (*unintelligible*) the first reserve delegates from all different countries, also may be invited to the General Conference. Or on the other hand, American first-reserve delegates have a privilege against Central Conference delegates.

BISHOP MINOR: Thank you. Is there a speech for the amendment? I don't see it . . .

BROOKS: (*unintelligible*) . . . enabling legislation to go with that, if it passes.

BISHOP MINOR: Yes. We are not yet at this point. Any other speeches to this amendment? Now I ask Dr. Del Pino.

JEROME DEL PINO: Bishop, the committee would oppose the amendment fundamentally because it does create a very serious question regarding equity, insofar as how we will function in the presence of first reserves from all of our conferences that have access to the General Conference. Secondly, it would also have implications beyond

this body that would need to be specifically referred to GCFA.

BISHOP MINOR: Thank you. Are you ready to vote on this amendment? Please vote now. [*Yes, 128; No, 772; Abstain, 16*]

128, yes; 770, no; 16 abstentions. The amendment is lost. Yes, mic 1, please.

*Proposal for Consideration
of Diversity*

BEVERLY L. WILKES (Illinois Great Rivers): Bishop Minor, Beverly Wilkes, Illinois Great Rivers Conference. And I'd call your attention to page 120, where I'd like to make an amendment. Page 120, Section E, "Meetings of Committees," and if you will go to the Item (b), as in "Bravo," on the "Legislative Committees"; and go to the second full sentence in Item (b), which reads, "These officers shall be elected by ballot." My amendment would begin there, excluding the period at that moment and would read as follows: "These officers shall be elected by ballot with due consideration for gender, ethnicity, geographic, clergy, and laity inclusiveness that reflects the global nature of our church."

BISHOP MINOR: Thank you. Is there a second? Second, yes, and you may speak to your amendment.

WILKES: Yes, I arise to put this in print to serve as a conscious reminder that The United Methodist Church is a global church, and that our inclusiveness includes not only gender and ethnicity but geographical inclusiveness, so that our Central Conference delegates may have opportunity to be elected as chair, vice chair, or secretary, as well as the representation of clergy and laity in either of those three positions for our 11 committees.

BISHOP MINOR: Thank you. Is there a speech against it? I ask for a speech against—this is against? Please, No. 7. Whose point of order? Point of order, No. 2, please.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: No. 7.

WALKUP: Vin Walkup, Tennessee Conference. The point of order is that

we have already stricken the paragraph and replaced it with what had originally been deleted; and I believe that the amendment needs to go at the top of page 121, at the end of what appears to be an “a,” but I think now is a “b”—where it ends with the phrase “shall be ballot,” and that’s where it would be added instead of where the maker of the motion said it should be.

BISHOP MINOR: This is correct . . . yes. Yes. This is correct, but we go ahead with the understanding that this is an already-changed part of the text.

I’m back to the—gentleman who asked to speak against it. No? . . . Anybody else who’d like to speak to this . . . ? Over there, mic 8.

ANA KELSEY-POWELL (Northern Illinois): Ana Kelsey-Powell, Northern Illinois Conference, laity, young adult. I don’t know if this is going to be a friendly amendment or a point of clarification for me, but was age included in that list of qualifications? And if not, I would make a friendly amendment that that would be added.

BISHOP MINOR: I see the maker of the motion nodding; so, is it included, or would you include it? Yes. So, it will be included. Thank you.

No more speeches? Dr. Del Pino. No speech? *(pause)* Over there. Mic 5.

TERRELL SESSUMS (Florida): Bishop, my name is Terrell Sessums, I’m a lay delegate from the Florida Annual Conference. Bishop, I really, I think have more of a question. I think the spirit of the amendment is clear. It’s an admonition we’re under generally. But we’re only electing three officers in each committee. And my question is, how do we satisfy all these requirements of inclusiveness with only three officers to be elected independently by each of the legislative committees? I’m concerned that it’s a noble intent but extraordinarily difficult if not impractical to apply.

BISHOP MINOR: This is a speech against it, and I would just ask you to be quicker in asking to be recognized. The chair had already said that he

would not speak? Over at the right again . . . No. 8.

LONNIE CHAFIN (Northern Illinois): Lonnie Chafin, Northern Illinois Conference. Bishop Minor, I thank you very much for your graceful care of this conversation. I would, though, move consideration of all that is before us.

BISHOP MINOR: Wait a minute, we have an amendment pending. *(pause)* We have to care for this amendment, and then you—I can recognize you.

(pause)

I had to consult with my supporters. They told me that we had only one speech on each side for this amendment, and I have to give the opportunity for two speeches on each side before I can entertain the previous question. So, again I ask for speeches on the amendment that’s before us. A speech for the amendment. Yes, please? Mic 5. Right behind you. *(pause)* Mic 1.

JOHN W. EDGAR (West Ohio): John Edgar, West Ohio. I speak in favor of the amendment because I think it will have a very positive, if perhaps unintended, consequence. If we approve this, it seems to me we are under a mandate to make sure that before we close nominations, which sometimes has been much, done much too quickly in the past, we have to slow down and allow any and all nominations that would allow for greater inclusiveness. I think this is a wonderful amendment, because I believe it gets at a core issue of how to improve the process of nomination and election of our officers in a very simple way. I would urge you to support the amendment.

BISHOP MINOR: Thank you. There’s a last chance for a speech against it. *(pause)* There is no speech against it, and I would re-recognize the gentleman over there at mic 8, who was asking the previous question. I re-recognize you.

CHAFIN: Thank you, Bishop. I’m still Lonnie Chafin, still from Northern Illinois Conference, and still moving all that’s before us.

(laughter)

BISHOP MINOR: The previous question is before us, it needs two-thirds of—two-thirds vote. Please vote now. *(pause)*

680 Yes; 250 No; 9 Abstentions; that is 76% Yes, and the previous question has carried. Before we do the final vote, I ask, again, the chair, for a final statement. Dr. Del Pino. Point of order? Yes, please. Mic 2.

PAUL E. BLACK (Illinois Great Rivers): Paul Black, Illinois Great Rivers Conference. The question that we just voted on was to close the debate. We still have an amendment and a question before us.

BISHOP MINOR: Thank you. I’ve been instructed to vote the amendment, and then we’ll have the final speech for the whole—for everything that’s before us. So, the amendment about inclusiveness . . . Dr. Del Pino, would you like to speak to this amendment? The amendment on inclusiveness? Would you like to speak to it? No. Thank you.

Then, the amendment is before us. The amendment that is changing under letter “E,” point 3.b, “Legislative Committees,” “officers shall be elected by ballot,” and then a list of inclusiveness. Please vote now on this amendment. *(pause)* [*Yes, 612; No, 286; Abstain, 10*]

612, Yes; 286 No; 10 Abstentions. And the amendment has carried; and now, Dr. Del Pino has the final speech from the committee.

Closing Remarks

DEL PINO: Bishop Minor, I will be brief. I would want to call the body’s attention to the preamble for this Plan of Organization and Rules of Order. It is a statement that has been included since the last General Conference—it was first included in the last General Conference—and it has been revised to reflect what are the further discernments of the committee. And even though it is not an action per sé that is calling for any specific rule change, we want to call your attention to that.

Finally, we want to say to the committee again a very sincere appreciation for work that has been well done, and we thank you for the way in which you have taken seriously the fruits of our labor. Thank you, Bishop.

BISHOP MINOR: Thank you. The report of the committee is before us as amended. Please vote now on the report as it is before us, as amended. *(pause)* [Yes, 874; No, 29; Abstain, 7]

874 votes, Yes; 29, No; 7 Abstentions, and the report of the committee is sustained. We thank, again, the committee for its diligent, diligent work.

(applause)

And now I call on James Perry for the report of the Commission on the General Conference.

*Commission on General
Conference Report*

JAMES M. PERRY: Bishop Minor, delegates, and friends, after more than four years of planning, we are finally in Pittsburgh. As we began, this day seemed so far away; but the time has gone all too fast. After so many decisions, there is a part of me that wishes we had just a little bit more time to get every detail right. But there's another part of me that has already begun to breathe a huge sigh of relief. When I wonder what I will do with all this time on my hands, my wife says, "Play more golf, and spend more time in your workshop."

My bishop says, "Do a little more work in your annual conference."

Seriously, I could not have done this work without the full support of my spouse of nearly 36 years, or the enthusiastic support of my bishop, John L. Hopkins, who has heard more about some of the details than he may have wanted.

As I said in the printed report of the commission, found on page 106 of Volume 1 of the *DCA*, this has been an outstanding group of persons to work with over this quadrennium. There is a sense in which we are family. We have managed to meet and to do our business, even when some members are

unable to be there; but we have felt less than complete when we've not all been present. We have not always agreed, but we have always been able to work through our disagreements and move ahead. Always, our goal has been to work to produce the best possible General Conference for our great denomination. And these persons are here on the platform with me, and I want them to stand and to receive your appreciation for their work.

(applause)

The lion's share of the work is really done by staff. We make policy decisions, and we point the direction; but staff carries out much of the work. Although they are not quick to take credit, there are no persons more integral to the myriad of details that must be cared for to allow this event to happen than Carolyn Marshall, secretary of the General Conference, and Gary Bowen, business manager. This is the last General Conference for each of these dedicated individuals in their current position. We will take time next week to formally recognize their service to this body.

Issues Related to Central Conferences

I vowed not to repeat information that is found in our printed report. I must, however, talk briefly about the issues around translation and interpretation. The commission spent much time dealing with the issue of translation. First of all, it is a three-pronged issue: simultaneous, written, and consecutive translation. After much debate and discussion, it was decided to provide written translation in the languages in which the central conferences conduct their business—English, French, and Portuguese. The cost of written translation is approximately 17 cents per word, \$85 per page, and nearly \$200,000 per language. In arriving at this decision, we believe that we have been both good stewards and expanded the accessibility to the session for delegates from the central conferences.

Simultaneous translation used in the plenary sessions is offered in English,

French, German, Korean, Portuguese, Russian, Spanish, and Swahili. Consecutive translation used in the legislative committees, and, as possible, in subcommittees, is offered in the languages spoken and read by the delegates as indicated in the delegate language survey. If we were not told in advance about a particular need, we cannot guarantee the availability of a translator, although we will do our best to accommodate late requests. If there is anyone present who is not a delegate, who can provide translation assistance during this first week for legislative subcommittee work, please make your availability known in the business office.

The thorniest issue we have been dealing with has been that of the process of securing visas for delegates from outside the United States. Although the commission staff has worked on the visa issue well ahead of time, the results of measures enacted since September 11, 2001, have impacted the ability of central conference delegates, as well as affiliated autonomous delegates, to travel to this country. When the difficulties of securing visas became public, the commission staff was joined by staff and members of the General Council on Ministries and the General Board of Global Ministries in working on the issues.

Through the cooperative efforts of these several general agencies and any number of local United Methodists with particular expertise in this area who responded to the news of these difficulties, we have been more successful than originally thought possible. The commission wishes to publicly thank everyone who has helped to solve these problems. Unless changes are made in U.S. State Department policy, it may well become necessary for Central Conferences to elect delegates one year earlier, so that delegate lists and the letters of invitation can be in the delegates' hands much earlier than is currently possible, to allow delegates to schedule visa appointments far enough ahead to accommodate the extremely

long lead time that is now required in many countries.

Unfortunately, even with all the time needed and all documents in order months in advance, there will be seemingly arbitrary decisions made, which will keep some delegates from being able to attend General Conference, as long as it is held in the United States. We do not like it. It is arbitrary . . . and unfair. We have discovered, though, that even with the help of the office of the Speaker of the House, Dennis Hastert of Illinois, as well as the office of Indiana senator Richard Lugar, chair of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, there are times when the State Department has been an immovable object. It appears that approximately 15-20 seats will remain empty because of the inability of delegates and reserves to obtain visas.

The numbers of delegates who have been unable to obtain visas is much higher; but in many cases, a reserve has been able to obtain one. In at least one situation, it was the sixth reserve that was finally able to obtain a visa. The numbers change daily. We will provide you with an updated report no later than Thursday or Friday of this week.

I wonder if it's possible for the Igniting Ministry folks to do a little hospitality training with our embassy and consulate staff.

(applause)

Economic Issues

An additional problem that was not anticipated was the failure to fill room blocks in all of our hotels. The number of rooms contracted for was determined after thorough analysis of the rooms used in preceding General Conferences. When the deadline for filling the room blocks arrived, there were still enough empty rooms at the Hilton to cause the imposition of more than \$100,000 in penalties. Although some of these rooms are being filled, and alternatives such as scheduling other events at this hotel in the future are under consideration, we will likely absorb some level of penalty.

This is what happens when delegations and general agencies go outside the contracted hotels for rooms during General Conference. This fact, which is partly caused by a change in practices of reserving rooms, is also driven by a concern for costs. Like other actions taken for very good reasons, they often have unintended consequences. It may result in a consideration of a different method of room allocation to be considered by the next commission.

An additional economic issue surfaced, when we calculated the cost of coffee for the breaks. When they're provided for all of the delegates and all of the visitors, believe it or not, the cost of coffee for General Conference was \$200,000. Delegates will get a first turn at a cup of coffee. The rest will then be available to visitors. You are able to purchase a cup of coffee at one of the concession stands at approximately one half the cost of having it provided through the coffee breaks for everyone. I don't understand it, that's just the way it is. Without understanding the economics of this issue, a decision that represented a good stewardship might have seemed to be stingy and poor hospitality.

Presidential Invitations

After much conversation the commission decided to invite two influential United Methodists to address the General Conference. Boris Trajkovski, President of Macedonia, and George W. Bush, President of the United States. Mr. Trajkovski, a former delegate to General Conference, received the World Methodist Peace Prize in 2002 for his skills of peacemaking and bridge-building and his efforts to unite his country. Unfortunately, as you know, he was tragically killed in an airplane crash in southeastern Bosnia on February 26th. I ask that we take a moment now of silence in honor of the life of this devoted Christian.

(pause)

Thank you. The Reverend Kenneth Chalker, our vice chair for program,

will report on our efforts to bring a member of the Bush family to General Conference.

KENNETH W. CHALKER: As Jim has indicated, we have these past four years worked very diligently to invite both President and Laura Bush to bring greetings to this General Conference and to do that certainly because of their Methodist connection. We have done this in a number of straightforward ways as well as utilizing the abilities and connections of persons throughout the church to invite the President and First Lady to be here during our deliberations.

Unfortunately, they were not able to attend personally; but I want to express a word of appreciation for the kinds of efforts that were made to secure and to present to them our formal invitation directly into the hands of the President and to the First Lady. And I would be remiss if I did not thank Dr. Maxie Dunham from Asbury Seminary, who is so helpful in part of this effort this past year.

Since January, however, we have received a formal response from Laura Bush. And the White House has called my church office at First Church, Cleveland, several times since January; and my office staff has been most impressed. This, however, is a letter that I would like to read to you that we have received. It's a very personal and kind note written to all of us here at General Conference.

"Dear Friends,

"I am delighted to send my greetings to everyone attending the General Conference of The United Methodist Church.

"As a lifetime Methodist, I thank you for the dedication of your time and energy to this important series of meetings.

"Your fellowship and discussion enrich each of us when you return to your home churches with new ideas and vision.

"The churches, and more to the point, the churchgoers of our country are one of America's most distinctive

and heartening strengths. Thank you for doing the necessary work to maintain and increase the mission and vitality of United Methodism.

“President Bush joins me in sending our great appreciation to each one of you for your role in this gathering. We ask God’s blessings on your time together.

“With warmest regards,
Laura Bush”

(*applause*)

*Resolution on Format
of General Conference*

PERRY: Thank you, Ken. Through an oversight on my part, a resolution that we crafted as a commission was not submitted to consideration of this body. It is now on the desks before you. It is not controversial, but it is important. We believe it is critical to how we do General Conference, and that that be examined and that recommendations for future General Conferences be brought back to this body.

The Commission on the General Conference for the next four years is willing and able to undertake such a study without any additional budgetary impact. Here is that resolution read for you:

“Whereas only the General Conference has legislative authority for The United Methodist Church and;

“Whereas only the General Conference has the authority to speak for The United Methodist Church and;

“Whereas the format of the General Conference has changed several times since the Christmas Conference of 1784 and;

“Whereas the global of the church has changed the face of our denomination more dramatically than any other single factor in recent memory and;

“Whereas the financial expenses associated with General Conference are continuing to increase at or above the rate of inflation in the United States;

“Therefore be it resolved that the 2004 General Conference, meeting in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, charges the

Commission on the General Conference to bring to the 2008 General Conference in Fort Worth, Texas, recommendations regarding the format and structure of future General Conferences for the consideration of the General Conference.”

Christian Conferencing

In closing, I want to share some of my hopes and dreams for this General Conference. We have been concerned that we need to have a common framework out of which we live during these two weeks. At our invitation, Dr. Paul Chilcote of Asbury Seminary in Orlando, wrote a one-page essay entitled, “Christian Conference in the Wesleyan Heritage.” It has been reproduced and is available at information counters here in the convention center, and it was also published in today’s *Daily Christian Advocate*. It is my hope that we—delegates, visitors, and all the rest—will take seriously his words that he has written.

Whenever believers gather together for fellowship and nurture, and especially to discuss the nature of their witness and service in the world, they are engaged in sacred work. All that we have before us, these two weeks, is sacred work. It is our hope that we will do nothing as individuals, as small groups, or as an entire body to desecrate this work. It is also our fervent prayer that we will do everything in such a way that we will do more conferencing than winning and losing. It is our hope that we will listen to each other and to God rather than approach difficult issues with our minds made up.

It is our firm belief that God has not yet revealed all of God’s self to us, and that we as faithful United Methodists from around this earth, regardless of whether we are from the right, the left, or the middle of the theological spectrum, have things to learn that have not yet been revealed to us. It is also a dream of ours that things will happen during these 11 days that will both surprise and delight us. I am sure that we will laugh together and shed tears

together, and certainly to God’s glory we will sing and pray together.

The commission has also heard that some have considered challenges to the seating of certain delegates due to unhappiness over particular actions that have occurred in the recent past. It is the opinion of this commission that any attempt to do such things would fly in the face of our longstanding tradition of annual conferences electing from among its eligible members those it wishes to represent them.

As United Methodists, we talk a lot about the connection, but it is not always in positive terms. One of the times I find myself most appreciating our connection is when I talk with persons from denominations who are not as connected as we are. It is common to hear them say, with a degree of wistfulness in their voices, that they wished that they had this same sense that we do. Our connection provides the dual emphasis of support and accountability. We cannot have one without the other; and having a vital, living connection, they do go together.

I carry in my pocket today a symbol of that connection. At the 2001 session of the North George Conference, James Mooneyhan, currently a district superintendent and a reserve delegate to this General Conference, provided small crosses that he had carved. Although I was not at that session, several months ago I was given one of those crosses. Since that time, it has sat on my desk, reminding me that I am part of something much greater than I. It also reminds me that I share a faith with persons I may never meet; but through that cross, I am bound to them forever. I decided to carry that cross with me daily during General Conference to remind me of that bond.

Some days I’ve approached General Conference without much hope. There seems to be so much that threatens to tear us apart. What hope is there that we can remain one and grow stronger?

Recently, I was reading Dr. Gerald May’s latest book, *The Dark Night of the Soul*. In the concluding chapter, he

speaks of how deep real hope can run. He told of going to Bosnia in 1994 and meeting with people who had lost everything. As he talked with them, he sensed deep hope in them. He asked them if they had hope; and when they answered in the affirmative, he asked if it was hope for peace. The reply: No, things have gone too far for that. He asked if they hoped that the United Nations or the United States would provide help. The reply: No, it's too late for that. He asked then, what were they hoping for? They were silent. He then asked, "How can you hope when there's nothing to hope for?" The reply: (*unintelligible*), the Serbo-Croatian word for *God*.

Our circumstances are very different from these persons'. We have many reasons to hope. God and our historic and still-living connection are just two of them.

I also have a hope that someday, we will gather from the four corners of the globe in a General Conference in which it is deemed more important that we talk with each other and listen to God than legislate. What would it be like if we had a moratorium on issues that divide us and spent all our time and energy focusing on reaching out to those in our world who feel like outcasts, and share God's love with them?

(*applause*)

It is my hope that we will be more concerned about extending God's grace than getting it right. As Dr. Chilcote reminds us, the conference of 1759 was anticipated to be a particularly contentious one. Afterwards, John Wesley wrote, "Great was the unanimity and love that reigned among us, and if there were any who hoped or feared the contrary, they were happily disappointed."

A few pages after Gerald May's description of his encounter with the Bosnian refugees, he said these powerful words that could have been written for us during these two weeks:

"Theologically, if God is indeed all-loving, if God is love, then that love must necessarily temper God's

omnipotence. Love always transforms power, making it something softer, deeper, and richer. Conversely, it may be only in our vulnerability, in our actually being wounded, that love gains its full power. Thus, true omnipotence may not be found in a distant and separate power over something, or someone, but rather in the intimate experience of being wounded for and with." Is it possible for us to go home from Pittsburgh at the end of next week and have this fine city say, 'See how those United Methodists love each other!'"

I close this report with Dr. Chilcote's prayer and ask you to join me in that prayer:

(*prayer*)

Thank you.

(*applause*)

BISHOP MINOR: We thank the Reverend Perry and the Commission on the General Conference. And before we will get a decision on the petition that is before us, I just need to remind you that we are in a kind of dilemma: We are already over time, but we need to do this kind of business to be able to work. We have a petition, it is in your hands, about future work. Would someone like to speak to this petition? Are we ready to vote? Those who—please, vote to the petition to the General Conference from the Commission on the General Conference, please vote now. (*pause*) [*Yes, 873; No, 24; Abstain, 8*]

873, Yes; 24, No; 8 Abstentions. The petition is accepted.

Committee on Agenda Report

I now call on Mary Alice Massey, with the report of the Committee on Agenda. Where is she?

(*pause*)

MARY ALICE MASSEY: Bishop Minor, Council of Bishops, brothers and sisters. It's my privilege to announce the remainder of the agenda for today. We are going to extend our

time. Beginning at 5:15, we will go to our Organization of Legislative Committees and Election of Officers. That will go until 6:00—6:00? Yes, 6:00. And then, after that, you will adjourn for dinner. Those who are elected to serve will attend the dinner and training legislation meeting immediately following their election. We'll have the dinner break, and then committees will again begin to meet at 7:30 until 10:00 tonight. You must leave the hall by 11:30.

In the morning, on Wednesday morning, we will begin with choral music at 8:00, worship service at 8:15. Conference business will begin at 9:00; and then we will have the GCOM report, the Laity Address, and the Financial State of the Church. We have a busy day; we must get on with the business of the conference.

Thank you very much.

BISHOP MINOR: Thank you. And now I call on the secretary of the conference, Carolyn Marshall, and the instructions for the organizing of legislative committees.

CAROLYN M. MARSHALL: All right. Bishop, we will move directly to—

BISHOP MINOR: A microphone, please, for the secretary.

MARSHALL: Bishop, we will move directly from here to the assigned rooms for your legislative committees. One change in the timing from what was announced just a few moments ago is that the legislative committees will begin meeting this evening at 8:00 instead of 7:30—basically a half-hour shift as far as the printed agenda is concerned.

In addition to that, I wanted to let all of you know, because some several of you have asked, "What happened to the binders?" We become so used to getting what we've always gotten, and some of you are very aware that you did not get binders for your *DCA*. They will be—the plan is that they will be on your desk when you arrive tomorrow morning. Another question which

needs answering at this point is that as far as voting is concerned, we have received several messages about checking to make sure, because there are not the total 998 votes, to be sure that all voting pads are working. There is a monitoring system, and they are being checked regularly. We do not have all seats filled, and there are several other reasons that people just simply are not voting on every single machine.

Bishop, I think that completes what I have for us this afternoon.

BISHOP MINOR: Thank you, Ms. Marshall. Are there any other announcements for this moment? No. Thank you. Then go to do your good work with God's help in the legislative committees. The Lord be with you.

DELEGATES: *And also with you.*

Wednesday morning, April 27, 2004

(Morning worship)

BISHOP HAE-JONG KIM (Pittsburgh Area): Good morning. Good morning, everybody. We are about to start the next session. Would you please come to an order? . . . Would you please be seated? We will begin the legislative session. Conference business. We had an inspiring worship service. Now we are energized to do God's work. Let us all be seated.

It is a beautiful morning; it is a beautiful Pittsburgh morning; and it is a beautiful General Conference morning. So let's have a good meeting this morning.

Let me just share with you that the first time I ever attended General Conference was 1964, and I was just a student—foreign student, at that—at the Methodist Theological School in Ohio, ready to be graduated. That's when Pittsburgh had its General Conference, and I was a visitor. That was 40 years ago. And 40 years later, this year, as the hosting bishop of this conference, it is my honor and privilege to sit here to preside over this session; and I thank God for that. And it seems like this morning's session is, doesn't

have too much controversial items, so we hope that we'll just sail on. So, please be seated.

We'll ask Mary Alice Massey, if she's here, to bring the Committee on Calendar and Agenda. If she's here? Let's pay attention to her.

MARY ALICE MASSEY: Good morning, Bishop Kim, Council of Bishops, delegates. We're just right on time! This morning, we will have two special recognitions along with our conference business, followed by the GCOM report, the Laity Address, the Financial State of the Church. We will adjourn for lunch. During lunch, the presiding officers will meet in [Room] 324, the Committee on Presiding Officers. That's Room 324. After lunch, your legislative committees will begin meeting at 2:30, adjourning at 5:00, and reconvening at 7:30, according to your presiding officers in those legislative committees. Tomorrow morning, we will follow the same agenda as we have this morning, with worship—choral music and worship. I'll see you in the morning. Thank you, Bishop.

Recognition of Affiliated Autonomous and Concordat Church Delegates

BISHOP KIM: Thank you. The first item is recognition of delegates from affiliated autonomous churches and concordat churches, and Bishop Talbert is going to present.

BISHOP MELVIN G. TALBERT: Good morning, sisters and brothers. Bishop Kim and members of the General Conference, it is my privilege to present to you some who are among us this morning, but they are in a special category; and they are the affiliated autonomous churches and our concordat churches. If you are in that category, if you could make your way down front to this side, and I will call the churches and identify your names; and you will walk across the stage, be greeted by the presiding bishop, and return to your seats.

We begin with The Evangelical Methodist Church of Argentina, followed by The United Protestant Church of Belgium. And if you are those in the

category of affiliate autonomous churches and the concordat churches, I think you know who you are, if you will come down front over here and be recognized at this time by walking across the stage, so that people might see you and know who you are. So let us begin, if you could quickly come down front and have you presented at this time. The Evangelical Methodist Church of Argentina first, followed by The United Protestant Church of Belgium, The Evangelical Methodist Church of Bolivia, et cetera. Do we have people moving forward? Are the delegates here? *(pause)* If you could just—in this area.

We begin with The Evangelical Methodist Church of Argentina, and the names that I have before me are Bishop Nelida Ritchie and Sr. Juan Plou. Are they here? If they'd come on the stage at this time.

(applause)

I don't have the names; do we have delegates here from The United Protestant Church of Belgium? Are you here?

If not, then we move to The Evangelical Methodist Church of Bolivia, and the two persons that I have listed are Bishop Dr. Carlos Intipampa and Samuel Condori. Are you here?

We move to The Methodist Church in Brazil. Bishop Joao Alves de Oliveira, Ms. Kelia Guimaraes, and Luiz Carlos Escobar.

(applause)

From The Methodist Church of Chile, Bishop Pedro Grandon and Nancy Carmona.

(applause)

From The Methodist Church of the Republic of China, Bishop Philip Tseng and Dr. Harry Fay.

(applause)

From the Evangelical Church of Costa Rica, Bishop Luis F. Palomo and Mrs. Zulay Palomo.

(applause)

And then also with them is Professor Douglas Muhuarez Duran.

From The Methodist Church of Cuba, Bishop Ricardo Pereira and Maritza Proenza-Ortega.

(applause)

From The Dominican Evangelical Church, Juan S. Roman and Reverend Alejandro Figueroa.

(applause)

From The Evangelical Methodist Church of Ecuador, Bishop Solomon Cabeza and Fredy Balseca.

(applause)

From The Methodist Church in Indonesia, Bishop Bachtiar Kwee, Bishop R.P.M. Tambunan, the Reverend Robert Sihombing, Dr. J. F. Napitupulu, and the Reverend Rameana Sihombing.

(applause)

From The United Church of Christ in Japan, Reverend Hiroko Ueda.

(applause)

From The Korean Methodist Church, the Reverend YoHan Lee, the Reverend Jae Hwang Moon, and Mrs. Mary Um.

(applause)

The Methodist Church of Malaysia, Bishop Peter Chio Sing Ching, Mr. Richard Wong King Lion.

(applause)

The Methodist Church of the Union of Myanmar, Bishop Zothan Mawai, the Reverend U Saw Shwe, U Myo Myint.

(applause)

The United Church of Pakistan, the Right Reverend Sadiq Daniel, and Humphrey Sarfraz Peters.

(applause)

The Evangelical Methodist Church of Panama, Bishop Pablo Morales, and Fulvia Veliz.

(applause)

The Methodist Church of Peru, the Reverend Jesus Rio-Maravi, and Carlos D. Gastelu.

(applause)

The Evangelical Methodist Church in the Philippines, Bishop Nathanael P. Lazaro, and Mr. Rene E. Cristobal.

(applause)

The United Church of Christ in the Philippines, Bishop Eliezer M. Pascua.

(applause)

The Methodist Church in Singapore, Bishop Dr. Robert Solomon, Mr. Lim Soo Chin.

(applause)

And the Evangelical Methodist Church in Uruguay, the Reverend Oscar Bolioli, president, and Marta Saez.

(applause)

My sisters and brothers, these are they who are from the affiliated autonomous churches, and the press would like to get a photo of any. If you could just step forward for a moment, and they will do that, and we will then move to recognized others.

(pause)

Oh, I didn't have that on the list. I understand that we have our sisters and brothers here from Hong Kong, if you would come forward, please.

(applause)

And, our sisters and brothers from India. If you would come forward.

(applause)

Now we will recognize those persons who are from the concordat relationships. First, I call The Methodist Church in Great Britain—that's Margaret Jones, Peter Salston, Rachel Lampard, and Martin Stone.

(applause)

And from The Methodist Church in the Caribbean and the Americas, George Mulrane, and Theodore Fahi.

(applause)

From The Methodist Church of Mexico, Raoul Garcia, and Jose Vergara.

(applause)

And from The Methodist Church of Puerto Rico, Victor Perez, and Victor Ortiz, and then of course we have sitting among us Victor Juan Vera Mendez.

(applause)

My sisters and brothers, in addition to the people called United Methodist around the world, these are the persons who are part of the Wesleyan family, and we have longstanding relationships with these churches as affiliated autonomous churches and as concordat churches, and they are privileged to be seated among us as delegates—some with voting privileges, others seated as persons who are to be present without vote. But whether they are voting or not, they are our sisters and brothers in Christ. And in behalf of the Council of Bishops, and of you as delegates, we greet them and welcome them in our midst.

(applause)

All right, thank you very much, and you may return to your seats.

BISHOP KIM: Thank you very much. This will make us a part of the global church again. It's good to have this recognition.

Now, I present Janet Forbes for the Extending Connection. *(pause)* Yes. Over there, mic 1.

Request for Declaratory Decision

FRED H. HAUSTEIN (Arkansas): Fred Haustein, from the Arkansas Conference. In an effort for us to have effective holy conferencing, we would like to have as much correct information as we can. Therefore I would like to move that the General Conference ask the Judicial Council for a declaratory decision in answer to the following questions. One, does the statement in Paragraph 304.3 constitute a declaration by The United Methodist Church

that the practice of homosexuality is incompatible with Christian teaching? Two, if the answer to [question] 1 is yes, does Paragraph 2702.1b, “practices declared by The United Methodist Church to be incompatible with Christian teachings,” incorporate that declaration into United Methodist church law by reference? I so move.

BISHOP KIM: Is there a second?

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Second.

BISHOP KIM: OK. The motion to request for a declaratory ruling is before you. Are you ready to vote? Please vote now. [*Yes, 511; No, 286; Abstain, 42*] The result is Yes, 511; No, 286. It passes. Thank you.

JANET L. FORBES (Rocky Mountain): Good morning. From the Committee on Courtesies and Privileges, I am Janet Forbes, from the Rocky Mountain Conference. I would pray your connection to those delegates who we yet await their presence among us. This is a part of our great cloud of witnesses, our great connection to the saints, both living and those who have gone beyond. If you are seated near to an empty chair that you know that is someone who has not been able to be among us physically but are connected to us spiritually and by their presence around the globe, I would ask that you would connect to that space—if you are next to it, to lay hands on that chair—and let us remember, in a moment of silence, let us send our love, our connection, and our courtesy, as brothers and sisters in Christ, to those who are around the globe awaiting presence in this space. Let us connect.

(moment of silence)

(prayer)

BISHOP KIM: Amen. Thank you.

Next we will have Carolyn Marshall giving us the announcements for the conference.

CAROLYN M. MARSHALL: We’re OK.

BISHOP KIM: Not now. OK. We go to the main item, then—report from the

General Council on Ministries. Bishop Paup?

GCOM Report

BISHOP EDWARD W. PAUP: Thank you, Bishop Kim—Bishop Kim and all of this General Conference. It is my pleasure to greet you on behalf of the members of the General Council on Ministries and to bring you our quadrennial report, and I invite those who will be assisting me in this report to come to the platform at this time.

Personally I want to add a word that it is so good to be home in Western Pennsylvania. I was nurtured from my birth in this annual conference, a disciple molded in Grace Church, Foyle City, and I am one of those who yesterday, as the sisters shared, understand fully about what it means to red up one’s room. It is good to be here, and thank you, Western Pennsylvania, for your hospitality extended to us.

I also want to express appreciation for your affirmation and support, and indeed, encouragement, of the bishops’ band. *(laughter)* Last night someone asked me if I was a musician in the bishops’ band, and I said, “No, I’m the drummer.” *(laughter)* Now before you go too far with that response, let me say, I don’t want to malign the musical ability of drummers, but I do want to say that drummers are in a long line of storytellers and message bearers, and this morning on this platform we’re going to share in at least figuratively drumming some of the story of United Methodist ministry and mission around the world.

There are four components to this presentation, which will be made by the General Council on Ministries. You will receive our response to the 2000 mandate of the General Conference, “Living Into the Future.” And secondly, we will present our recommendation for the proposed special program for Africa and Latin America in the Caribbean. Thirdly you will hear our quadrennial report on behalf of the general program agencies and our ethnic initiatives. And then finally, you will

receive the report of the “Advance for Christ and His Church.” In witnessing these four dimensions of the council’s work, you will see the connectational nature of the United Methodist Church illustrated in meaningful and vital ways.

And now to introduce the first part of the General Council on Ministries report, I’m pleased to call upon Jay Williams, a lay delegate from the Western New York Annual Conference.

(applause)

JAY WILLIAMS (Western New York): Good morning, Easter people!

DELEGATES: Good morning.

WILLIAMS: Good morning, Easter people!

DELEGATES: Good morning!

WILLIAMS: It is my great pleasure to greet you this morning and to encourage your consideration to our response to the mandate of the 2000 General Conference. You asked the General Council on Ministries to do some very specific work. You asked us to consider not efficiency but effectiveness as we envision the relationship among the general agencies of the church.

You asked us to help the church fulfill its desire to live into the future. We have tried faithfully to do so, and we now share with you our efforts.

What you are about to see is something many of you have already seen, since we sent a video cassette to you earlier this spring that is almost exactly like it. Even if you watched it carefully, I hope you will watch it again now. Watch it now with new eyes and new ears and with a renewed attention to one central question: If this proposal is to be approved by you, the 2004 General Conference, will The United Methodist Church better fulfill Christ’s mission in the world, that is, will our ministry be more effective?

This plan is the fruit of some four years of committed labor, crafted through the joint wisdom of many voices from across our connection, as

charged by this body, which met in Cleveland. Not only this, this proposal is the heir to several quadrennia of study of the ordering of our general agencies. The General Council on Ministries believes the time is now right for us to act.

You know where I stand in relation to this proposal. Soon we will know where we stand as a General Conference. I prayerfully invite you to continue to perfect this proposal instead of simply disengaging the process or rejecting it wholesale. Let us conference together in the coming days so that we might hear a word from God on high of what God might do in this United Methodist Church.

So then, now, let us listen in to a conversation from Barrett's Chapel.

(video presentation)

BISHOP PAUP: We at the General Council on Ministries are grateful for the opportunity that we have had to serve you and this church in bringing this proposal to this General Conference. The proposal and its enabling legislation is in the committee work and will return to us later in the conference, but we prayerfully and carefully enter into conferencing with you toward decision.

And now to introduce the second part of our report on our special program recommendations, it is my pleasure to call upon my colleague Bishop Leo Soriano, not only a member of the Council of Bishops but also of the General Council on Ministries, who will also introduce other presenters. Bishop Soriano.

A Holistic Strategy on Africa and Latin America and the Caribbean

BISHOP LEO A. SORIANO: Good morning. Thank you for this opportunity to address the 2004 General Conference. This morning the General Council on Ministries brings forward the recommendation of the special program A Holistic Strategy on Africa and Latin America and the Caribbean, in accordance with Paragraph 703.10 of

The Book of Discipline, 2000. According to that paragraph, and I quote, "A special program is a quadrennial emphasis initiated by a general program-related agency in accordance with Paragraphs 906.1, .2, and .4, approved by General Conference, and assigned to a general program-related agency. The program shall be designed in response to a distinct opportunity or need in God's world that is evidenced by research or other supporting data and shall propose achievable goals within the quadrennium."

The General Council on Ministries is recommending A Holistic Strategy on Africa and Latin America and the Caribbean, to be coordinated with the General Board of Global Ministries, in cooperation with all levels of The United Methodist Church, to strengthen the church's witness and ministry in Africa and Latin America and the Caribbean. The general agencies with programs in Africa and Latin America and the Caribbean propose to fund this holistic strategy through the 2005-2008 budgets, which are part of the World Service budget request to the 2004 General Conference. Additionally, the General Council on Ministries requests the General Council on Finance and Administration to allocate \$1.32 million for the 2005-2008 quadrennium to the General Board of Global Ministries, as the program agency to which this special program will be assigned for coordination.

Now I would like to introduce to you the Reverend Jane Allen Middleton to explain the rationale for this special program. Jane?

JANE ALLEN MIDDLETON (New York): Beloved members of the General Conference of 2004, I invite you to envision for a moment a blue-green sphere floating in the cosmos, spinning gently: our earth home; God's precious creation; one world. We, the General Conference of 2004, have the possibility of participating with God in doing a new thing. This General Conference is invited to confirm a vision of ministry with the central con-

ferences of Africa, and the affiliated autonomous concordat churches of Latin American and the Caribbean, found together through *(unintelligible)*. The Holistic Strategy for Africa and for Latin America and the Caribbean, a special program, provides a unified response to the crises in these areas of our world, offering opportunities for relationships between our sisters and brothers in the Southern Hemisphere with our sisters and brothers in the Northern Hemisphere, affirming the reality that we are all God's people, with needs and gifts.

Yesterday I had the high privilege of serving Communion at the opening worship service, and I was overwhelmed, brought to tears, by the power of serving in turn delegates from Georgia, Peru, Estonia, Florida, the Philippines, Bulgaria, Virginia, Katanga; we saw some of those delegates this morning, standing before us. We may not speak the same oral language, but we speak the same language of Jesus Christ. We truly are a global church.

We can partner with God, being swept away by the Spirit into a new mission age. We are called as United Methodists for such a time as this to respond to and with our sisters and brothers. To do less would be to shirk our responsibility to make disciples of Jesus Christ. In a time when we as a church struggle with our differences and with issues that threaten to divide us, the Holistic Strategy for Africa and Latin America and the Caribbean provides a celebration of all that unites us—indeed, our oneness in Jesus Christ and our commitment to reach out to those in need, to give until we heal. The call to us as a church is first and foremost to respond to a world that is crying out for healing and hope.

And now I would like to introduce Dr. Carolyn Johnson, who will discuss the relationship between the general agencies and the annual conferences with the areas of Africa and Latin America and the Caribbean.

CAROLYN E. JOHNSON: Good

morning. Actions taken during the 1996 General Conference enabled the general agencies of The United Methodist Church to work directly with the annual conferences residing within the central conferences throughout the world. In what may seem like only eight very short years, that form of empowerment has enabled the general agencies to develop programming and resources for United Methodists in Africa, Latin America, and the Caribbean. The work conducted by the general agencies complemented the partnerships and the covenant relationships between annual conferences and between individual churches from both the United States and Europe, to Africa, Latin America, and the Caribbean.

Let me share just a few of the very many ministries and resources that have resulted from that new form of engagement. Those include the development of curriculum and education in the areas of evangelism and liturgy and worship; training programs for lay and clergy leaders; technical and financial support for institutions; scholarship assistance; the publication of resource materials, including but not limited to *The Book of Discipline*, *The Book of Resolutions*, and *The Upper Room*; and beyond the education issues to move into healthcare areas, so that there were many projects on community-based healthcare, which included building and financial support of medical and dental clinics, pharmacies, hospitals, and even the digging of wells; a wide range of humanitarian assistance, as well as refugee resettlement.

Importantly, there were also projects that dealt with witness and advocacy work, particularly on land mines and the land-mine ban treaty, debt cancellation, economic development assistance, funding and training regarding HIV and AIDS awareness and treatment, protocols that would govern conditions around child soldiers, and a myriad of other issues.

But that empowerment emphasis also included things like the supplementing of pastoral salaries, academies

for evangelism and church growth, new church starts, and the construction of church and school buildings. But lest you think that it's only the general agencies, it actually is a connection between the agencies and annual conferences within the United States. So the list could go on and on, but what we'd like to do at this point is to introduce Reverend Dr. Carl Schenck from Missouri to discuss how his annual conference has been in partnership with the Mozambique Annual Conference.

Annual Conference Partnerships

CARL L. SCHENCK: Thank you, Dr. Johnson. It's been called "the Miracle in Mozambique." For 15 years, the annual conferences in Missouri have been in covenant partnership with the annual conferences in Mozambique. During that time, the 170 parishes in Mozambique have also been linked in partnerships with congregations in Missouri. We have supported pastors' salaries, we have built church buildings, we have dug wells, we have removed land mines, we have supported healthcare. In these and in many other ways, the covenant has made it possible for United Methodists in Mozambique and in Missouri to know one another, to love one another, and to truly become partners. It has been called "the Miracle in Mozambique," and I have seen the miracle there; but I have also seen the difference it has made in Missouri, and I believe we could just as rightfully call it "the Miracle in Missouri."

And now, please, give your attention to our colleague and brother, Bob Hoshibata.

ROBERT T. HOSHIBATA: My dear sisters and brothers in Jesus Christ, I stand before you first in a moment of personal privilege. You . . . earlier received from members of the delegation of the Pacific Northwest Annual Conference an invitation to come and to receive a gift of a folded origami crane. Members of the delegation and our friends have been folding 1,001 cranes as symbols of hope and peace that come to us first from Japan and

throughout the world—a symbol to tell you that we are here at this General Conference, all of us, in order to offer our prayers for peace.

We invite you to come to our delegation table to take a crane or two and to sign a special book that we've provided in order to record your commitment to pray with us. These prayers are being offered by many people, and they speak of the need to always engage in prayers for peace. It may be the prayer for peace between you and me, or the prayer for peace between you and another person, or the prayer of peace for this General Conference, or, indeed, the prayer for peace for our broken, war-torn world. Some have already asked that there is a prayer for the spirit of discernment in our place. Some have written, "May God truly make us one"; and one has written, "For a special for a beloved family member who is fighting the war in Iraq."

I invite you to come and take a crane and sign our book, to make your commitment for peace for this day. And I invite you now to join me in prayer.

(prayer)

And now let me take a moment to share with you something else that is good happening in the Pacific Northwest Annual Conference. Honduras, a nation about the size of Pennsylvania, about half the number of people in this state—for the Pacific Northwest Annual Conference, Honduras represents our partnership with our holistic approach to Africa, Latin America, and the Caribbean. Through the United Methodist Volunteer in Missions program, our missionary from the Pacific Northwest, Lyda Pierce, is involved in creating the destination manual, which will pave the way for United Methodist Volunteer in Mission teams that will come to be a part of the exciting ministry of justice and service, of healing and peace, in that country.

Lyda Pierce is also a United Methodist mission member of the steering committee, creating a new entity in Honduras, The United Methodist

Mission Church. As a member of the steering committee, Lyda is helping to guide the destiny of this church, which is only five years old but boasts 12 congregations and 1,200 members. Partnering with the General Board of Global Ministries, this represents hope for the future as members of this United Methodist Mission Church in Honduras continue their courageous work of making disciples for Jesus Christ. The field is ready for harvest; and through our gift of our Bishop, Elias Galvan, there is infrastructure being created for The United Methodist Mission Church in Honduras.

Sometimes meeting instead of in a comfortable setting like we are meeting, instead of meeting in settings such as this, they meet beneath trees, outdoors in God's created world, to do the business of creating the church. The field *is* ready for harvest, for making disciples for Jesus Christ. This is part of our participation, in the hope that we have for a holistic approach to Latin America, Africa, Latin America, and the Caribbean.

BISHOP PAUP: I thank my colleague drummers for drumming the message of this recommendation before you. And now as we turn to the third component of the report, let me offer a dangerous opportunity to those who are able and would like to quietly stand and stretch while I introduce the report. You may wish to take advantage of such a moment, but I'm going to keep on talking as you do.

The council is called upon each quadrennium to report on the program ministries of the church as they are lived out through our general program agencies and the ethnic initiatives that are established by the General Conference. We know that each of these 13 entities is worthy of the opportunity to report directly to you; but it is the rule of the General Conference to provide that the report be given by the General Council on Ministries on behalf of these program ministry units of our general church. Indeed, it is our pleasure to do so. We have made every effort to faith-

fully represent the breadth and depth of the vital ministries carried out through these agencies and initiatives.

And so now I invite you to watch with me as we glimpse their work through the window of video technology.

(video presentation)

ALFRED JOHNSON: Hello, I'm Alfred Johnson, the team leader for the "General Advance for Christ and His Church." We will culminate this report.

Douglas Steer, a Quaker spiritual writer, speaks in the face of overwhelming spiritual and temporal diseases, yet reminds us of the unmatched lavishes of God's grace to meet every human need. The Advance for Christ and His Church has been a precious and powerful stream of lavish and redemptive grace throughout this world for the past 56 years. This year, we will reach our \$1 billion mark, proclaiming that our profit margin has been in redemptive healing and the touching of souls for Christ. With 2,000 ministries in more than 100 countries, including the General Board of Global Ministries missionaries in more than 50 countries, let us hear a precious few of those who have answered the call reflecting Hymn 593, "Here I Am, Lord."

(video presentation)

JOHNSON: Grateful to God, this concludes our report. Thanks be to God.

(singing and applause)

BISHOP KIM: Please be seated for a moment. We'll hear an announcement from Carolyn Marshall, and then we'll have a 15 minute break.

MARSHALL: Announcement to advise the conference that is has been discovered that there are several errors in the reprinting of the Plan of Organization and Rules of Order. They will be corrected and reprinted tomorrow.

BISHOP KIM: OK, we'll have a 15 minute break, and 15 minute only. We'd better come back so that we can

finish this agenda before we go to lunch. Thank you.

(break)

BISHOP KIM: So that we can begin and get you out for lunchtime. While you are coming to your seats, I'd like to share with you, Western Pennsylvania Conference, the host team has been working hard, and especially working hard to make this conference very spiritual and surrounded by prayer. So we have a shoe-shine and prayer program at some point on Wednesdays, if you go up to the third floor, they give you a free shoe shine, which is a modern day foot washing. And then you have a place to pray, and pray together for this great General Conference. We are trying to surround our sessions with prayers to God.

OK, please come, so that we can begin to hear the Laity Address at this point. Please come to your seat.

OK, we are going to begin the Laity Address pretty soon, so please come to, come back to your seats.

Bishop Fannin, are you going to introduce the speaker? Please come to the microphone and begin your introduction.

BISHOP ROBERT FANNIN: Good morning! It's my great privilege to introduce to this great General Conference Miss Gloria Holt, the Lay Leader of the North Alabama Annual Conference. She is a member of the Clear Branch United Methodist Church, a new congregation with 2000 in worship—eight years old. She's the president of the Association of Annual Conference Lay Leaders, president of the Southeastern Jurisdiction Association of Lay Leaders. She is an innovative, creative partner in ministry. Let us welcome Miss Gloria Holt for the Laity Address.

(applause)

[The text of the Laity Address can be found beginning on page 1497.]

(Laity Address concludes)

(applause)

BISHOP KIM: Thank you. Thank you very much for that wonderful address.

We are somewhat behind the schedule, so we'll ask Mary Alice Massey what to do.

MASSEY: Friends, we've had a busy morning; and we have decided that we will let you adjourn and have a nice lunch, let you come back here for your committee meetings after lunch recess, beginning at 2:30. And then tomorrow morning, we will be privileged to hear from the General Council on Finance and Administration from Sandy Lakore and her report. We hope this meets with your approval. Thank you.

(applause)

BISHOP KIM: OK, we are adjourned for lunch, recess for lunch.

Friday Morning, April 30, 2004

(Morning worship)

BISHOP JAMES KING: Beautiful people! Beautiful, beautiful people, if I could have your attention. Please return to your seats. We're behind schedule. If you'll come back home. Don't leave now. Please come back. We are behind schedule. If you don't come back, you'll still be beautiful; but come back!

(laughter)

Come back so we can get started. Thank you.

(pause)

Please be seated. Please come back home. Come back to your station. If you don't come back, I'll start singing.

(laughter)

The people in Kentucky always come back when I say that. All right, please return to your seats so we can get started. If you will return to your seats, we will get started. Here's what we have before us. I will be recognizing in just a few moments the represen-

tatives from the Commission on Archives and History. Then Bishop Mel Talbert will have a presentation to make, or a recognition. Then we'll turn our attention to recognizing retired bishops. Then we'll hear from the Committee on Presiding Officers report. Then the Committee on Calendar and Agenda report, then conference announcements from Carolyn Marshall, and then we'll be ready to do some more work. But please return so we can get started now.

Now I have riding shotgun with me, I mean, I have two persons assisting me: Bishop Joe Pennel and Bishop Joe Yeakel. I'm very appreciative to them for their assistance. Thank you.

(applause)

OK, thank you. I now recognize our representatives from the Commission on Archives and History.

Recognition of Bishop Thomas

CHARLES YRIGOYEN JR.: Thank you, Bishop. Bishop King, delegates, and friends, from time to time, the General Commission on Archives and History is privileged to recognize and honor unusually important contributors to the knowledge of our history. A year ago, the General Commission on Archives and History voted to recognize one such person. This is Bishop James S. Thomas.

I remember seeing Bishop Thomas about 50 years ago at a convocation of United Methodist youth at Purdue University and was deeply moved by his presence and message. We are deeply grateful today to offer this recognition at the General Conference and especially following this extraordinary service of worship.

I'm pleased to call on the General Commission's president, Bishop J. Lawrence McCleskey, from South Carolina, and our vice president, Bishop Solito Kuramin Toquero, from the Philippines, to make this special recognition to Bishop Thomas.

BISHOP J. LAWRENCE MCCLESKEY: Thank you, Dr. Yrigoyen. Bishop King, my colleague

bishops, delegates, and friends, how fitting it is following this service of appreciation for African Americans who remained in our denomination that we recognize and honor the chief architect of the plan which shaped the merger of the Central Jurisdiction's annual conferences into the regional jurisdictions.

Bishop James S. Thomas is a native of the great state of South Carolina, *(applause)* which is the wonderful area in which I am now privileged to serve, an area which has contributed immensely to the African American leadership of The United Methodist Church.

The son of a Methodist minister, Bishop Thomas has served as a pastor, a theological school professor and president, and a general agency staff person. He chaired the committee popularly known as "the committee of five." This was a body created by the Central Jurisdiction to develop a plan whereby that body's annual conferences, congregations, pastors, and bishops were merged into the regional jurisdictional structures. Bishop Thomas was elected to the episcopacy in 1964, and he served for 12 years in the Iowa Area and for 12 years in the Ohio East Area.

(applause)

The Commission on Archives and History is honored to present to him this award for outstanding leadership in United Methodist history. The award is presented for his overall leadership but principally for his book *Methodism's Racial Dilemma: The Story of the Central Jurisdiction*. This book is available at Cokesbury, and it tells the important story of the dissolution of the Central Jurisdiction as part of United Methodism's journey from being a structurally segregated church towards becoming a racially inclusive, beloved community.

In telling the story of the Central Jurisdiction, Bishop Thomas casts a vision in these words, which conclude the text of this book: "Opportunities before the church are always better

than dilemmas. What was feared in 1939 does not need to be feared any longer. As far as racial structure is concerned, The United Methodist Church can more faithfully seek the goal of one shepherd, one fold.”

Bishop Thomas, we thank you for holding this vision before us. We thank you for embodying this vision in your life and ministry; and we honor you with deep gratitude and continued commitment to realize the vision toward which you have pointed us.

Now I call upon Bishop Solito Toquero, the vice president of the General Commission on Archives and History, to present this award to Bishop Thomas, after which we shall have the great joy of hearing from Bishop Thomas.

(applause)

BISHOP JAMES. S. THOMAS: Thank you very much. Bishop, *(unintelligible)* whatever control I had on my deep emotion, I've been lost in the joy and the thanksgiving I have, both to the commission and now to the General Conference for the presentation of this award. I wish I could deserve it, but I do want to accept it, praying for humility as I do.

Just one or two words of perspective, as I express my appreciation. When I was a college graduate in South Carolina, I never dreamed that I could be a part of solving the problem that stirred deep emotions at the hearts of so many of us. I was only elected to sit where you sit on the General Conference floor one time in my life, 40 years ago in Pittsburgh. We had some stormy debates over the Central Jurisdiction; and, if I must be absolutely frank, I was pushed into service much more than volunteering for it, for when one is pushed into the ocean, you don't have many alternatives. *(laughter)* And so we had to swim and plan and pray and work.

Over these 40 years, I've tried to do whatever I could do, and almost missed this General Conference and would not have been here but for Dr. Walter

Kimbrough, of Cascade Church, who felt that my legs would hold up if my head would. *(laughter)* I hope both of them will survive these days. Thank you very much.

(applause)

BISHOP KING: Thank you, Bishop Thomas, and thank you, conference, for showing your love.

Yes? I recognize mic 2.

CARL L. SCHENCK (Missouri): Thank you, Bishop King. With your consent, I'd like to place a motion before the conference.

BISHOP KING: Please go ahead.

Resource for Reconciliation

SCHENCK: I'm Carl Schenck of the Missouri Conference, and I move that the General Conference direct the GCCUIC to continue through this quadrennium the emphasis on leading The United Methodist Church in acts of repentance for racism by gathering and organizing the information about those who stayed into a resource for the church in listing the support and cooperation of other agencies in the Council of Bishops and working continually toward the goal of reconciliation and unity. The GCCUIC is further directed to make every reasonable effort to involve the church at all levels in this project, including annual conferences and local churches. If I have a second, I'd like to speak very briefly.

BISHOP KING: There is a second.

SCHENCK: I am dependent upon those whom I have offended for them to be the agents of my reconciliation and restoration. We as individuals and as a connection are dependent and have been blessed by the reconciling love of those whom we have frequently excluded. This motion offers the church opportunities to continue to examine our hearts and our actions and to bring us to those acts of repentance, which further our reconciliation. Thank you.

BISHOP KING: And thank you. The motion is before you. Are you ready to vote? If so, please vote now. [*Yes, 744; No, 42; 16 Abstain*]

The motion carries. Thank you.

(applause)

All right, let us continue now with our agenda. I'd like to recognize Bishop Mel Talbert.

Presentation of Bishop Hoyt

BISHOP MELVIN G. TALBERT: Bishop King and members of the General Conference, good morning. As ecumenical officer for the Council of Bishops, it has been my distinct honor and privilege to represent the council and this church, indeed across the globe. And I want to express my deep appreciation in your presence to my colleague bishops for giving me this opportunity over the last four years in particular.

I've been able to work with many people and to go many places and to do many things. I have a real honor this morning to present a very special person. He is one that is no stranger to many of us in our church because we've worked with him before. He has been a stalwart leader in the ecumenical movement all of his adult life. He worked with the Consultation on Church Union and continues to work now with Churches Uniting in Christ.

He is currently the president of the North American section of the World Methodist Council. He is the president of the National Council of Churches for 2004 and 2005. He is the esteemed bishop for the Fourth Episcopal District of the Christian Methodist Episcopal Church, with headquarters in Shreveport, Louisiana.

I want to present to some and introduce to others my dear colleague and friend in the ecumenical movement, Bishop Thomas L. Hoyt Jr., to greet us.

(applause)

BISHOP THOMAS L. HOYT JR: Thank you very much. Methodist people know how to greet each other, and I'm thankful to you for that greeting. I want to thank Bishop Melvin Talbert for what a wonderful person he is. He has been one of the strong fighters for

justice and also for lifting up the ecumenical agenda.

Bishop King, and to the College of Bishops—very gracious college and distinguished college—to all of the delegates present from all over the world, I'm grateful to you for having the opportunity to say a few words. I think about what I heard this morning was a tremendous sermon from Bishop Kammerer. It was one that I will long remember as a challenge to the church.

I'm grateful—I was in Pittsburgh 40 years ago as an exchange student from ITC in Atlanta, and I was at Union Theological Seminary. And we came as a group of students to your General Conference, and we sat in the balcony. One of the bishops said to us, "You are enthusiastic. You are young people. I hope you have the enthusiasm that you have now when you get my age."

And I remember that there was great debate over the Central Jurisdiction; and you have come through it and you have dialogued and you have prevailed in a way that I would like to offer thanks to you.

I'm wonderfully blessed to serve now as the president of the World Methodist Council, North American Region, president of the National Council of Churches, and as Bishop Talbert has said, bishop in the Fourth Episcopal District of The Christian Methodist Episcopal Church that comprises Louisiana and Mississippi. Some of God's choice bishops have been through there from The United Methodist Church. I had Bishop Gardner and Bishop Hutchinson to preach at my annual conferences this year, and what preachers they are. I'm thankful to them for their leadership and for their work together.

I really want to say a few things about George Freeman, who is executive director, general secretary of the World Methodist Council, and Bob Edgar, who is the secretary of our National Council of Churches. He's going to greet you in the next few days, and so will George Freeman. So I'm going to let them take care of that greeting.

Moved by the Worship Service

I'm moved by this worship experience not only because it reminds me of the heritage of the CME church, the AME church, and the AME Zion church, who at one stage in church life felt that they had to *leave* home in order to feel *at* home. I am reminded that a repairing of the breach and restoration of relationships is taking place through your participation in Pan-Methodism, Churches Uniting in Christ, and your own call to repentance and fruits of repentance. You've been doing that a few years now. I would be remiss if I did not tell you today there is a CME bishop, Bishop Charles Helton, who is president of the Pan Methodist Council. He is recuperating, doing well, from a kidney transplant. He had it only ten days ago. The kidney was given to him by his daughter—an ultimate sacrifice, but he's doing well. But I wanted to mention his name, because he was an avid supporter and is an avid supporter of Methodism and Pan-Methodism. He would have me bring greetings to you on his behalf and ask prayers for him from the Methodist colleagues for himself and his family.

My deep emotions are felt today by this service of worship on behalf of those who stayed at home and chose to worship and work for changes of relationships within the house. Such actions on their part called for creative dialogue and for tension, shared power and prayer, shared gifts and graces, and a determination to be faithful to the gospel message, and the challenge of Jesus, that they may be one as he and his Parent were one, so that the world might believe. I long for that day, and I thank God that there are those who have been faithful to the task within the understanding of The United Methodist Church.

Let me close my greetings to you with a dialogue from The World Council of Churches meeting in Australia in which the former executive secretary of NCCC USA and the executive secretary of the World Council of Churches were in a dialogue in the plenary ses-

sion. The National Council of Churches president at that time asked the World Council of Churches secretary, "What does it take to be a leader today?"

And he said, "You must have three things to be a good leader: You must have a screw loose, (*laughter*) you must have a death wish, and you must have a sense of humor." And he proceeded to explain what that meant.

So you must have a screw loose, and that means that you can't screw things down too tightly. You've got to leave room for the Holy Spirit. Come, Holy Spirit. To have a death wish means that faithfulness in the call of God demands a cross. Those who would be faithful to God in justice and in ecumenical work must have a sense of calling to take up the cross and follow Christ. To be a disciple of Christ demands, what Bonhoeffer called, come and die, to give oneself away for the being of others. Then you must have a sense of humor. One cannot take oneself too seriously. One must have a sense of humor and understand that the thing that keeps us going is to learn how to make the devil frown. And I think we've got a lot of people in the church who never smile because they are so busy thinking about the negatives of life, until they do not have enough time to think about the positives.

That's the reason I ask you to keep on making the devil frown. Keep on lifting up one's life for justice and ecumenical work, keep on having a screw loose, and keep on making changes in your midst, understanding that we are called to be faithful and not successful. When we do *our* work, God will do the rest.

And so I say to you today, keep the frown on the devil's face. Keep the devil frowning, for what you do today for the positive understandings of life will be what God will give you a crown for. What you did in the worship service shows that you are willing to have a screw loose, seek the obedience of the Holy Spirit, and continue to bring the power of a frowning evil environment to an end. Come, Lord Jesus.

We greet you in that name that is above every other name. In the name of Jesus, we greet you and pray God will give you a wonderful General Conference as you continue to speak truth to power. May God bless you. May God give you strength.

(applause)

BISHOP KING: Thank you, Bishop Hoyt. Thank you very much for your words of encouragement. Now, General Conference family, Bishop Melvin Talbert has been the ecumenical officer for this quadrennium, and he has done an outstanding job. Would you join me in saying thanks to him for his work?

(applause)

And aren't you wonderful, too? Thank you.

All right, let us continue. We want to recognize retiring bishops and the presentation of the new Episcopal leadership team. Our conference secretary, Bishop Sharon Rader, will come and lead us.

Recognition of Retiring Bishops

BISHOP SHARON ZIMMERMAN RADER (Wisconsin Area): Bishop King, members of the General Conference, and guests, bishops are elected as general superintendents of the whole church. As members of the Council of Bishops, we, according to the *Discipline* are bound in special covenant with all other bishops. In keeping with this covenant, bishops fulfill their servant leadership and express their mutual accountability. The Council of Bishops is a faith community of mutual trust and concern, responsible for faith development and continuing well-being of its members.

The church expects the Council of Bishops to speak to the church and from the church to the world and to give leadership in the quest for Christian unity and interreligious relationships.

Two thousand years ago, Paul wrote to that early church in Corinth these

words about their exercise in mutual leadership. He said, "Now there are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit. And there are varieties of services, but the same Lord. And there are varieties of activities, but it is the same God who activates all of them in everyone. To each is given the manifestation of Spirit for the common good. Now, you are the body of Christ, and individually members of it. And God has appointed in the church, first apostles, second prophets, third teachers, then deeds of power, then gifts of healing, forms of assistance, forms of leadership, various kinds of tongues. But strive for the greater gifts, and I will show you a more excellent way."

There are varieties of gifts in the Council of Bishops. Held together in the same Spirit, some of our members will change their activities in future months. When next we gather as a General Conference, 24 bishops will have entered the retired relationship. I invite them to come and join me here on the platform as I read their names. Elected in 1972 to be a bishop of the church Bishop Fama Onema. In 1984 Bishop Felton May, Bishop Woody White, Bishop Neil Irons, Bishop Elias Galvan. Elected in 1986 Bishop Ruediger Minor. Bishop William Oden, Bishop Bruce Blake, Bishop William Dew were elected in 1988. In 1989 Bishop Walter Klaiber and Bishop Heinrich Bolleter were elected. In 1992 Bishop Alfred Norris, Bishop Robert Fannin, Bishop Fritz Mutti, Bishop Ken Carder, Bishop Hae-Jong Kim, Bishop William Morris, Bishop Clifton Ives, and Sharon Rader were elected. In 1996 Bishop Joseph Pennel, Bishop Susan Hassinger, Bishop Marion Edwards, Bishop Joseph Sprague, Bishop Ray Chamberlain.

Cumulatively these bishops represent 344 years of servant leadership and mutual accountability in this Council of Bishops and to the whole church. I am sure you would wish to greet them.

(applause)

BISHOP KING: Thank you for showing your love and kindness.

There is a great deal of wisdom among that group of members who are a part this council and I am personally blessed to have them on the council to guide and to help those of us who have been more recently elected. As we continue now, let's turn our attention to the committee on presiding officers report.

Paul Extrum-Fernandez would you please come and share with us. I am so sorry, we have not completed this time of recognition of our leadership transition team. So, let's continue that. Bishop Minor.

Leadership Transition Team

BISHOP RUEDIGER R. MINOR (Eurasia Area): The Council of Bishops has all its life elected a president each year rotating leadership among the jurisdictions and central conferences. Through prayerful discernment and collegial conversation the council has determined that we will move to a different model of leadership for the 21st century.

A team of leaders was elected by discernment process presented to the whole council and elected. The president, Bishop Peter Weaver, is now elected for 2 years rather than 1. And, as I am naming the other members of the team I would ask them to rise and to stand. Others on the team include; the president elect Bishop Janice Riggle Huie, who for a family concern can't be present this morning. The secretary, Bishop Ernest Lyght, the executive secretary, Bishop Roy Sano, and the ecumenical officer, Bishop William Oden, and the past president. In this brief region before the General Conference, we symbolize this transition of leadership which has taken place and acknowledge publicly to the whole church the changes and the pattern of leadership selection and election. We, also, visibly demonstrate our connectedness within The United Methodist Church and within the Body of Christ universal. Bishop Weaver, I now present to you a symbol of our responsibility as a leadership team for the Council of Bishops the Bible, The *Book of*

Discipline and the hymnal. God's blessing be with you.

(*applause*)

BISHOP PETER D. WEAVER (Philadelphia Area): Thank you Bishop Minor, sisters and brothers in Christ. The book of our eternal covenant, the book of our communal covenant and the book that keeps us singing in harmony with all the rich diversity of our parts. Thanks be to God. I wish on behalf of the new leadership team and the Council of Bishops to simply say that we are first and foremost with you, disciples of Jesus Christ, and as members of the body of Christ no more significant, nor no less significant. This leadership team will seek to be servant leaders of the Council of Bishops so that the council may be servant leaders of the United Methodist movement as we seek to serve the world in life changing, world changing, neighborhood changing ministries on behalf of Jesus Christ. To serve the present age our calling to fulfill. Oh may it all our purpose and passion and people and pocketbooks and prayer engage to do our master's will. I invite you to pray with me as you see on the screen the prayer for our church and for our council as we enter this new season of God's grace and witness. Will you prayer with me as you see it on the screen?

(*prayer*)

BISHOP KING: And, thank you, Bishop Weaver.

(*applause*)

And now, Paul, would you come? Paul Extrum-Fernandez.

PAUL EXTRUM-FERNANDEZ (California-Nevada): Thank you, Bishop King, and members of the General Conference. Tomorrow's presiding bishop for Saturday morning hails from the state Mississippi is also now resident Bishop of the Los Angeles area, Bishop Mary Ann Swenson.

BISHOP KING: Thank you Paul. Alright, let's turn our attention now to

the Committee on Calendar and the agenda report. Mary Alice Massey and L. Fitzgerald Reist.

MARY ALICE MASSEY (Florida): Good morning Bishop, Council of Bishops, and delegates. We are behind, but it has been time well spent, I believe, in recognizing our heritage. This morning after conference announcements, we will break for legislative committees. Now there is a break scheduled here, but I notice that all of you took a break about 30 minutes ago. So, I will expect that you will just go directly to your legislative committees, those of you who took breaks already. This afternoon you will be in legislative committee sessions.

We will have dinner recess, and you will return to your committees. If you should be one of the lucky ones who finishes your business with your legislative committee, then you will have the evening off. Saturday morning, we will follow the same agenda as we have been following with our choral music and worship service. And after the plenary call, we will have some legislative business that we will attend to for about an hour to an hour and a half and then returning to our legislative committees, lunch, and then in the afternoon legislative committees will meet again. This is your schedule for the next 24 hours, Bishop. Thank you very much. I would like to call on Gere Reist now who brings the calendar items.

Consent Calendars

L. FITZGERALD REIST: Good morning. I am Fitzgerald Reist, coordinator of the calendar, and I invite you to turn in your *DCA* to page 1544. Page 1544. Consent Calendar A01. Mary Alice, I didn't realize that you left the stage; I need you back here. All of the items on Consent Calendar A01 are correct as printed.

MASSEY: Bishop, I move that we accept the actions on Event Calendar 1.

BISHOP KING: It is before you if you would support this motion, would you vote now?

(*pause*)

BISHOP KING: Thank you, the motion carries. [*Yes, 84; No, 5; Abstain, 7*]

REIST: On the facing page, page 1545, page 1545, appears Consent Calendar B01. B01. Calendar item 15 has been removed from that calendar. Calendar item 15 has been removed from that calendar and now appears on page 1581 for consideration at a later time. Consent Calendar B01 is before you with that correction.

MASSEY: I move approval of all the action on B01 except for the one that has been removed, which is calendar item 15.

BISHOP KING: It is before you B01. If you would support this action, please vote now.

(*pause*)

The motion carries. [*850 Yes; 7 No; Abstain 2*] Thank you. Thank you, Jerry. Alright, let's turn our attention now to announcements. Carolyn Marshall.

Carolyn, as you're coming, I see a wave out here to my right. Mic 8.

(*pause*)

ANN A. SAUNKEAH (Oklahoma Indian Missionary): Bishop King, I would like to ask permission to suspend the rules to be able to distribute materials from the Native American Comprehensive Plan and a gift from the Oklahoma Indian Missionary Conference for Monday's plenary.

BISHOP KING: OK, there's a motion before us to suspend the rules. Is there a second? There is a second. If you would vote . . . this requires a two-thirds vote to be able to distribute this material. If you would support this motion to suspend the rules, please vote now.

(*pause*)

Thank you. The motion passes. [*765 Yes; 100 No*] Thank you for your support. Alright, Carolyn—I do not see Carolyn Marshall—if you'll come now and share announcements with us.

CAROLYN M. MARSHALL: Yes, Bishop. I would refer all of us to the announcements on page 1556 and 1557 in today's *DCA*. As you know, this is the way for disseminating information. However, there are two items here that need to be particularly lifted.

One, in the second column on p. 1556, is that of check cashing procedures. Many of you have checks, which you would like to convert into cash. The Treasurer's Office has been made aware of the fact that although instructions were in the packets, and instructions have been given on what bank is prepared, we seem to be going to other financial institutions which are not prepared to handle these checks. And so I would urge that you be mindful of that particular bank, PNC Bank, Steel Plaza, 600 Grant Street, for your check-cashing purposes.

And then on p. 1557, call attention to the fact that the Commission on Central Conference Affairs will meet in Room 406 this afternoon from 1:00 to 2:30. Just an additional announcement

as a reminder, the Service of Holy Communion around our center altar will be this afternoon at 12:40 with Bishop Bolleter as the celebrant.

BISHOP KING: I received on my table a commercial from the Council of Bishops, "Remember the Children and the Poor." That's the Children and Poverty Initiative. And now I'd like for Bishop Gregory Palmer to come and send us forth with prayer.

As he is coming, let me share one matter with you . . . I'm sorry, there's a wave back here to my right, mic 7.

MICHAEL C. MUMME (Southwest Texas): I rise to appoint a parliamentary inquiry. Please turn in today's *DCA* to page 1566.

(pause)

OK, I'd like to know if the report from the Church and Society legislative committee on 4/27 is amendable by this body.

BISHOP KING: Not at this time. Thank you.

Alright, as Bishop Palmer is coming now . . . I do not, uh, see any unrest or need for more discussion before we take our break. I would remind the body that all legislative committees are open. It was reported to me this morning that some persons have been turned away from participating in legislative committees or being present. Please remember that all of our legislative committees are open. They are not closed meetings.

Alright. I hope that you have a wonderful time with your legislative committee and a great afternoon. Bishop Palmer, would you come and lead us now?

BISHOP GREGORY V. PALMER (Iowa Area): Dear friends as you are able, would you rise.

(prayer)