

Proceedings

Afternoon Proceedings for May 1

Plenary 1

BISHOP Sue Hauptert-Johnson: Good afternoon, everyone! This session is called back in order. I am Sue Hauptert-Johnson. I am the resident bishop of the Virginia Annual Conference, the Richmond Episcopal Area.

(applause)

Thank you for that. I want to introduce—you know, everything in our system is done in connection, even presiding. And so I want to thank Delores Williamston and David Bard; these two bishops are backing me up today and I'm grateful for them. As we enter into the afternoon session, I want to invite you into my favorite spiritual practice. You might not be familiar with it because I made it up.

(laughter)

But when my daughter, who is twenty-two now, was a toddler in the early 2000s, all of the electronic devices had docking stations, do you remember those? They had cradles. And my daughter, every morning, I started noticing that my toddler would crawl up into my lap for about ten minutes. And she would just ease back into me. And after ten minutes, the only still time she had, she'd be up and going. And as I thought about that, I thought *that's like a cradling docking device*. She would just settle into my love and bask in my presence. So my favorite spiritual practice—every day I do this. I like to do it for about thirty minutes, but I usually get about ten in, like she did. I invite you to just settle back and imagine yourself resting in the arms of God. Cradle yourself, dock yourself in God, and feel the power of the Holy Spirit. The calm of the Holy Spirit. The still small voice of God in your hearts and minds. I think that's important to do as we enter into business. So let's join each other in cradling ourselves in the arms of God.

(pause)

O God, as we bask in your presence, remind us that we are your beloved. Strengthen us and remind us that Christ wells in our hearts and root and ground us in love so that all we do flows forth from you. O Lord, help us have the power to comprehend with all the saints, what is the breadth and length and height and depth of your love, and to know the love of Christ that surpasses all understanding. May we be filled, O God, with all of your fullness. And may the work we do reflect the love you have for us and your love for those we serve. In Jesus' name, we pray. Amen.

100th Anniversary of the United Methodist Church Building

The next item of business is a report regarding the 100th Anniversary of the United Methodist Building. The chair recognizes John Hill, Interim General Secretary of the General Board of Church and Society.

(applause)

(video playing)

JOHN HILL (Interim General Secretary of the Board of Church and Society): Good afternoon, I am John Hill. White, lay, adult, he/him pronouns, with the Board of Church and Society. And every day when I walk in to our offices in the United Methodist building in Washington, D.C., I am awestruck at the wisdom of our Methodist forbearers who boldly positioned this sacred place directly across from the U.S. Capitol. This place set apart for work, worship, and witness to the redeeming power and promise of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. And today we invite you to learn more about this amazing history on our website, umcjustice.org, or by visiting our booth in the Exhibition Hall. And just as importantly, we invite you to join us in continuing this legacy as together we write this next chapter in the powerful story of Methodist social witness for justice and peace. Thank you.

BISHOP HAUPERT-JOHNSON: Thank you for that report. We appreciate that. The next item is a presentation regarding the eightieth anniversary of UMCOR and Migrant Ministry. The chair recognizes Roland Fernandes, Molly McEntire, and Bishop Tom Bickerton to present their report. You're recognized for ten minutes for your report.

80th Anniversary of UMCOR and Migrant Ministries

ROLAND FERNANDES (General Secretary of the General Board of Global Ministry and UMCOR): Good afternoon. I am Roland Fernandez, General Secretary for Global Ministries and UMCOR. Asian American, adult, male. In 1940, this body made a momentous decision to create a new organization for relief work among war refugees in Asia and Europe: the Methodist Committee on Overseas Relief, now the United Methodist Committee on Relief or UMCOR. UMCOR is a vital part of Global Ministries' work, bringing together the service and missional aspects of our ministry. Bishop Herbert Welch, who spearheaded the founding of UMCOR, called on General Conference to form this new body to distribute the proceeds of a special offering for the relief of human suffering without the distinction of race, color, or creed. Ever faithful to that commitment, UMCOR continues to meet the needs of vulnerable populations while maintaining the dignity of those with whom it works in relationship.

Early on, UMCOR was concerned, primarily, with the plight of war refugees and migrants, especially those impacted by the Second World War. Assistance for those impacted by war, along with national disasters, has continued to be a priority for UMCOR. In 2022 when Russia invaded Ukraine, United Methodists offered an unprecedented wave of generosity to help those displaced and otherwise affected by the war.

We have responded as best we can to the devastating situation in Palestine, despite little to no access to Gaza. As a Christian humanitarian organization, we ask that humanitarian organizations have full, immediate, and safe access to Gaza and we call on all in authority to establish an immediate ceasefire so that those who are starving can be fed and cared for.

(applause)

United Methodists continue to respond generously to human suffering every day, and we are very grateful to be in mission and ministry with all of you.

(video playing)

MOLLY MCENTIRE (Florida, Board Member of the General Board of Global Ministry and UMCOR): I am Molly McEntire from the Florida Conference, a White adult. I'm also a member of the Board of Global Ministries and UMCOR. As a humanitarian relief and development agency of The United Methodist

Church, UMCOR works as part of Global Ministries to transform people and communities in ways that support holistic wellbeing. The four components of UMCOR's work is providing disaster relief and recovery, assisting migrants, fostering environmental sustainability, and promoting sustainable agriculture—operate in holistic support of one another and other Global Ministries programs, such as Global Health, to support the wellbeing of the whole person.

But UMCOR isn't just about sending help, and UMCOR does not do this work alone.

UMCOR is about helping out one another through difficult times and circumstances through the power of partnership. UMCOR's work is possible because of dedicated work on the ground of United Methodist episcopal areas and area conferences, affiliated Methodist Churches, and other partners.

Together, we all share in the work of UMCOR. In this video, meet a few of our amazing UMCOR partners:

(video playing)

BISHOP THOMAS BICKERTON: Good afternoon, church. I'm Thomas Bickerton. White, male, resident bishop of the New York Annual Conference. It's been my pleasure to serve as the president of UMCOR this past quadrennium. As United Methodists, we can and should be proud of what we've accomplished together through the United Methodist Committee on Relief over the last eighty plus years. But you know what? Our work is not done. Your support of UMCOR through UMCOR Sunday, direct giving, and partnership work, allows the United Methodist Committee on Relief to continue to show God's love. Thank you, church, thank you for your attention to neighbors near and far. Now if we might, let us together, join in prayer, as we recommit ourselves to this shared work and ministry together.

God of all people, everywhere, we thank you for UMCOR. Thank you for Herbert Welch and for all of those who have built this table of grace from which we serve the world. Through the United Methodist Committee on Relief, the world has known you better. Cleaning buckets, food, water, shelter, legal services, healthcare, solar panels, and so much more have become real and tangible signs of your great, unconditional love. May this ministry continue to alleviate suffering without regard to the ways the world has defined your people. And O God, may we be bold and brave enough to walk arm in arm with the suffering of this world. This is our prayer. Amen. Thank you.

BISHOP HAUPERT-JOHNSON: Thank you for that report.

(applause)

Calendar Items

When we recessed for lunch, we were in the process of debating Calendar Item No. 442. The chair invites Lonnie Chafin, chair of the Committee on Conferences, to resume his place on stage as we take up where we left off. I also ask and I—I—the speaker recognition pool was—no, it's still here, we've got it. So that is good. I have the speaker recognition pool, but when the orders of the day were called, a delegate was a mic. no. 6, speaking on behalf of the motion. The chair asks Guy Nyembo to return to the microphone, and when you return, you'll have thirty seconds to conclude your remarks. That was your remaining time.

OK. Go ahead. You have thirty seconds.

GUY NYEMBO (North Katanga): (*simultaneous interpretation from French*) Thank you, Bishop. I wanted to say that we are against disaffiliation in Africa, in our conferences. We want to stay in the unity of The United Methodist Church, which has a long tradition with our ancestors who had missionaries who came, were with our parents. We don't want to leave. We want to stay, but help us. Please don't inflict pain on our churches.

(*applause*)

BISHOP HAUPERT-JOHNSON: If you'll hold your applause, thank you. OK, at the time of the recess we had heard three speeches in favor and two speeches against. I call on delegate Dixie Brewster at mic. 4 to speak against.

DIXIE BREWSTER (Great Plains): Dixie Brewster, Great Plains Conference, laity. I speak against because I—I speak—I speak in favor of disaffiliation. I'm very nervous and very scared because I want a place for our churches with conservative, traditional values to go peacefully. I don't want our churches to be caught up in the court systems. I am traditional and I have loved being a United Methodist. But with the values and with what has been passed to this point, on marriage being between one man and one woman, and on human sexuality, I—I disagree and I support the churches back home that are also conservative. So we want a place to go peacefully. We will not be disruptive, and I love—I do love all. I love my homosexual friends. I love you and even though it doesn't seem that I do, I truly do. I just view the scriptures in a different way. And so, that is where I am and I would hope that you would allow a way for churches to disaffiliate and to disaffiliate peacefully. Thank you.

BISHOP HAUPERT-JOHNSON: OK. We've followed our rules of order. We've had three speakers in favor and three speakers against. And soon we'll proceed to an automatic vote on the pending motion. For your information, in the pool there are fifteen people wishing to speak in favor, five wishing to speak against, and no one wishing to make an amendment.

Before we vote, the—he doesn't want to speak. OK, let's move along then. We will now proceed with the vote. This motion requires a majority. The question is on the adoption of Calendar Item No. 442. Those in favor, press *one (1)*; those in favor, press *two (2)*—Those opposed, press *two (2)*. You may vote now.

(*pause*)

There's a flag here in front of me. One over here to the right.

(*pause*)

The vote is now closed. If you'll project the results. The results are 519 in the affirmative, 203 in the negative. Calendar Item 442 is adopted.

[*Yes, 519; No, 203*]

Earlier in today's session, delegate Thomas Lank requested to make the following motion: that the body adopt all remaining calendar items that received twenty or fewer votes against in committee, except those with constitutional impact, a minority report, those already removed from the Consent Calendar, and those that are requested to be brought to the floor but were not supported by the legislative committee.

To save time, since we have the motion in writing, the chair will not require delegate Thomas Lank from Greater New Jersey to go back to the microphone. The chair will ask if there's a second.

There is a second. It is moved and seconded. Thomas Lank, would you like to come speak on behalf of your motion? Mic. 5.

THOMAS LANK (Greater New Jersey): Thank you, Bishop. Tom Lank, deacon, Greater New Jersey, adult, White, male. For our monitors, I hope I'm not getting counted three times as a male speaker. I only intended to be here once. But I just want to say I think this is a pretty clear motion, now that we've had time to sit with it. We're doing great work here at the conference, but we're moving a little too slowly. As we heard from our coordinator of the calendar this morning, there's still something like sixty petitions left to deal with. This will, by my count, knock that count down by half. And it does leave room for us to continue to debate those items that we most need to discern together. The ones that had the narrowest votes in committee. And so I think it focuses us on the task at hand. I would mention that in the list that was put at all of our tables, this matches my list, except it includes Calendar Item 451, which we dealt with before lunch. So I would—And 442, which we just dealt with. And 241, not 241. I'm sorry. I shouldn't listen to the voices inside my head, I guess.

(laughter)

But I do believe that this motion is faithful stewardship of our time and of the good work of our committees and so I urge adoption of the amendment.

BISHOP HAUPERT-JOHNSON: OK, thank you. In order for all of you to make an informed decision, I recognize Coordinator of the Calendar, Susan Brumbaugh, to provide additional information.

SUSAN BRUMBAUGH (New Mexico, Coordinator of Calendar): Well you stole my thunder a little bit. Because I was going to tell you to remove those items. So just to be clear, and these are in calendar item order, you should cross off 241, 442, and 451. And I also wanted to clarify that I did not include the GCFA Report petitions because they will be handled on Friday.

(silence)

BISHOP HAUPERT-JOHNSON: OK, so what we'd like to do is kind of make this, not a consent calendar, but we'd like to give you the opportunity to study it, review it, and by the end of the day today if there are any of these that you have concerns about—because we don't want the body to vote something through without full recognition of that—so we're going to ask any of you bring, you know, if you have concerns about one of these, to bring it by the end of the day, and we'll have a vote on the remaining, whatever remains, later on. So that, that is the best way, so, Susan do you have any suggestions? Why don't you give us some procedure for that since I just made it up?

(laughter)

BRUMBAUGH: I think even though you said this is not a consent calendar, maybe the best thing to do—like, how many people would you want to be able to say that should come off the list?

BISHOP HAUPERT JOHNSON: Why don't we do it just like a consent calendar?

BRUMBAUGH: OK.

BISHOP HAUPERT-JOHNSON: Right? So if—what's the total of that, ten?

BRUMBAUGH: It's twenty.

BISHOP HAUPERT-JOHNSON: Twenty. OK, if twenty people, by the end of the day, have an issue with something on this potential consent calendar—I like the way that's called, so why don't we keep with our procedure—So, if you get twenty folks together and you want to pull something off this list, why don't we say by like 4:00? Could we do that? And then vote on it after that?

BRUMBAUGH: I think so because these, the reason we ask you to have that form in by 3:00 is so that we can process it and make sure it prints in the *DCA*. These are already printed in the *DCA*. So I would even say by the close of our second session.

(chatter from floor)

No, I'm hearing all kinds of nos about that.

BISHOP HAUPERT-JOHNSON: How about 4:00? Does that work?

BRUMBAUGH: 4:00, whatever you say is fine with me.

BISHOP HAUPERT-JOHNSON: 4:00! So, you know, you have, you have a little under two hours and so if you have twenty people, let's just take of this as quickly as we can. Thank you.

BRUMBAUGH: OK. And what I will do is have copies of that form here on either end of the stage where the pages are. So that you can pick one up if you need to. I don't have them here with me now, but I'll ask to have them delivered.

BISHOP HAUPERT-JOHNSON: And we will have a break before that time.

BRUMBAUGH: OK.

BISHOP HAUPERT-JOHNSON: So that'll, that'll facilitate things. Great!

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKERS: Bishop!

BISHOP HAUPERT-JOHNSON: Mic. 1.

DAVE NUCKOLS (Minnesota): Dave Nuckols, White layperson from Minnesota. And I apologize I couldn't get in the speaker on this phone. But, Bishop, I rise to say, maybe it's parliamentary, but we already had all these items on the consent calendar, and people had a chance to pull them off and no one did, I think. Isn't that right?

BRUMBAUGH: That's not true.

BISHOP HAUPERT-JOHNSON: That's not true. I think in an abundance of caution, we have other items on here that would not normally be on that. These were, remember, because these had a low vote in committee.

NUCKOLS: Ah...

BISHOP HAUPERT-JOHNSON: There are other things on this list that would not be taken care of by that. So I think just in an abundance of caution, to make sure everybody has fully vetted these, that we say

unless we hear from twenty people on of these items by 4:00, we will have the vote on the rest of them by the end, in the last business session of the day.

NUCKOLS: I just wanted to apologize for misunderstanding, Bishop.

BISHOP HAUPERT-JOHNSON: I have two points of order. Jessica Vittorio, mic. 1. Please state the rule.

JESSICA VITTORIO (North Texas): Uh, Jessica Vittorio. Laity, North Texas Annual Conference. I was actually in the process of trying to change that to a point of inquiry, Bishop.

BISHOP HAUPERT-JOHNSON: OK.

VITTORIO: Do you want me to go back and re-register?

BISHOP HAUPERT-JOHNSON: Yes.

VITTORIO: And—

BISHOP HAUPERT-JOHNSON: No. I need you to go back—

VITTORIO: OK.

BISHOP HAUPERT-JOHNSON: —because we have another point of order, Gregory Gross, mic. 1. Mic. 1. OK. He's off. This is supposed to save time. Chris Schlieckert on mic. 6.

Oh, is that Mr. Gross? OK, go ahead. Mic. 2.

GREGORY GROSS (Northern Illinois): Thank you, Bishop. Gregory Gross, clergy, Northern Illinois. I believe we have a motion before us already before us on the floor from delegate Lank that we need to deal with.

BISHOP HAUPERT-JOHNSON: The chair has postponed that motion until the last session of the day, so it's in order.

I would ask the house to approve the postponement of the consideration of Mr. Lank's motion until the last session of the day. Jesi Lipp, mic. 4.

CHRIS SCHLIECKERT (Baltimore-Washington): Bishop, sorry, I believe you had called me. Chris Schlieckert to mic. 6.

BISHOP HAUPERT-JOHNSON: OK, go ahead, state your point.

SCHLIECKERT: I have a point of inquiry about the bundle we are talking about.

BISHOP HAUPERT-JOHNSON: OK, hold for a moment. I am going to ask the point of order at mic. 4.

JESI LIPP (Great Plains): Jesi Lipp, laity, Great Plains, non-binary, White. I'm thirty-four—I am very confused on if I'm an adult or young adult—and a person living with disability.

My point of order is related to Rule 33 of our standing rules, I think maybe Rule 34 as well, and possibly also Rule 27 in Robert's Rules related to a division of a question. We are creating a process that is not in our rules without the consent or approval of the body. I feel like we need to, there needs to be some kind of vote that the body is OK with this process we are creating of semi-consent calendar.

BISHOP HAUPERT-JOHNSON: I think I agree with her.

LIPP: Them, Bishop.

BISHOP HAUPERT-JOHNSON: If you will pull out—

LIPP: My pronouns are they/them. I think forgot to state that when I introduced myself. I apologize.

BISHOP HAUPERT-JOHNSON: OK, here is where we stand. We would like to postpone the vote on this consent calendar until the last session of the day. We would like to have anybody with twenty signatures to pull off anything on this calendar, and if it is not pulled off, we'll vote for it in the last session of the day. I invite you take your voting—

(pause)

OK, this is what we are going to do. We have the motion before us that Thomas Lank put before us. That motion is before the body. If you would like to amend that motion and remove something from that now, we will entertain that as well. So, the motion is, let's pull up the speeches for and against. He has spoken for. If you are against considering all of these items, the chair—OK we are going to hear the motion.

GARY GRAVES (Kentucky, Secretary of the General Conference): Thank you, Bishop. The motion from Thomas Lank: "I move that the body adopt all remaining calendar items that received twenty or fewer votes against in committee, except those with constitutional impact, a minority report, or those already removed from the consent calendar."

BISHOP HAUPERT-JOHNSON: OK, Matt Dailey, mic. 2, point of order.

MATT DAILEY (Florida): Thank you, Bishop. Matt Dailey, Florida. I am a White young adult layperson from the Florida Conference. My point of order is in regard to Rule 22, but I think you might have walked that back, but just for the sake of stating it—Rule 22 on alterations of motions, when a motion is made and seconded, a resolution is introduced and seconded, or a committee report is read or published in *Daily Christian Advocate*, it shall be deemed to be in the possession of the conference and may not be altered except by action of the conference. So the action to require more signatures would not be in order. Thank you.

BISHOP HAUPERT-JOHNSON: Thank you.

Robert Zilhaver, mic. 1.

ROBERT ZILHAVER (Western Pennsylvania): Robert Zilhaver, clergy, White male, Western Pennsylvania Annual Conference. I would like to move that we would separate Calendar Item 461, Petition 20357-JA2609.G for the purposes of a referral to the Judicial Council. And I am prepared to speak to the specifics of that if that would be in order at this time.

BISHOP HAUPERT-JOHNSON: OK, I'm gonna rule that's out of order.

The thing that is in order is to move to amend to take 461 off this list.

ZILHAVER: That would be my motion.

BISHOP HAUPERT-JOHNSON: OK. Is there a second before you speak to it? There is a second. Go ahead.

ZILHAVER: This motion changes the appeal process for administrative action for bishops and limits that appeal decision to be final at the Jurisdictional Appeals level. This creates conflict with—I believe its paragraph 523—and also I think this is very important that bishops are allowed to go to the Judicial Council. I've had some experience monitoring, observing, working with complaints, and Bishop Hae Jong Kim—this was written, the appeals process—because of what happened with Bishop Bledsoe. I was part of the monitoring team with Bishop Carcaño. Also dealt with Bishop Wandabula; we resolved one piece, but the General Council on Finance and Administration stopped paying him, and that needed to be resolved at the Judicial Council level. And this body has already heard me talk about jurisdictions as being an institutional racist structure. And I just want you to think about the list of bishops that I talked about that couldn't be resolved at the jurisdictional level and the issue was not resolved until it reached the general church level at the Judicial Council. So I would move that you separate this piece for the purpose of referral to the Judicial Council.

BISHOP HAUPERT-JOHNSON: OK, it is moved to amend to add to the calendar to remove Calendar Item 461. Before we ask for any discussion, I ask that a new speaker recognition pool be developed. OK, we have before us an amendment to remove 461 from this list. Would anyone want to speak to that?

(pause)

OK, we have John Stephens. This motion that is pending isn't amendable. If you want to take something off the list, another item off the list, we'll wait until this one is done. I'm looking for folks to speak just on Robert Zilhaver's motion to remove something from the list. OK, Lydia Muñoz on mic. 5.

LYDIA Muñoz (Eastern Pennsylvania): Lydia Muñoz, Eastern Pennsylvania Conference, clergy, *(indecipherable)*, Latina. I speak in favor of the move to remove the item from this list. I think it's important that we ensure transparency, clear process, and due process, which is really important if we're going to continue to witness to the world what fair and a fair process looks like in the wider body, so I really support this just because of the witness we just recently had in trials.

BISHOP HAUPERT-JOHNSON: Thank you. There is no one else in the speaker—there is one. Beverly Wilkes-Null. Mic. 4. Speak for.

Beverly Wilkes-Null (Illinois Great Rivers): Beverly Wilkes-Null, African American, clergy, woman, Illinois Great Rivers Conference, pronouns she/her/hers. Bishop, I rise to speak in favor of the motion to remove this item. In committee, the vote was twenty-two to twenty, so it was so close. I think it would be wise for it to come out and there would be opportunity for discussion later.

BISHOP HAUPERT-JOHNSON: OK, thank you. There is no one else in the speaker pool to speak for or against the amendment. We will proceed to vote on the amendment to remove Calendar Item 461 from the list of those items we have before us. Please get your voting devices ready. The question before us is on the adoption of the motion to remove Calendar Item 461 from the pending motion to allow separate consideration. Those in favor of the amendment, press *one (1)*; those opposed, press *two (2)*. You may vote now.

(pause)

OK, voting is closed. If you'll show the results. There are 537 votes in the affirmative and 171 is the negative. The motion is adopted and Calendar Item No. 461 is removed and will be considered separately.

[Yes, 537; No, 171]

OK. Alex Shanks, mic. 2. Other parliamentary.

ALEX SHANKS (Florida): Alex Shanks, clergy, Florida Conference, White male, Adult. Bishop, I make a motion that we postpone the vote on this motion and allow persons who would like to remove anything from this list of petitions. Twenty delegates to sign a form and bring that to the front of the plenary space by 4:00 P.M. and anything removed would be removed, and anything else we would vote on during the end of plenary, the last part of the plenary session today.

BISHOP HAUPERT-JOHNSON: OK, is there a second? OK, would you like to speak anymore, delegate Shanks?

SHANKS: I think this will save us some time, Bishop, and make sure that every voice is heard and then we don't have to go through each petition and make an amendment on each one.

BISHOP HAUPERT-JOHNSON: OK. I'd like to have a new speaker recognition pool, please. Thank you. Would you like to speak on delegate Shanks' motion? Please register. OK, I see nothing in the pool so I'm going to move this. Oh, I have one to speak against. Thomas Lank, mic. 5. Delegate Shanks, would you please put that in writing and bring to us? Thanks.

LANK: Thank you, Bishop. Tom Lank, Greater New Jersey, deacon, adult, White male. I speak against this amendment because the amendment was specifically drawn up to deal with those calendar items that have received twenty or fewer votes in the committee. This amendment would allow those twenty to simply put it back onto the list, and that's what we're trying to overcome. I might entertain something that had thirty. But twenty is just defeating the purpose.

BISHOP HAUPERT-JOHNSON: Katie Simpson, mic. 2. Amendment. This is the motion to postpone that we are hearing. Is it a motion to amend this?

KATIE SIMPSON (Louisiana): Yes. Katie McKay Simpson, Louisiana Annual Conference, White cisgender female, clergy. I'd like to move to amend that there would be—well is it in order, and if it is I'll speak to it?

BISHOP HAUPERT-JOHNSON: State your motion and then we'll—yeah.

SIMPSON: Sure. OK, so I'd like to move to amend that the threshold on the list that we were just given to be considered for the bundle would be seventeen votes and under. And my reason for that is that it seems—

BISHOP HAUPERT-JOHNSON: Stop, stop now.

SIMPSON: Go ahead.

BISHOP HAUPERT-JOHNSON: We need a second. OK, now go ahead.

SIMPSON: OK. I think that some of the major petitions in question are above the threshold of seventeen and that would save the body's time and energy with this more complicated process that we have before us at this time.

BISHOP HAUPERT-JOHNSON: OK, we have the amendment before us. If you'll clear the pool we're going to speak on the amendment that would be and we need that in writing. Strike out twenty votes and insert seventeen or fewer. OK, the pool is open on the amendment for the motion to postpone. Frederick Brewington, mic. 3. Point of order.

FREDERICK BREWINGTON (New York): Fred Brewington, New York Annual Conference, male, laity, straight. I rise with a point of order. I do not believe that we are in compliance with Rule 40 and 41. I—it appears as though that the motion that was made initially, as well as these amendments, deal with changing and/or suspending our current rules. If that is the case, the requirement that there be a motion to suspend the rules, which are 40 and 41 that pertain to our numbers that we're dealing with here, has not been made nor provided to the body, which would require a two-thirds vote.

BISHOP HAUPERT-JOHNSON: Delegate Brewington, are you talking about grouping all of these as for one vote? Or the motion to postpone?

BREWINGTON: The grouping—the underlying motion that—that got us into this conversation.

(pause)

BISHOP HAUPERT-JOHNSON: I'm going to rule it's in order, and we're going to go ahead with the motion to postpone. The amendment on the motion to postpone.

BREWINGTON: Very well.

BISHOP HAUPERT-JOHNSON: Let's open the pool. Please. Those who wish to speak on the amendment to the motion to postpone, I invite you to enter the pool now. Tech team, we need you to open a new pool for us.

(pause)

OK, Drew Dyson, mic. 5, point of information or inquiry.

DREW DYSON (Greater New Jersey): Thank you, Bishop. Drew Dyson, clergy, Greater New Jersey, White male, adult. I just have a question about the amendment that's on the table. The amendment, I believe, was an amendment to change the vote threshold? Which would be an amendment to the original motion, but I think there was a Shanks amendment that had been proposed, prior to that—

BISHOP HAUPERT-JOHNSON: Ah, I see.

DYSON: —that we had not dealt with yet.

BISHOP HAUPERT-JOHNSON: OK, yes.

GRAVES: The motion that we have from delegate Shanks is a motion to postpone vote on these items and allow twenty delegates to remove an item from the list before 4:00 P.M. and then we will vote on those items. The amendment from delegate Simpson is to move to have the threshold of the list be set

at seventeen votes or under. The question that is before us for delegate Simpson, is the seventeen that you're changing from the twenty in regard to delegate Shanks or to delegate Lank?

SIMPSON: Katie McKay Simpson, Louisiana Conference. I meant for it to be a substitute motion to Shanks's amendment.

BISHOP HAUPERT-JOHNSON: That—that is out of order, then. I'm going to take us back to the Shanks motion to postpone. Please clear the pool. We're going to open a new pool. OK, Anne Kiome-Gatobu, mic. 4, speak for. Hold a minute, Ian Urriola, point of order, mic. 5.

IAN URRIOLA (Upper New York): Bishop, Ian Carlos Urriola. I am a Latinx, lay, young adult delegate from the Upper New York Annual Conference. And I believe we are in violation of Rule 24 right now. We're dealing with multiple main motions at this time. And delegate Lank's motion should take precedence. I believe that delegate Shanks made a separate motion to create some other procedure and there has—we—we are not in order right now, Bishop.

BISHOP HAUPERT-JOHNSON: No, I—I'm going to rule we are in order. We're going to go back and we're discussing the—delegate Shank's motion to postpone. The original motion is Thomas Lank's motion, and it is the—the motion now is that that motion be postponed and that was delegate Shanks' motion. So we will continue. And I'm going to go ahead and hear from Anne Kiome-Gatobu on mic. 4, who is speaking for.

ANNE KIOME-GATOBU (Great Plains): Anne Kiome-Gatobu, Great Plains Conference. First-generation immigrant from Africa to the U.S. I would like to speak for the motion to postpone. May I have a second?

BISHOP HAUPERT-JOHNSON: Yes. You don't need a second. Go ahead and speak.

ANNE KIOME-GATOBU (Great Plains): OK, I'm aware that we are trying to redeem time, which apparently we actually are more using, using more time to do exactly that. And I would like to balance that with a sensitivity to the fact that we have a considerable number of people in the delegation who are having to not only go through the list of thirty-five petitions, but also have to translate that in their own language, read the documents in their own language, and make sense of them. And so proceeding to vote for all these at this time, will be voting blindly. So I am for the motion of postponing it, giving people time to look at those items, and gathering the twenty signatures to lift off things from the list. Thank you.

BISHOP HAUPERT-JOHNSON: Thank you. I see no more speeches for or against on the queue. It is moved to postpone—to close debate. Mic. 5, David Koch.

DAVID KOCH (Eastern Pennsylvania): I'm David Koch.

BISHOP HAUPERT-JOHNSON: Sorry about that.

DAVID KOCH (Eastern Pennsylvania): That's all right. Lay delegate, Eastern Pennsylvania Conference, male, pretty old. I move to close debate.

BISHOP HAUPERT-JOHNSON: OK, is there a second?

Please get your voting devices ready. There are no speakers in the pool to speak in favor or against. Let's be clear on what we're voting against—voting for. The motion before us is the question—the motion to close debate. If you will get out your voting devices. Those in favor of closing debate, press *one* (1); those opposed, press *two* (2).

(*pause*)

OK, the voting is closed. May I have the votes posted. There are 675 in favor; 30 in the negative. There are two-thirds, and the motion is adopted. Debate is closed.

[*Yes, 675; No, 30*]

And now the question before us is on the adoption of postponing the motion on these items to allow twenty delegates to remove an item from the list before 4:00 P.M., and then we will vote on these items. Get your voting devices.

(*pause*)

OK, those in favor, press *one* (1). Those opposed, press *two* (2). The vote is now open.

(*pause*)

There is a flag over to my left, waving mightily.

OK, I will close the voting pool now, and I invite you to post the results. The vote is 529, yes. 182 in the negative. The affirmative has it. The motion is adopted, and the motion is postponed.

[*Yes, 529; No, 182*]

The chair recognizes the Secretary of General Conference, Gary Graves, to give instructions.

GRAVES: Thank you, the process for securing those names: First, be sure they are seated delegates at the time that they sign. In case you are using any properly seated reserve delegates, they must be seated at the time that they sign the form. The form is available from the Coordinator of the Calendar at the bottom of the stairs here by the stage, on your left side, our right side. So your left side, here at the bottom, they will have those forms available for you and you would return them to the same place.

(*pause*)

BISHOP HAUPERT-JOHNSON: OK, we're going to take a couple of minutes and figure out what calendar item to go to next because some of them are on this list so we will be back in a couple of minutes.

(*pause*)

OK, please take your seats.

(*pause*)

OK, we're going to return to our calendar items. The chair recognizes Lonnie Chafin to present Calendar Item No. 237.

LONNIE CHAFIN (Northern Illinois Conference): Thank you, Bishop. Thank you, General Conference. Calendar Item 237 you can find on p. 2099. It relates to Petition No. 21027 that the legislative

committee completely rewrote. So I'd like you to draw your attention to the Calendar Item 237. The text you find there fully replaces the text of the original petition.

We are voting on a requirement that, "Where applicable, every annual conference shall have a policy of re-affiliation, where churches seeking to reconnect to The United Methodist Church."

Each annual conference would have the authority to design their own process for receiving requests from local churches that disaffiliated or withdrew by any of the processes available. They're not obligated to accept those churches. They could set any standards they wish in order to accept those churches into the connection. The committee recognizes there's a variety of national laws where our churches operate, so no petition could contemplate all the various contexts and national laws that are applicable. And therefore, each annual conference has to create their own standards. Those could be practical standards or financial standards. But they could also choose to evaluate the Methodist *ethos* of that congregation seeking to reconnect. We recognize the term "withdrawn" is used here to describe any process, but there is no actual term for "withdraw" in the *Discipline*, otherwise.

We know of the hurt feelings and pain caused in many because of these disaffiliations. But I remind you of the congregational commitment we make in our baptismal covenant, when the congregation is asked, "Will you nurture one another in living the faith of the church and include this person in your care?" and we answer, "With God's help, we will live the gospel of Jesus Christ. We will embody faith, hope, and love so that this person may learn to trust God and live Love's service in the world." We meant it when we said it then. We mean it when we say it now. And, through it all, and through all the pain, our hearts are still open to reconnection and reaffiliation. Let us be people of grace. I hope you will support the empowerment of annual conferences to develop their policies that guide the reaffiliation requests. Bishop, with that I move acceptance of the amended petition.

BISHOP HAUPERT-JOHNSON: OK, thank you. I'm going to ask them to clear the pool. And the question, now, is on the adoption of Calendar Item 237. If you'd like to speak on this motion, you're welcome to enter the pool now.

(pause)

OK, Matt Dailey, mic. 2. Speech for.

DAILEY: Thank you, Bishop. Matt Dailey. White. Young adult. Layperson. Queer. From the Florida Conference. While I currently serve the Florida Conference, as a delegate, I grew up in the Alabama-West Florida Conference, which saw 43 percent of its churches disaffiliate, including the church that raised me. The church where my family holds membership. I have to trust that somewhere along the way, the Holy Spirit sanctifying power will continue to work in the lives of people who once called themselves United Methodists. And that they may see my humanity. My holiness. My call in a way that inspires them to rejoin our denomination. Annual conferences should provide a way home for disaffiliated churches. In the spirit of Luke 15, in which Jesus reminded that one lost sheep is not too many, or that one lost sheep is enough for the shepherd to leave his flock and go searching. Thank you.

BISHOP HAUPERT-JOHNSON: Thank you. I have a motion to amend from Jay Brim on mic. 1.

JAY BRIM (Rio Texas): Jay Brim, older adult, male, from the Polar Region known as Section A.

(laughter)

Bishop, I move to amend this petition by including a requirement that each reaffiliation policy include a requirement to commit to the trust clause. And if I have a second, I will speak to it.

BISHOP HAUPERT-JOHNSON: There is a second. Go ahead.

BRIM: I don't think it needs much explanation. If people want to come back, we want them to agree that they will be truly Methodist and agree to the trust clause.

BISHOP HAUPERT-JOHNSON: OK I need a new speaker pool on this amendment. If you'd like to speak to the amendment, register your request. OK, Carol Zaagsma, mic. 1, a speech against.

CAROL ZAAGSMA (Minnesota): Carol Zaagsma, clergy from Minnesota, White, female, gay. And I speak against this amendment as part of the legislative committee from which this came. And the reason for that is that the petition requires an annual conference to have a process. There are many things that identify congregations as United Methodist. The trust clause is not all of that. And so we wanted annual conferences to have a process for this, without prescribing for every annual conference what this process would be. And I think if you look closely at the language that is there, it focuses on an annual conference having a process. So I would speak against amending it as requested. Thank you.

BISHOP HAUPERT-JOHNSON: Thank you. Krysta Deede, mic. 1, point of order.

(pause)

Please cite the rule.

KRYSTA DEEDE (Wisconsin): Krysta Deede, Wisconsin, clergy, White, female, adult. I rise to bring to attention Rule No. 23.8, which is found on line 886 on p. 2051. The Wisconsin Delegation has representatives in our visitor section, including one of our clergy, and the community in which she serves, Mount Horeb, Wisconsin, has experienced a school shooting in the middle school where she has a child who attends. And so we would invite a moment of prayer to acknowledge the continued violence against our children and the threat of guns that is among us this day.

BISHOP HAUPERT-JOHNSON: You know, I will invite you to offer that prayer.

DEEDE: I will gratefully offer that. Let us join our hearts. Gracious God, it is a moment in time which we all fear, when we get the news through text messages and others who communicate such a fearful moment, when it impacts our children and communities so deeply. So today we especially lift to you Becky, the Mount Horeb School District, and all those who have been impacted by gun violence not only here, in the United States, but across our globe. We ask you to be with the first responders and all of those who respond in these times of need, that they might feel your presence, that though they go into danger, that you are with them. Help us, O God, to be peacemakers in this world. In your holy and gracious name, we pray, Amen.

BISHOP HAUPERT-JOHNSON: Thank you. Lindsay Drake, mic. 5, speech against.

LINDSAY DRAKE (Iowa): Lindsay Drake, laity, Iowa, adult, female. I want to speak against this amendment as I echo very much the same that my friend, Carol, just stated. I want to be very clear that when we were putting this together—as a member of the Conferences Committee, when we were putting this together, we were not prescriptive. The key here is grace. The key is grace because we have all felt the pain of disaffiliation and sometimes what was missing from those disaffiliating, from those

leading in disaffiliation, was grace. And so I believe if we start to put prescriptive pieces in this piece of legislation, we may begin to lose that spirit of grace.

BISHOP HAUPERT-JOHNSON: Thank you. We have nobody in the queue speaking for. We have a couple of motions to close debate. I will go to Stefan Schröckenfuchs. Mic. 5, to make that motion.

STEFAN SCHRÖCKENFUCHS (Austria Provisional): Bishop, Stefan Schröckenfuchs, Austria Provisional Annual Conference, native European, clergyman. I move to close debate. Thank you.

BISHOP HAUPERT-JOHNSON: OK, is there a second? OK, take out your voting devices. There are—there is nobody who wishes to speak in favor, and one person who speaks against, zero folks who wish to propose amendments. Motion to close debate requires a two-thirds vote. We will now proceed to a vote. The question is on closing debate on the amendment. Those in favor of closing debate, press *one* (1); those opposed to closing debate, press *two* (2). You may vote now.

(*pause*)

OK, the voting is now closed. If you'll post the results. We have 681 votes in the affirmative, 20 in the negative. Motion to close debate carries. And now I'll turn to Gary Graves to read the amendment to the motion for us.

[*Yes, 681; No, 20*]

GRAVES: Thank you, Bishop. The motion from Jay Brim is to add a sentence, "Each such policy shall require that reaffiliating churches affirm their commitment to the trust clause in paragraph 2503."

JAY BRIM (Rio Texas): Bishop, may I have a final word?

BISHOP HAUPERT-JOHNSON: You may, sir.

BRIM: Thank you, Bishop. Friends, let me just remind you that the disaffiliation provisions that we had in 2553 required churches to sign out of the trust clause as they left. This is not intended in any way to change our sense of grace in bringing them back. It's simply to put them back in the same relationship that they had when they left. And to welcome them with that desire to remain Wesleyan in our approach to being church. Thank you.

BISHOP HAUPERT-JOHNSON: OK, the motion before you is the amendment to the original motion that would add that the churches will commit to the trust clause. The motion—the amend—motion on the amendment is before you. Those in favor of the amendment, vote *one* (1); those opposed, vote *two* (2). The vote is open.

(*pause*)

OK, the vote is now closed. I invite you to post the results. There are 386 votes in the affirmative, 304 in the negative. And the motion to amend has carried.

[*Yes, 386; No, 304*]

Now, we now return to the main motion. Calendar Item No. 237. And we return to our queue on the main motion. Let me have a new pool since it's amended. If you would like to speak on the motion as amended, go ahead and enter it into the pool.

OK, I recognize Helen Ryde, mic. 3, speech for.

HELEN RYDE (Western North Carolina): My name is Helen Ryde. I'm a lay delegate from the Western North Carolina Conference. I'm a home missionary. I'm an adult, White, non-binary person, and my pronouns are they/them. I rise to speak in favor of this petition because I am not the person I am now that I was thirty to thirty-five years ago. I lost track. I'm saying that to say my heart has been changed about who I am and how I exist in the world. But if you had told me that many years ago that my heart was going to change I would've said, "No. Nope, it ain't gonna change, 'cause I'm quite sure what the Bible tells me about who I am." But I listened to God, and I listened to people who told me the image of God was in me just as much as it is in people who are heterosexual and cisgender. And so I believe we need to leave the door open. You know, this move to bring our church to a new place has never, ever been about asking anybody to leave. Many of those who have left, have believed gross mischaracterizations about people like me. And I believe many of them are realizing that maybe they shouldn't have believed them. And so in my heart, I hope and pray that we can have the grace to allow a way back. There are no closed doors in the kin-dom of God. There is nothing that should prevent people from being in relationship with us as The United Methodist Church.

BISHOP HAUPERT-JOHNSON: Thank you. I'll recognize Byron Thomas at mic. 5 to speak against.

BYRON THOMAS (North Georgia): Byron Thomas, clergy, North Georgia. I believe in grace. But one of the central tenets of the Wesleyan faith is also accountability. And the only reason that I stand against this is because I don't see it taking into consideration the need for accountability as well. Grace and accountability are not mutually exclusive. And so it's the lack of accountability in this is the reason I speak against it.

BISHOP HAUPERT-JOHNSON: Thank you. George Howard, mic. 3, a speech for.

GEORGE HOWARD (West Ohio): Thank you, Bishop. George Howard, West Ohio, lay, White, older male. I speak for this amendment. We can affirm it. We can defeat it. And that neither of those answers changes the authority of the annual conference to welcome a church into that annual conference. What this does, is it sends a message, across the country, across the world, to say you are welcome as a part of this church. It is up to the bishop and the cabinet and the leadership of the annual conference to discern what the process is, and I agree with Byron. There is accountability. There are systems and structures that the annual conference would put in place. But what's important here, for me, is that we're sending a message that this is a church for all people. And we welcome all to welcome them back, if they choose, and if they follow the processes established by the bishop in a particular annual conference. I encourage us to support this motion and send a message of hope and possibility.

BISHOP HAUPERT-JOHNSON: Thank you. OK, we've had two speeches for and one against. We have nobody in the queue, additional folks in the queue to speak against. I'm going to turn to Emily Kincaid on mic. 3, to close debate.

EMILY KINCAID (Alabama-West Florida): Thank you, Bishop. Emily Kincaid, clergy, Alabama-West Florida, White, woman. I move that we close debate.

BISHOP HAUPERT-JOHNSON: Is there a second? OK, it's moved and seconded. The motion isn't debatable. There are five individuals who speak to speak in favor. Zero people who wish to speak against

and one person who wishes to propose an amendment. This motion to close debate requires a two-thirds vote. We will now proceed to vote.

Take your advi—take your devices. To support the motion, press *one (1)*. If you do not, press *two (2)*. To close debate, you may vote now.

(pause)

OK, voting is now closed. If you'll have the results on the screen. There are 674 in the affirmative, and 34 in the negative. Two-thirds are in the affirmative, and it is adopted. Debate is now closed.

[Yes, 674; No, 34]

We will now—you want to close us out?

CHAFIN: Yes, please. Thank you, Bishop. Thank you for the richness of this conversation. I don't know churches will move from disaffiliation to reaffiliation quickly. There will be a process of mutual recognition, a process of understanding what happened, and how that relationship can be reformed. We trust annual conferences to build into those process—we trust annual conferences to build processes where that mutual recognition and return to the Methodist *ethos* can be part of what happens. We hope you will support the petition to encourage annual conferences to develop those policies before invitations or requests appear. Please support the petition.

BISHOP HAUPERT-JOHNSON: We will now proceed to vote. The motion requires a majority vote. The question is on the adoption of Calendar Item 237 as amended. Those in favor, press *one (1)*; those opposed, press *two (2)*. You may vote now.

(pause)

OK, voting is now closed. May we have the results of the vote. There's 629 in the affirmative and 96 in the negative. The affirmative has it, and the motion is carried. Calendar Item No. 237 as amended is adopted.

[Yes, 629; No, 96]

I'm going to turn to Lonnie Chafin again, to present our next calendar item, which is No. 253.

CHAFIN: 253. Thank you, Bishop. The last of me, today. I think.

(laughter)

Some are grateful. If we could turn to Calendar Item No. 253. Calendar Item No. 253. Of the eight petitions for worldwide regionalization, we have passed seven. Only this one remains to set us on a course towards regionalization. We made some amendments to the petition as presented that simply cleans up some language. Our committee proposes the addition of the words *or central* in two places. So it would read, "regional or central conference". And that assures that regional or central conference presence would be part of this committee as we move into the regionalized structure. The petition as a whole adds a US Committee on—thank you—adds to the section in *The Book of Discipline* on the General Conference a committee that's parallel to the Standing Committee on Central Conferences. So, just as the Standing Committee on Central Conferences deals with issues that impact the central conferences, this committee would meet at General Conference and talk about matters that deal

specifically with U.S. matters. But like the Standing Committee, this committee cannot make decisions. They can only make recommendations to the General Conference, and this body as a whole will actually decide the fate of each petition that comes through them. So it's just going to be a space for the United States to talk about the issues that impact only the United States and bring a recommendation to the whole body on how to proceed. And so we ask you to approve this petition as amended in the final act of moving towards regionalization.

BISHOP HAUPERT-JOHNSON: Thank you. It is moved to adopt Calendar Item 253. The question's on the adoption of this calendar item. You may now register to speak. Is there any discussion?

I invite Jerry Kulah to go to mic. 1 for a speech against.

JERRY KULAH (Liberia Conference): Jerry Kulah from the Liberia Annual Conference. I want this General Conference to know that this path you've taken towards regionalization is unacceptable to the central conferences in Africa—I speak now only for Liberia at this point. But just to let you know, because regionalization is only a platform to strengthening the American UMC against the rest of The UMC in the central conferences. Given the fact that all five of your jurisdictions are coming together to constitute one regional conference and all the ones in the central conferences, you are disintegrating them so that you divide and rule. That's one major, major argument I have against this whole thing.

And let me just let you know, in America, you do not have North Carolina running her own government, exclusive of the government in the USA. Similarly, you cannot claim that we have one United Methodist Church that each of is compartmentalized, that each church is produced into sub-denominations, to run its own affairs. Run its own constitution. And claim to be one church. So, my friends, I just want you to know all you are doing, you are breaking our hearts and you are letting us to know that you don't value our views and, like the first preacher said, the door is open to go. So, you give us an opportunity to reflect seriously about the future of The United Methodist Church. So you can have your train and you can ride your train and go where you want to go. But regionalization is unacceptable today, tomorrow, and in the future for Africa. Thank you.

BISHOP HAUPERT-JOHNSON: OK. Beth Givens. Mic 1. Speech for.

BETH GIVENS (Virginia Conference): Bishop, mic. 2, please.

BISHOP HAUPERT-JOHNSON: OK. Go ahead.

GIVENS: Beth Givens, clergy delegate, Virginia Conference, adult, White, woman, cisgender, she/her. With all due respect to delegate Kulah, I strongly disagree and believe that regionalization is our best step forward as a global church. I believe that we live so many different contexts of ministry that we need to have the freedom and the courage to be able to follow Christ faithfully in each of those contexts. Regionalization is a path forward, the most hopeful path forward I have seen in my fifty-four years as a United Methodist. I encourage us to vote to adopt this last petition that we might be able to move forward in ministry together with all God's children around the globe.

BISHOP HAUPERT-JOHNSON: Thank you. We're going to go to mic. 3. Gail Douglas Boykin for a point of information.

GAIL DOUGLAS BOYKIN (New York): Good afternoon, Bishop. Gail Douglas Boykin, New York Conference, deaconess, laity, Black woman. It is actually a point of inquiry rather than information, if I may?

BISHOP HAUPERT-JOHNSON: Well, start.

DOUGLAS BOYKIN: Thank you.

BISHOP HAUPERT-JOHNSON: Is there a question? What's your question?

DOUGLAS BOYKIN: Yes ma'am, there is a question. It has been noted several times today how cold it is in here. And while I respect the reason that the Secretary of the General Conference has given, I do believe that we can raise the temperature slightly without having stale air in this place. Thank you.

(applause)

BISHOP HAUPERT-JOHNSON: OK. Thank you. We'll do what we can. I'll ask the—*(to Gary Graves)* Please, help.... They're turning blue.

GRAVES: It has been raised one; they are trying to do it incrementally so that we don't move it from one extreme to another which is what occurred yesterday and it became very, very hot on the stage.

BISHOP HAUPERT-JOHNSON: Yeah, how many of you here are hot?

GRAVES: We're trying to balance multiple places in the room. We actually have the frozen section of A in the front, but people fanning in the back, so we're watching and trying to keep it as balanced as we can, and we do understand your concern.

BISHOP HAUPERT-JOHNSON: OK. Thank you. We take what we can. OK, I'm going to recognize Ande Emmanuel, mic. 6.

Ande Emmanuel (Southern Nigeria): Bishop, my name is Rev. Ande Emmanuel. I am a clergy delegate from the Southern Conference of the Nigeria Episcopal Area. And I rise to support this motion. And in the morning there were multiple of petitions in consent calendar that were discussed here, and I was observe from a general participation, and most of us Africans were quiet and looking at you people. And I was sharing with my friends that, how long are we going to be having this kind of experience. In fact, I can't wait for the generalization to be in effect. Because many issues that we discuss in this place are still US-centric, and we have to create this platform to allow that United States to decide what issues are particular to them. And I'm saying this personally, as a personal observation—in 2019 when we got to St. Louis, we have a lot of our friends that are here that brought in their traditional plan. Anyway, I'm happy that the traditional plan has been repealed. But what I'm trying to say here is it will do us a lot of good if we support initiatives that create a platform for respect for each other. When we stand here to talk, let's begin to talk about our own personal experience and avoid a wide generalization. So for this I will call on every one of you to support this motion. Thank you.

BISHOP HAUPERT-JOHNSON: Thank you. Now we'll turn to Julius Nelson, mic. 1 to speak against.

JULIUS NELSON (Liberia): Julius Nelson, Liberia Annual Conference, clergy, African. I was in the Conferences Legislative Committee where the argument that the whole rationale for only one regional conference of the US, while four, for example, in Africa, needed some more discovering. I believe there's

a need to explore the possibility with the same argument that maybe we need five regions in the United States instead of one. Or, correspondently, you may need one region in Africa, vis-à-vis one region in the United States, since the United States is one country but Africa will have fifty-two countries. Be respectful of the national perspective. So I believe the question by establishing a one-region committee in the United States for the implementation of the regionalization process may not be appearing as it will be OK outside of the United States. That is why I believe we consider that we vote against this particular proposition to ensure that the regionalization process, as we go through starting it and waiting for the process that will evolve, the approval by each annual conference, would then need to see where we are for more discussion. Because it might be appearing than having five regions in the United States might be better than only one region since now the United States is now homogeneous.

BISHOP HAUPERT-JOHNSON: Thank you. We are going to Uchenna Awa. Mic. 1. Speech for.

UCHENNA AWA (New England): Thank you, Bishop. Uchenna Awa, New England Annual Conference. I speak for the petition and my point is when my African brother from Liberia, the first one spoke, initially he would speak for all of Africa. But now he is speaking for Liberia. I wish he did that in the previous times he spoke about the bishops and all what not. So I know that having autonomy in Africa should also be reflected also in the US. And I want us all to support this petition because it will bring up much growth and every church will thrive for the betterment of the love of God and the work of God. Thank you.

BISHOP HAUPERT-JOHNSON: OK, I'm going to turn to Julius Nelson, mic. 1, for speech against. Oh, I'm sorry, that didn't get clicked over. OK, Forbes Matonga, mic. 4. OK, mic. 6 please.

Forbes Matonga (West Zimbabwe): Forbes Matonga, Zimbabwe West Annual Conference. I'm a man. I am Black. Bishop, the first thing that is not being clear to us is exactly when the 2024 General Conference will be held. Because we think that Africa is going to be the majority of this church. But we are using the numbers of 2016 to determine the future to which Africa will be majority to when we are minority today. So we think we are putting the cart before the horse. So I would think that regionalization in all these other things will be best discussed in a 2024 General Conference, which reflects the realities of today. Where the US has lost almost a third of its membership, and therefore you are no longer the majority. You are now the minority, but you are determining the future when the majority is not present. So that creates an unfair platform. So this is why we are concerned because the majority are not the ones who are determining the future of the church. I thank you.

BISHOP HAUPERT-JOHNSON: Thank you. Since you raised it, for your information the 2020 postponed General Conference is also known as the 2024 Conference for Judicial Council Decision No. 1485. We have followed our rules of order. We have given the opportunity for three speakers in favor and three speakers against. We will proceed now to an automatic vote on the pending motion. Oh, go ahead.

CHAFIN: Thank you, Bishop and thank you, General Conference. I just want to come back to what this petition is about. We've talked about things that are beyond the scope of what is before us right now. I will point out that what we are discussing originated with the Standing Committee on Central Conferences after deep engagement with sectors across the church, and there is a belief that we need to find a way to be more equal in how our decision making happens. And just as there is a Standing Committee on Central Conferences who does work for this body, there can be a place where the US matters are discussed among US citizens, and those decisions come to this body. The power will still be

here, the decisions will still be here, but the conversations will be more fluid and more focused and more arranged. So we can encourage you to support this petition.

BISHOP HAUPERT-JOHNSON: Thank you. Now we will move to a vote on the pending motion. This motion requires a majority vote. The question is on the adoption of Calendar Item No. 253. Those who are in favor, press *one (1)*; those opposed, *press two (2)*. You may vote now.

(pause)

OK, the vote is now closed. If they'll post the results. There are 593 votes in the affirmative and 139 in the negative. The affirmative has it and the motion is adopted. Calendar Item 253 is adopted.

[Yes, 593; No, 139]

Before we go to the next item, I'd like to take a moment—a personal privilege—I understand that there is some concern and some ill will about me only offering thirty seconds to our opening speaker. I do realize that was the time that was left available to him because he spoke before our break, and we wanted to make sure he had the time allotted to him and I would've granted time for translation, too. But for any who felt like that he was cut off inappropriately or that I acted in any way that disrespected that speaker, I apologize. And I want the house to know that that was not an intentional or in any way meant to disrespect him. So thank you for that moment of personal privilege.

OK, we're turning to the secretary of the General Conference for announcements.

GRAVES: I'm happy to report again that I don't have any at this moment.

BISHOP HAUPERT-JOHNSON: OK, great. OK, friends and delegates, we've reached time for a recess. I want to thank my backups, David Bard and Delores Williamston. I thank you for a—I'm not going to say a delightful afternoon, but a different and challenging afternoon. And I want to leave you with some Scripture. This is from Ephesians 3. It is one of my favorite verses, and I think we can all mull it over.

Now to him, who by the power it work within us, is able to accomplish abundantly far more than we can ask or imagine. To him be the glory and the church and in Christ Jesus to all generations forever and ever. Amen.

We will take recess until 4:05 P.M. When we resume, Bishop Cynthia Fierro Harvey will be in the chair. Yay!

Plenary 2

BISHOP CYNTHIA FIERRO HARVEY: Going to invite you to find your seat. This is like Sunday school. Sometimes interrupting your chatter is really hard. Those moments are so holy and special and sacred, so I hate to do that, but I am going to invite you to take your seat in order that we might be able to complete the rest of our work for today.

(pause)

It's been a big day, a big day. So as we begin this afternoon, I'm just going to invite you to find your center. Whatever posture you need to find that center, feet firmly planted on the floor maybe. Your hands open to the movement of the Spirit.

Let us pray. We pray, O God, that in this moment, you will not give us a spirit of fear, but of power and of love and of a sound mind and courage and boldness and everything we don't even know that we need. Give us clarity of purpose. Help us to be a strong witness of your gospel. And give us hearts to know of your overflowing abundance, recognizing that we share a unique kinship that is filled with joy. Amen.

(simultaneous interpretation from Spanish) Is for me a great pleasure to be with you today, so we can walk together in this path, new pathway.

I am Cynthia Fierro Harvey, Latina, from the Texas Annual Conference, and it is my privilege to be with you as we travel together this road that God has prepared for us this day. So my hope for our time together is that as we come to this point in the week, I know you're weary, I'm weary, we're all weary. But we're energized by the power of the Holy Spirit that fills this space from the moment that we walked in. So I pray that we will continue to honor and respect one another, also remind you that all the work that we do is sacred, holy, and worshipful work. Our worship does not end at the end of this morning at, what was it, 9:30 or so? Our worship continues. So, yes, even the work of our agenda is worshipful work. And we have lots of worshipful work to do. So if you will work with the chair and all of us here, we'll do our best to move efficiently through the agenda, but I'm gonna need your help.

Now I'm going to ask something of you: One way that you might be able to be helpful is if you've already spoken several times during this conference, maybe if you have already spoken on the matter that's before us, we still wanna hear you. But I'm going to ask you to do something before you push that button. I'm gonna ask you to take a breath, maybe count to ten. Sometimes it takes introverts a little while longer to get to the microphone. Takes a little more courage, so give all of us space to do that.

So our triad is here to help you do your best work today. So my triad is Tom Bickerton from the New York Annual Conference and Bishop Eben Nhwatiwa from the Zimbabwe Annual Conference.

Calendar Items

BISHOP HARVEY: So, friends, we're going to do some great work this afternoon. We're going to keep doing this great worshipful and sacred work. So we're going to get to work right now, and I am going to return to where we were earlier this afternoon.

We had a bundling motion. That is what I am calling this. A bundling motion and we have received in time, meeting all of the requirements for items to remove from that bundling motion. If you'll remember that the body adopted all the remaining calendar items that were received in the previous session. The motion was to bundle all of the items that had received twenty or fewer votes in committee. So what we are going to do now is, I'm going to give you—let me just go back one second, one sentence. Twenty or fewer votes against in committee, except those with constitutional impact, a minority report, those that had already been removed from the Consent Calendar or those that were requested to be brought to the floor but were not supported by the legislative committee.

So we're going to soon move to that motion.

However, we before doing so, the chair will announce the calendar items that have been removed from this list. The list that the chair is referring to is a list that was at your seat when you returned from the lunch recess. So grab a pen. If you want to do what I did, I just crossed through.

These are the four items that will be removed the list. I'm going to read it slowly and I am going to repeat it several times to make sure that you know what remains on this bundling list.

Item 454, 461, 535, and 554. 454, 461, 535, and 554.

I'm going to pause there for a minute, and remind you that we've already covered some of the items that are on the list.

Earlier today we dealt with Item 241, 442—glasses—451, we've covered those.

I'm going to one more time. I'm going to do the whole list that's been either dealt with or has been removed.

241, 442, 451, 454, 461, 535, and 554.

We've already exhausted our speeches for and against, so we are now ready to vote on the bundling motion. So I'm going to ask you to have your devices ready.

If you support the bundling motion, you will press *one (1)*; all of those opposed, press *two (2)*. You may vote now.

(pause)

Everybody who wanted to vote, have you voted? Any problems? Checkered flags? I'm going to ask for the results now.

The bundling motion passes. 606 votes yes; 91 no.

[Yes, 606; No, 91]

And you can see the percentages on the screen.

Just want to make just a little notation here, just so that we're all clear. That screen said all, all remaining calendar items. I think we all understand that it's the items with the exclusions we just had. OK. So, all right. I see a flag in the back; I'm not exactly sure. The poll is closed. The pool is closed.

We're going to proceed now to the elections. We've got quite a few, so I'm going to need your help here.

AMIE STEWART (North Carolina): Can I ask a clarifying question?

BISHOP HARVEY: Let's try it.

STEWART: Amie Stewart.

BISHOP HARVEY: Can you give me your name and where you're from?

STEWART: Yes, Amie Stewart, White, female, clergy from North Carolina.

Can you clarify the ones that were polled, when we will be considering them?

BISHOP HARVEY: Repeat the question one more time.

STEWART: So we voted to remove four petitions from this list.

BISHOP HARVEY: Correct.

STEWART: When will they be reconsidered?

BISHOP HARVEY: I think the agenda and calendar team are working on that right now.

Voting Devices Tutorial

BISHOP HARVEY: All right. We have quite a few of elections to take care of, so I am going to move us there, and this is where I'm going to need your help, but I'm also going to need my help from my friends behind me, including the folks that are helping us with our voting devices. So we're going to be caring for the elections this afternoon, but before we begin to vote on the nominees that you have already submitted—our nominations are closed. You have already submitted all of your nominees. So we're going to have an opportunity to practice, because this is a little bit different than just yes-no kind of voting. So I'm going to invite Simon Bryan from Lumi to help us. Give us a tutorial, Simon, on how to vote for these elections.

SIMON BRYAN: Thank you. So, yeah, just going to take you through how we do the elections, because it's a little bit different to the yes-no. I think you're were masters at that, so I'm sure we can handle the elections. So I'm just going to pop up my slides.

So when it's time to vote with the elections, you'll actually see that the candidates will appear on the big projector screens as well as on your keypad screen, OK? So they will be alphabetized, they'll be alphabetized by last name. And at the top of the screen you'll see how many candidates you have to pick, so you must pick how many it says. So on my photo there on my screen it says I need to select two choices, so I must select two candidates before I can move on.

Now there are a couple of ways we can pick our candidates with the keypad. We can either use the track ball—which is the little ball in the middle of the keypad—or we can use the numbers, OK? I'll take you through each of those.

So with the track ball—rather like an old-fashioned BlackBerry device—we can actually use the track ball to scroll to the candidate we want. So we can scroll down or up to the candidate we want, and then we just press that track ball when we've highlighted the person we wish to nominate. So, scroll up and down, and then press the track ball, and an "x" will appear next to that person's name, and then you can just scroll to the next person, press the track ball again, and then if there are any more, press again. And at the top that keypad will tell you when you've selected the correct amount. So my screen now tells me I've selected two from two and at that point I can press the green button to send. I won't be able to press the green button to send until I've selected the requisite number of choices. So once I've picked the two, or the four, or however many it is, I press the green button to send. OK?

Moving on to the next one—oh, and then when you've done that, when you've hit send, the green send—you'll get a confirmation back to tell you who you've selected. So scroll, select, scroll, select, green to send, and then you'll receive back the confirmation of who you've chosen. If that's not who you

would like, then just press the red button—the red triangle—to cancel, and you can go through that again.

Now using the number keys, you could—if you’ve not been bothered to scroll all the way through—you can just press the number of the candidates. They’ll be on the screen, so you just simply type in the number that corresponds to the candidate you wish to choose. So if I wanted candidate 2, I would press *two (2)*, and then I would press green to select no. *two (2)*. So I do *two (2)*, green to select, and then I type in the number of my next choice, so maybe it’s no. *fourteen (14)*. I can type “one-four,” select. And again, once you’ve chosen the requisite number, so you can see at the top there, two from two or four from four, I can press the green button to send. OK?

So with that—oh, and again, if you did use the number buttons, exactly the same as the scroll ball method, once you’ve hit send, you’ll get that confirmation back and then you can, if you want to, you can press the red to cancel and go again. But hopefully you get your choices as you wish the first time.

So I think we’re going to have a little practice, so this time we’re going to—I’m going to ask you: Which two places would you like to go swimming in? And this is going to be what we call a two-seat election—it’s two positions; we must vote for two. So, as I mentioned, if you want to use a track ball, you can scroll down and select where you would like to swim, and select two, and then select green to send. Or you can simply press the number, so if you fancied swimming in the Baltic—I’m not sure I do, but if you wanted to swim in the Baltic, you would press *two (2)* and select; then if you fancied the North Sea, you’d press *one (1)* and *zero (0)*, select, and then you’d hit send. OK?

And we can all do that now, so you’ve got the Arctic up there, Baltic, Caribbean—I think I’d rather be in the Charlotte Convention Center than the Caribbean, the Dead Sea, the Great Barrier Reef, maybe the Hotel Pool, unless you’re in the Westin, which had a photo of a pool on the website but they didn’t in real life.

(laughter)

Or the Indian Ocean, the Mediterranean, the South Pacific, the North Sea, or the Gulf of Mexico. So I’ll just give you a few moments to step through that, and then if you’re having any issues, my colleagues will join you—wave your little flags, and we can help you with that.

(pause)

So I’ll give you all a couple of minutes. This is the first time we’ve done this. So we’ll take our time just to make sure everyone’s comfortable with the process.

BISHOP HARVEY: I think those folks sitting over here would never choose the Arctic Ocean because I think they think that they’re in the Arctic Ocean now, it’s so cold over there, right?

BRYAN: It’s more like the South Pacific on stage.

(pause)

So I can see the votes rolling in, so just waiting for a few more.

BISHOP HARVEY: Yes, sir, at mic. 4, why do you rise?

KALABA CHALI (Great Plains Conference): Bishop, Kalaba Chali, Great Plains.

Just trying to follow as someone who speaks a different language, this explanation will not help those who are getting the information in several other languages. Our request kindly that it's repeated before we move forward, for the other people are getting the translation. Thank you.

BISHOP HARVEY: Thank you. Yes, we will do our best to make sure that we can make sure the translators and interpreters can communicate.

BRYAN: Yes, absolutely, so I'll just go through that again.

So, your choices will appear on the big screen. You will also see the choices on your keypad screen. At the top of your keypad screen, you will see how many choices you must make. And you can't move on until you've made the correct number of choices. So in my current example, you must pick two choices.

There's a couple of ways you can use the devices. You can use the track ball in the middle of the keypad or you can use the number keys. So when the vote is open, you can actually use the track ball to scroll through the list of candidates on your keypad. And press that scroll ball in the middle when you are on the choice you wish to select. And then you would scroll to your next choice, press the button again in the middle. And then you would press the green button to send those two choices or however many choices. You will then get a confirmation back to tell you who you have chosen. And if you wish to change your mind, you would press the red triangle and go through that process again.

If you'd rather use the numbers as opposed to the track ball, then you would type in the number of the candidate, your first choice. So for example, if my candidate was listed as no. 2, I would press *two (2)*. And then I would press the green button to select. And then my next choice might be 5. So I would press *five (5)* and select. And then when I've made my choices, I will press the green button again to send those final choices. And then I'll get a confirmation back, to say, just to confirm who I've chosen. If that's right, then I can just stop there. But if I want to change my mind, I can press the red cancel button and start again. OK?

BISHOP HARVEY: And I know, I'm—this is a lot of instruction and I just went to one of the languages that I understand. And I understand the difficulty in the translation, so, Simon, we may need to do this another time slowly.

BRYAN: OK.

BISHOP HARVEY: Like a track ball doesn't translate.

BRYAN: Yeah

BISHOP HARVEY: So if there is another word—

BRYAN: OK.

BISHOP HARVEY: that you could use for that,

BRYAN: Sure.

BISHOP HARVEY: that might be helpful.

BRYAN: OK, so just to reiterate when the vote is open, when you are able to vote, you will see the list of candidates on the big projector screens. And they will all have a number by them. Additionally, the names will appear on the keypad screens.

You can use the little ball in the middle of the keypad, and you can scroll, so you can roll up and down.

And then when you're at the person you wish to vote for, press the little ball.

And then roll the ball to your next choice and press it again.

At the top of the keypad screen, it will tell you if you've made the correct number of choices. So for example, if we were, had to pick two people, it would say two slash two. Two of two. And then you can press the green button to send both choices.

Once you've sent those choices, you'll get a confirmation back to your keypad.

BISHOP HARVEY: May I ask if you are having issues understanding, whether its interpretation or just plain old confusion on how to vote in this matter, could you raise your flag?

(pause)

OK. So it looks like you've got it.

BRYAN: So the final step of the process is that you should have the two names, and in my example here, the two places you'd like to go swimming on your keypad.

BISHOP HARVEY: Do we wanna try to close the poll, close the vote, and see what we've gotten? That might be a good test.

BRYAN: Let's do it!

BISHOP HARVEY: OK. We're now going to close the vote.

BRYAN: And there we go, so we've had 601 ballots cast. We have most people wanting to get into the Caribbean Sea. North Sea less popular, I guess. So hopefully everyone sees pretty clear with that for now.

BISHOP HARVEY: Simon, one more thing that I think... One thing that might be helpful, I think that we use the word plurality vote? Could you just—

BRYAN: Yeah.

BISHOP HARVEY: explain a little more what that means?

BRYAN: Absolutely, so some—if a vote—there are two kinds of votes. So we'll have plurality. And we'll have majority.

So, when it's a plurality vote, the people that win, the candidates that win, are the people with the most votes. So my list there, the Caribbean Sea won because it had the most votes. However, if we do a majority vote, then candidates are elected if they achieve a majority. So as you saw from that screen, we received 601 votes so majority would be 302. So in this particular example, we did not achieve a majority.

So, if it was a plurality vote, of which some of the votes we'll be doing, of which some of these elections are, then in that scenario, the Caribbean would have won and the Great Barrier Reef would have been the second candidate elected. So, if it's a plurality, it's just the top two vote getters; if we were doing a two-seat election, the folks that got the top, the top two folks with the most amount of votes, they would be elected.

Now if it's a majority, we have to have a majority of the ballots cast to elect. So, in my example there, you know, we wouldn't have elected anyone, we would have to go again.

You know and some of you may have chosen instead of the North Sea you may have gone with the Caribbean, so we would do the vote again. And then once we achieved over half the votes, it's actually technically fifty percent plus one of the votes, then that's what would be needed to achieve a majority.

BISHOP HARVEY: OK. We're going to give this a try. I've asked Laura to sit here because she has been working on this for quite a while, and if we run into a hiccup, Maurice and I are both going to turn to you to help up through this. So it's gonna to take a whole village over here to do this. So we're going to give this a try. Now that we've all gone swimming in a lot of oceans, we're going to be ready to move to the real election.

OK, so were going to start. I'm going to guide you through each and every one of these elections.

Election of the University Senate

We're going to start with the University Senate. So I'm going to ask you to locate, find your list of the nominees in the *Daily Christian Advocate*. It's on pp. 2118 through 2119. They're also on the screen.

There is one change to the list that is printed. Stephen Cady has withdrawn from the list of other relevant positions. So you need to cross through that name. His name will not appear on the ballot. Have you located pp. 2118 to 2119? Strike through Stephen Cady.

So *The Book of Discipline* directs us that the University Senate elections will be without discussion by ballot and by plurality vote. Paragraph 1414.2. So we will elect a total of four persons. Two from the list of Chief Executive Officer nominees. And two from the list of other relevant position nominees.

Now let me just tell you one thing right now. Just so you know. The pool is closed because we're going to use this to vote. If you've got a problem or you've got a question that is absolutely related to what we're doing in that moment, you could raise a flag. But you won't be able to go into the pool because you're using your device to vote. Hope that makes sense, OK.

So we'll begin with the CEO nominees. You can see the eight nominees, they're on the screen and on p. 2118. In a moment I will open the ballot and you're going to see those same eight names on your voting device and you're going to select two. Because this is a plurality vote, the top two vote getters on this ballot will be elected in the CEO category of the University Senate. Is that clear? The poll is closed. Only you're going to use your device to vote from the eight that are on the screen and on p. 2118, and you're going to vote for two as soon as I open for votes.

So I'm going to now open the vote. You've got your devices.

The vote is now open for you to vote for two persons from this list, in the CEO category. You may vote now.

(pause)

And just so you know, I'm going to leave this one open a little longer than we normally would 'cause I'm watching here how many of you are out there still voting. So I just want to make sure, so I'm going to leave this open just a little while longer than you are probably used to up to this point.

(pause)

How are we doing? Let me just ask, Has everyone who wishes to vote, have you cast your vote? There are still a few more of you voting, so I'm going to wait just a tiny bit.

(pause)

Are we ready to close the vote? I'm going to close the vote now. If we could see the results.

You have elected two persons. You have elected Bishop Grant Hagiya with 401 votes and Candace Lewis with 371 votes.

[Bishop Grant Hagiya elected, 401 votes; Candace Lewis elected, 371 votes]

You have elected the two persons to serve on the University Senate in the category of Chief Executive Officers.

(applause)

OK. I usually tell you not to clap, but I think this is appropriate; you may clap.

(applause)

So now we are going to turn to the second category, Other Positions Relevant to Academic or Financial Affairs or Church Relationships. Also on pp. 2118 and 2119. We'll follow the same process we just used. In a moment when the ballot is open, you'll see—hold on a second. We're having a little technical hiccup.

It's not open yet.

(pause)

Technology works great sometimes, and sometimes it doesn't. We OK? All right.

So we're going to follow the same process that we used before. In a moment I'm going to open the ballot and you're going to see the thirteen nominees on your voting device and you're going to select again two names. This is again a plurality vote, so the top two vote getters on this ballot will be elected to this category of other relevant positions. OK. Yes, there's a question? If you'll go to mic. no. 3.

ALVIN MAKUNIKE (South Africa Provisional): Thank you, Bishop.

BISHOP HARVEY: Yes, sir.

MAKUNIKE: I'm Alvin Makunike, South Africa Annual Conference, delegate, African, adult. I'm rising on a point of inquiry.

BISHOP HARVEY: OK, let's try.

MAKUNIKE: Thank you. Is it possible maybe for the candidates to raise so that we can see them? (*indecipherable*) may not be our way of (*indecipherable*) those names there. Thank you.

BISHOP HARVEY: Some of our candidates may not be here. They may not be present. Because they don't—this category they don't have to be delegates. For the University Senate, they do not have to be delegates, so they may not be present for them to stand.

MAKUNIKE: Thank you, Bishop.

BISHOP HARVEY: Thank you for the question.

I'm going to now open the ballot for your voting. Remember you're going to elect, you're going to vote for two. The top two vote getters will be elected to this category of Other Positions Relevant to Academic or Financial Affairs or Church Relationships. You may vote now.

(*pause*)

How we doing? Has everyone who wanted to cast a vote been able to do so? Seeing no flags, I'm going to close the vote now.

Now before we go to the results, let me tell you that because there are so many names on the list, we're going to have two slides that will give you the total vote count so that you can see it. So just so you know and you're not surprised. I want to make sure you knew that. So the voting is now closed. If we could see the results. OK.

You have elected Kim Ingram with 316 votes and Lisa Garvin with 275 votes to the University Senate, Other Positions Relevant to Academic or Financial Affairs or Church Relations.

[*Kim Ingram elected, 316 votes; Lisa Garvin elected, 275 votes*]

And I think there's another slide that will take us to last person—there we go. Great, thank you. You're doing great. You've done great. Yes, we're hoping if we can get through this, maybe we can get back to some of the agenda items.

Election of the Judicial Council

But let's—we're going to test your will now. Because we're going to move to the Judicial Council.

The list of nominees for the Judicial Council can be found in the *DCA* on pp. 2107 and 2108. Please be reminded that two persons have withdrawn their names from nomination under the heading of Laity Nominated by the Council of Bishops. You need to strike through the name Deanell Reece Tacha. Under the heading of Laity that were Nominated from the Floor, I need you to strike out the name of Warren W. Plowden. These names will not appear on your ballot.

And the biographical sketches for all the nominees are printed on pp. 2109 through 2117.

By discipline, the Judicial Council elections are held without discussion, by ballot, by majority vote. That's different than what you just did. By majority vote. That's according to paragraph 2602.2. This means that each person elected must receive over 50 percent of the valid ballots.

I'm going to read that again.

By discipline the Judicial Council elections are held without discussion, by ballot and by majority vote. This means that each person elected must receive over 50 percent of the valid ballots.

So just as we did with your swimming locations and with the University Senate, you'll be voting for multiple names on one ballot. By now when we receive the results of the ballot we'll see the number needed for an election, which will be 50 percent of the valid ballots plus one. Note that even though the number of valid ballots might be seven hundred, each ballot will have multiple votes. And because you are voting for multiple names on one ballot. This means that mathematically it's quite possible that more than one person can be elected by a majority vote on a single ballot.

I'm going to guide you again through each ballot, going to give you plenty of time. So we're going to clear what was here before, we will.

We're going to begin with the election of four laypersons to the Judicial Council.

The first two laypersons elected will serve an eight-year term, and then the next two laypersons elected will serve a four-year term.

Now you know why I have these folks right here. The names of the twenty nominees will be on your voting device. You can scroll through the list or you can enter the number of each person for whom you wish to vote. You'll vote for four names on this first ballot. If you vote for fewer than four, your ballot will be invalid. Vote for four on this ballot. Clear? First ballot you're going to vote for four people. I'm going to open now for you to vote. You may vote now.

(pause)

Everybody that wanted to vote, have you voted? Your votes complete? Looks like I don't see any objection to that, so I'm going to close the vote now.

If you will give us the results? We needed 351 to elect.

(applause)

It looks like we've elected two persons. Harriet Jane Olsen with 380, Molly Hlekani Mwayera with 377 votes. You have elected two persons. All right, you did great. We're going to do it again.

[Harriet Jane Olsen elected, 380 votes; Molly Hlekani Mwayera elected, 377 votes]

We're going to let Lumi clear the pool over here. You remember, this time you're going to vote for two persons. Two persons, so when you get the list the two that you have already elected will not show up on that list. And if you vote for fewer than two, your vote is invalid. If vote for more than two, your vote is invalid. So, you'll need to vote for two persons; these are laypersons for the Judicial Council. So Lumi, if we would clear the pool.

(pause)

The two that you just elected have been elected for eight-year terms. These two that you will elect next will be for four-year terms. I am now going to open the ballot.

(pause)

We are resetting our ballot. Thanks for your patience.

Ready? OK. I am going to open the ballot. You are going to be voting for two persons. These are two laypersons, four-year terms. Only vote for two. You may vote now.

Ignore the slide that says four, you're only voting for two.

(pause)

How are we doing? I don't know if "How you doing?" is on one of those electronic bingo cards, but you might get a blackout with all this voting. How are we doing? Are we ready? Has everyone who wanted to vote, voted? I am going to close the vote now.

If we could see the results now?

We have no election. We needed about 350 to elect. So, we're going to do it again. If we could show the next—can we have a second slide? Great, that way you see everything.

Go back to the first slide so they get a good visual. OK. We're going to do it again. Give us a minute to clear the ballot.

Again, you are voting for two laypersons. When we get ready. We're not ready yet.

We're going to vote for two laypersons. These two will have four-year terms. I'll wait until I get a high sign back here.

(pause)

All right, we are ready. The ballot is now open. You are voting for two.

(pause)

I see you standing in the back, are you having an issue or just are you just stretching your legs? OK. That's good. All right, has everyone voted that wish to vote?

I see a flag over here to my left. Do someone see that over there? By gate seven?

(pause)

We're addressing a voting matter. I think that's Amanda Davis. You'll just let me know—you'll lower that flag when we are ready. I can't believe I can see that far.

(laughter)

(pause)

I'm going to close the ballot now. If we could see the results.

(pause)

Looks like we have one election: Bill Wadell, 413 votes. He's been elected for a four-year term to the Judicial Council.

[Bill Wadell elected, 413 votes]

We are going to see the next slide. Just so you can see total vote count. OK great. You got the hang of this. We are going to do this again. This time you're going to vote for one person. You vote for more than one, it will be invalid. We're going to vote for one person. We need to give them a chance to fix the slide.

(*pause*)

I think we are ready now to vote. You're going to vote for one person. One of these seventeen for the remaining position for a layperson on the Judicial Council (four-year term). You may vote now.

(*pause*)

Has everyone voted that wanted to vote? I'm going to wait one second over here on my right.

(*pause*)

Are we good? OK. I'm going to close the ballot now. And if we could see the results.

(*pause*)

We needed 363 to elect. There is no election. You see the names up on the screen. Is there a second screen? OK we are going to do it again.

(*pause*)

I'm going to clear the ballot. There is a yellow card on the right. Somebody check that out for us?

OK if you—I—mic. 2. Yes, sir.

GOMER CHAMUSA (South Congo): (*speaking in French*) Gomer Chamusa, South Congo delegate. If we continue on this path, I want to know if I can suggest—intervene, so I that I can suggest a way to get out of this, an exit ramp.

BISHOP HARVEY: We have a process now, but I'm willing to hear what you have to offer.

CHAMUSA: (*speaking in French*) I propose that we take the first three names so that we can move on and close this section.

BISHOP HARVEY: That is a great idea, but we can't do that. We are bound to take the top—by parliamentary procedure we have go to follow the procedures that we have outlined thus far in having a majority vote.

So, we're going to go to the next ballot. I've been told is ready. Going to vote for one. Ballot is now open.

(*pause*)

Anybody having any issues? There is a person right here in the front section. Standing up with a checkered flag. Can you raise your flag just—OK I think we've got it. Thanks.

I think we are ready to close this ballot. I'm going to close the ballot now. If we could see the results. Needed 355 to elect. We have no election. So we're going to try again.

(*pause*)

So we're going to get our ballot ready.

Yes, sir. Mic. no. 4.

GERMAIN MUPASA (East Congo): (*simultaneous interpretation from French*) Thank you for letting me speak. Germain Mupasa, East Congo. Bishop, I wanted to suggest, if it won't be an infraction of the rules, that you would call for voluntary withdrawals from the list of candidates. So that we could move forward. Of course, if there are people willing to withdraw their names.

BISHOP HARVEY: Thank you I cannot do that. According to the rules I cannot do that.

Believe our ballot is ready. Although I see a checkered flag. Over here on the left. If somebody could address that. I've not opened the ballot yet. To make sure that we're ready.

(*pause*)

If you'll go to the microphone. If you'll go to mic. no. 4.

JACQUES UMEMBUDI (Central Congo): (*simultaneous interpretation from French*) Thank you. Jacques Umembudi, Central Congo. Bishop, can you influence people so that they change the people who are voting because if we continue for those that we want, we're not going to go forward, we've not going to move forward.

BISHOP HARVEY: Thank you, sir. I cannot.

(*laughter*)

We're voting for one. The ballot is now open. There is a flag somewhere on—. The ballot is now open, and we're voting.

(*pause*)

Mic. no. 2? We're in the middle of voting. If you're having an issue with your voting device? If not, could we wait until we complete this vote? And then I'll recognize you.

(*pause*)

Has everyone voted that wished to vote? I'm going to close the ballot now. If we could see the results.

(*pause*)

We have an election.

(*applause*)

Andrew Vorbrich, 404 votes. Thank you again for your patience.

[*Andrew Vorbrich elected, 404 votes*]

OK. Ma'am, did you have something? I wanted to come back to you.

RITA SMITH (Northern Illinois): Rita L. Smith, Northern Illinois, laity, African American woman. There's no need to say what I was going to ask. So thank you very.

BISHOP HARVEY: Thank you. Good to meet you.

SMITH: You too.

BISHOP HARVEY: OK. It's going to get a little harder again because we also have to elect six alternates. Yes, six, to the Judicial Council, from our current nominees; excluding all the people we've already elected. They will not appear on your ballot. Same kind of voting process. You're going to vote for six. Majority vote.

I'm going to give you a second to go back and look at your list. You cannot vote—if you vote for more than six or less than six, your ballot is invalid.

The ballot is now open for you to vote for six lay alternates to the Judicial Council. You may vote now.

(pause)

Has everyone who wished to vote cast their vote? I'm going to trust that those of you that are standing are just stretching your legs.

John Stevens—hey! *(laughing)* I wasn't calling you out.

I'm going to close the ballot now.

(pause)

If we have the results.

(applause)

Look at you. Look at you go!

You needed 348, and I think you got them all.

(applause)

Erin Hawkins, 509; Jessica Vittorio, 500; Kent Fulton, 428; Thomas Lee, 412; Tom Starnes, 404; Laurie Day, 377. Is that all six? All right, look at you go. Great work! Give yourself a hand.

[Erin Hawkins elected, 509 votes; Jessica Vittorio elected, 500 votes; Kent Fulton elected, 428 votes; Thomas Lee elected, 412 votes; Thomas Starnes elected, 404 votes; Laurie Day elected, 377 votes]

(applause)

If you will put the screen back up, we want to just make sure we catch all of that—Back to the other one.

OK. Awesome. All right, we're going to keep moving. Great.

So, now we're going to move to the clergy portion of the Judicial Council.

A list of nominees are on p. 2107 and 2108, and you will be electing five clergypersons to serve on the Judicial Council. The first three clergypersons elected will serve eight-year terms, and the next two clergypersons elected will serve four-year terms.

Got that? You'll be electing five clergypersons. The first three will be serving eight-year terms, and the next two will serve four-year terms. The names of the nineteen nominees will be on your voting device. They'll also be on the screen. And you can scroll through the list or enter the number of each person that you wish to vote for. You will vote for five. If you vote for fewer than five or more than five, your ballot will be invalid. Let's see if you can do this again.

You will vote for five clergypersons from the list that is on the screen or on the device. You may vote now.

(pause)

Has everyone voted that wanted to vote? Any issues, raise your checkered flag, or if you still more time, raise your checkered flag. There's a checkered flag back left. There's two of them. You all see the person in the white jacket? If you could assist those two persons, that would be great.

(pause)

(audio playing)

(laughter)

(pause)

We got it? All right, everybody that has wanted to vote has voted? I'm going to close the ballot now. If we could get the results, please.

(applause)

Yay. We have elected four persons. Angela Brown, 474 votes; Susan Henry-Crowe, 471; Jonathan Ulanday, 423; and Øyvind Helliesen. And that's 402. Right. Great job. Great job. Here's the other slide.

[Angela Brown elected, 474 votes; Susan Henry-Crowe elected, 471 votes; Jonathan Ulanday elected, 423 votes; Øyvind Helliesen elected, 402 votes]

OK. OK, we need to elect one more person. Yes, where are you?

KATIE DAWSON (Iowa): Hi, Bishop. This is Katie Dawson—

BISHOP HARVEY: Hey, Katie.

DAWSON: Clergy, White, female, adult from Iowa. My question is, are some of these four-year terms and some of them eight-year terms? We did not clarify that, I don't believe.

BISHOP HARVEY: Yes, the first three persons are eight-year terms, and the next two will be four-year terms.

So the first three on that list were eight-year terms, the fourth one was a two-year term—or four-year term. Sorry. If we could see the list one more time. Can we put that up? That one. Thanks. So the first

three on this list are eight-year terms. The fourth one was a four-year term, and you're about to vote on one more person.

OK. Ready? Yes, looks like we're ready. You will vote for one person. This person will be a four-year term clergyperson. You may vote now.

(pause)

Has everyone voted that wished to vote? Any issues, raise your checkered flag. Seeing none, I am going to close the ballot now, and if you could give us the results.

(pause)

Needed 358 to elect. We did not have an election. Going to try one more time.

There they are. OK. Wait until I get the clear sign.

(pause)

BISHOP HARVEY: OK. The ballot is ready. Are you ready to vote? For one person. You may vote now.

(pause)

There's a flag over here, waving feverishly.

(laughter)

(pause)

I don't see any other yellow flags—yellow flags, checkered flags, so I'm going to close the vote now. And if we could have the results.

You needed 362 to elect. You have elected Luan-Vu Tran with 392 votes.

[Luan-Vu Tran elected, 392 votes]

All right. Got all of those up there now? Go back to the first screen. Thank you.

Just as we did with the laity, you're going to do again with the clergy. We're going to elect six clergy alternates to the Judicial Council from this current list of nominees, excluding those persons that have already been elected. They will not appear on your ballot or on the screen. Process is the same: You will vote for six. Majority vote. I'm going to wait til we have our ballot ready. It is ready. Oh, wait a second. Amy Lippoldt, mic. no. 4.

AMY LIPPPOLDT (Great Plains): *(indecipherable)* With thanks to all those who have supported me, I would like to withdraw my name.

BISHOP HARVEY: Thank you. I'm going to wait just a second, then, to open the ballot, so that we can withdraw Katy Lippoldt's n—Katy? Amy Lippoldt's name. It's getting late.

(pause)

Yes, mic. no. 3?

TIMOTHY RISS (New York): Tim Riss, glad for the honor of having been nominated and voted by some folk, and I'd like to withdraw.

BISHOP HARVEY: Thank you for your willingness to say yes. We have another person to remove from our list.

(pause)

So our ballot is ready. You will be voting for six clergy alternates to the Judicial Council. You may vote now.

(pause)

We having any issues? If so, raise your checked flag. I am seeing none. I'll give you a couple of more minutes—or, couple more seconds.

(pause)

I am going to close the ballot now.

You're voting for six. If we could see the results. You needed 342 to elect; it looks like you've elected a few people. All six. Tim Bruster, 511 votes; Taylor Walters Denyer, 510 votes; Paul Perez, 504 votes; Beverly Wilkes Null, 476 votes; Mark Grafenreed, 467 votes; and Katie Croskery-Jones, 391 votes. You elected all five of them—or six of them, sorry. Lost count. Good job.

[*Tim Bruster elected, 511 votes; Taylor Walters Denyer elected, 510 votes; Paul Perez elected, 504 votes; Beverly Wilkes Null elected, 476 votes; Mark Grafenreed elected, 467 votes; Kate Croskery-Jones elected, 391 votes*]

OK. Let's see, where are we? I think that concludes the Judicial Council voting. We're going to—looking at my watch, trying to make some adjustments so you can take a couple more votes before we go into our final worship—closing worship. And nobody ever complains about leaving church early, so we're going to try to get you out of here a little earlier than we did yesterday, so just give us a couple of minutes here while we confer.

(pause)

BISHOP HARVEY: OK I'm going to go to—if you'll just hold your seat; you'll want to for this.

Election of the Secretary-Designate of the General Conference

BISHOP HARVEY: The next election I would like to take on is the election of the secretary-designate of the General Conference. According to paragraph 504 of *The Book of Discipline* that states the following for the election of secretary-designate: "The election, if there be two or more nominees, shall be by ballot."

Hold that thought. Our parliamentary authority, Robert's Rules, states, "If only one person is nominated and bylaws do not require that a ballot vote be taken, the chair simply declares that the nominee is elected. Thus effecting the election by unanimous consent or acclamation. In this instance our *Book of Discipline* is the governing document that does not require a ballot vote since there is only one nominee.

Therefore, the chair declares that Rev. Dr. Aleze Fulbright be elected as secretary-designate of the General Conference.

(applause)

We are now going to go to a couple of areas where your vote is really yes/no, up/down. OK so we think that we can—hold on.

(pause)

I have been asked if we could have Aleze Fulbright come forward. Dr. Fulbright could you come forward so we can greet you and celebrate you.

(applause)

Friends, if you have not met Dr. Aleze Fulbright, I introduce you today. Thank you for saying yes.

All right.

We are going to go to the election of the John Street United Methodist Church Board of Trustees. It's printed on p. 2073 of your *DCA*. This is a yes or a no vote to approve all the names as they are printed. Do we have a slide for that ready? Thank you.

So this list is before you. I going to let you take a minute. This is just a yes or no. You're not voting for individuals. You're voting for the whole slate. So I'm going to open the ballot now for the election of the John Street United Methodist Church Board of Trustees. You may vote now.

(pause)

Anyone need any help with your voting device? Raise your checkered flag.

(pause)

Has everyone voted that wished to vote? It looks as if we're there. I'm going to close the ballot now. If we could see the results.

You see the votes before you: yes, 651 votes; no, 44. You have approved the Board of Trustees for John Street United Methodist Church. Great work.

[Yes, 651; No, 44]

Yes. So we are at the 6:10 mark, and I would like to first thank—thank you, Laura Jaquith Bartlett, who has helped us manage and navigate this very complicated process of election. Thank you. Thank you so much.

(applause)

I'd next like to recognize the secretary of the General Conference, Gary Graves. Do we have any announcements?

GARY GRAVES (Kentucky, Secretary of the General Conference): Yes, it's good to have a good team, so thank you, Laura. I have been asked to acknowledge that this is the beginning of Asian American Pacific Islander Month. So congratulations, and we will celebrate together. If you have lost any of the following

items please stop by room 103. You will need to describe the item lost using more than just the words I'm going to use: hat,

(laughter)

backpack, jacket—don't rush the stage if you want a jacket right now—jewelry—this could get interesting—drinking cups, USB drives, eye glasses—I don't understand that one cause I can't see without mine—books, and earbuds.

For those of you who are looking forward at some point in the future to leaving Charlotte, we do have an announcement. The bus schedule for General Conference delegates going from official General Conference hotels to the Charlotte Douglas International Airport on Saturday, May 4, will be printed in Friday's daily addition of the *DCA*. There is a citywide music festival occurring at the same time, so plans are being made accordingly in case there are road closures. It's always fun around here.

Please remember to take your voting card with your name badge but leave your voting device on the table and take your interpretation device with you. Those are the announcements, Bishop.

BISHOP HARVEY: Thank you. Thank you, Gary. At least we are not waiting for a monster truck rally.

(laughter)

GRAVES: I make no promises what's behind the curtain.

BISHOP HARVEY: Well, thank you, friends. Thank you for allowing me the privilege to serve you this afternoon, and thank you for your grace. We went through a lot today. I am thankful for my dearest colleagues behind me that I am blessed enough to also call friends. Bishop Nhiwatiwa and Bishop Bickerton, thank you for being always behind me and a lot of times in front of me, clearing the way. So thank you.

I just want to say—I don't think I need to remind you for this. But, y'all, we are making history. We are making history.

(applause)

And I believe this is that new thing that the prophet Isaiah talks about in Isaiah 43: "I'm doing a new thing." I pray that you perceive it, that you recognize it, that you receive it as a gift. Because God is doing a new thing certainly in this General Conference, this United Methodist Church, and certainly in each of us.

I do have to tell you that, as I came up today, I had a little PTSD moment. Because the last time I sat in this chair we weren't—we were making history but not this kind of history—so thank you. And I thank God for each of you and your willingness to say yes.

We have two more days left. Two more days. I pray that we'll keep making history and keep doing this new thing. Keep doing this new thing. Y'all, this good thing looks really good on you. This good thing that God is doing in each and every one of us is monumental. And it is certainly a gift from God. So my prayers are with you for the next two days.

Have a blessed evening, but before you go we have worship. We have a little closing time of devotion. At the end of our devotion and closing worship I will declare that this eighth plenary session is adjourned, and we will see you tomorrow morning.

(applause)

Evening Devotion

(music)

PAUL GOMEZ (Desert Southwest): “Remember your leaders, those who spoke the word of God to you. Consider the outcome of their life, and imitate their faith.”

Each of us have been blessed by the saints who have touched and shaped our lives. None of us is self-made. There were those who prepared the soils of our lives, loosened our hard hearts, removed some of the stones, and broke fresh ground. Others came and planted seeds of grace and may never have lived to see the results. There were those who nurtured us, encouraged us, corrected us, and tried to instruct us. We were not always the best of students; we were often distracted. We did not always pay attention, and at times, we were just stuck in our old ways and so slow to respond.

But God kept sending patient guides whom God would not allow to give up. Slowly, timidly, we kept growing toward salvation. We began to understand with childlike faith. We had so many questions. We kept growing and God would send those who would inspire our hearts and feed our souls. We have struggled to mature. But God has sent saints into our lives. So we would never be left to our own designs.

We are so thankful for those who have been used by God to bless our lives with the fullness of an expansive salvation.

MELE MAKA (California-Pacific): Take a few moments to remember with thanksgiving all those whom God has used. Some of them may still be strangers to you. Some of them you have known most of your life. But all of them were used to accomplish what only God’s Spirit could create out of your life.

(pause)

Let us pray.

ALL: Wondrous Potter, thank you for those whom we have remembered by name and for all those whose names we have forgotten. Together you have used them in ways that have been miraculous to us. We ask that you will use us as you have used others. Help us remove obstacles that hinder the spiritual journeys of others. Lead us in adaptive ways so your message of grace is useful to them and helps you to meet the prayers of their hearts. Open our hearts to listen carefully and with compassion. Give us your Spirit of kindness, gentleness, and patient self-control. Allow our life to reflect the gratitude we feel to do those who have invested so freely in our lives, as we invest our lives in the lives of all those around us.

As we depart today, grant us rest and healing to continue your work. Let it be so. Amen.

(music)