

Proceedings of the 2000 General Conference of The United Methodist Church

Tuesday Afternoon May 2, 2000

(continued from page 1730)

Start-Text PR02-023

BISHOP MORGAN: Number six.

RICHARD PARKER (New York): Thank you. Hello.

BISHOP MORGAN: Yes, number six.

PARKER: I tried very hard to discover how the material from the CPT was being referred to legislative committees. And I look carefully at the legislative proposals from the Connectional Process Team. And unless I missed something hidden somewhere, all of their proposals relate to the establishment of the Covenant Council and the places in the *Discipline* where the Covenant Council replaces the legislation now in place for the General Council on Ministries. There is no place where other material in the CPT document has been referred to legislative committees, unless, as I say, I missed it somehow. The report is coming directly to us, but the only thing going to legislative committees is going to the Committee on General Administration, where GCOM reports related to those legislative materials I've mentioned. The report of CPT as a whole, I don't believe, has been assigned to any legislative commission, committee. Therefore I support this proposal to have the plenary session make a decision in regard to the CPT report as a whole.

BISHOP MORGAN: All right, there's three now in favor, two against the motion. If you are speaking against the amendment, I recognize you... and then we will be ready to vote. There have been three speeches for and two against. If there's someone who wishes to speak against the amendment, please come... Yes. Go to microphone...

SAM WYNN (North Carolina): I have a question.

BISHOP MORGAN: Just a minute. I don't recognize you. I recognize the person here at the microphone in between six and four. I can't... All right... I think that's microphone four.

RICHARD H. JONES (Wisconsin): Okay.

BISHOP MORGAN: We have three speeches, this is a speech against the motion.

JONES: This is a speech against. The Connectional Process Team report, as I understand it, is not a final report in the sense this is a new structure for the church. It is a report that is offering a process towards which that structure may determine in the next quadrennium or quadrenniums, and therefore just setting up a Covenant Council for that process to continue. Secondly, the process that we have of perfecting a report or a process in a legislative committee allows us then not to vote on the report that comes directly from the CPT, in this case, but an amended or a perfected report. It seems to me for us as an entity body to try to perfect it in order to vote it up or down in principle inhibits the very process of perfecting the report in the legislative committee.

BISHOP MORGAN: All right. I need to say to the maker of the motion, we need to have the copy in the secretary's desk. There's been three for and three against. I'm going to turn to the chairperson of the committee for a comment. Dr. Del Pino. There's been three for and three against. We're ready to put the vote when you make your final comment.

JEROME DEL PINO: Bishop, would it be possible to have the chairperson of the committee address us regarding this matter? Okay?

(laughter)

BISHOP MORGAN: Any other questions?

(laughter)

DEL PINO: Then, I believe that in order to keep faith with what was our own reflection about this, it would be my understanding that this motion preempts or really subverts the process that we have outlined regarding discernment and goes really to the issue of legislative action, and therefore also preempts what we said would be the right of the Plan of Organization to take effect once that discernment process had occurred.

BISHOP MORGAN: All right. We've had the three speeches, the three speeches against. What is the point here? Now, you made the motion right?

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: We need a motion.

BISHOP MORGAN: I can't recognize you. Are you going to make a speech? I'm recognizing... Are you the maker of the motion?

CARL SCHENCK: Yes sir.

BISHOP MORGAN: What is your point for coming to the mic?

SCHENCK: I believe our rules, and we are...

BISHOP MORGAN: No, this is not...

SCHENCK: ...working under the rules of the last General Conference, the maker of the motion gets an opportunity to...

BISHOP MORGAN: No, no. No, no. No, no. No. No. You're out of order. That's for a major presentation for a report. I recognize the person in the back, in the aisle, with the orange card.

(applause)

SAM WYNN (North Carolina): The question I have... If this motion prevails, will all the legislation that's been proposed to go to General/Judicial Administration be negated? Will we have to address that?

BISHOP MORGAN: Now, the maker of the motion may come and explain that.

(laughter)

BISHOP MORGAN: I don't... The question... the question... Did you hear the question? If you can answer something like that for us, it would be help full.

SCHENCK: Thank you. Thank you, Bishop.

BISHOP MORGAN: All right, Carl.

SCHENCK: The house may choose any number of things if it has the opportunity to respond to the report as a whole. And the specific legislation, paragraph by paragraph, that is assigned to various legislative committees, including General and Judicial Administration, would still be before those committees after the house has expressed its judgment about the committee as a whole, the report as a whole.

BISHOP MORGAN: All right, the amendment is before you and I'm ready to put the vote now. When the light comes on, you will vote... If you favor the amendment, you will vote yes, pushing one, no, pushing two. We still need a copy of your motion up here, Carl. All right... All right. The motion to amend is supported, which means that eight becomes nine now, and that new eight will be placed (*unintelligible*)...but we need a copy of that, very

badly. All right, now it's amended, it's before you. Yes. The green card, please come to microphone six or four, whichever is easy. Now help me in sections C and D. I do not want to ignore you, nor do I want to encourage you. I... I... Yes. Microphone four, please.

DONALD R. AVERY (Louisiana): I'd like to call the question on all that's before us.

BISHOP MORGAN: All right the question on all that's before—and we've had three speeches for and against—is before us. If you would, put... if you're ready to vote on the whole section, is my assumption. Is that correct, Don? Then, if you are ready to do that, when the light comes on, vote. One for yes, two for no. We're voting for the previous question. All right, you're ready to vote. Now the whole third section is before you now, as amended. If you will now vote when the light comes on, if you favor that, push one for yes, two for no, when the light comes on.

(inaudible) ...section three. Now, all three of these sections are before you. If you will adopt the entire report of the rules and organization when the light comes on, one for yes, two for no. Three if by sea. Uh... (silence)...no.

DELPINO: Members of the house and Bishop, thank you very much. I believe this is record time for rules since I've been at every General Conference since '76, and I think that it is a very, very good thing.

BISHOP MORGAN: All right, now we're ready to come to an end of this session. We've got business to do this evening, the Episcopal Address. Turn to Carolyn Marshall, now, she has two sets of nominations. Hear her, and then we will be ready to adjourn.

CAROLYN MARSHALL: Two sets of nominations, Bishop. One is for the Coordinator of Calendar, and put in nomination the name of Gerald Fitzgerald Reist.

BISHOP MORGAN: All right. The nomination is before you. If you would support this nomination when the light comes on, push one for yes; push two for no. All right, he's elected. Carolyn.

MARSHALL: All right, and then the second one is the Committee on Plan of Organization and Rules of Order, which needs to be elected at this particular time.

BISHOP MORGAN: Your first part was not on. Start from the beginning of the sentence.

MARSHALL: To place in nomination the nominations from the Council of Bishops for the Committee on Plan of Organization and Rules of Order for the 2000 to 2004

quadrennium. Those names are: Janet Stephenson, Jerome Del Pino, David Severe, Joe Whittemore, Grant Pejagua (*unidentifiable*), Momoh Kpaan, Ruben de Guzman, Darlene Amon, Barbara Means, and Elaine Stanovsky.

BISHOP MORGAN: All right, these nominations are before you. If you would support them, when the light comes on, punch one for yes, two for no... They did the supporting. We have one more matter outstanding.

End-Text

Start-Text Pro2-024

CAROLYN MARSHALL: My math obviously is not too good; there's more than one. One is to simply say that, first one: that that Committee on Plan of Organization and Rules of Order which was just elected will meet to organize this evening half an hour after the end of the evening session. And then we need to advance our schedule for this particular afternoon. The committees will organize at 6:30, and then by 7:15 the chairs and vice chairs and the secretaries will meet for their organizational meeting. The chairs and vice chairs meeting in Room R-202 and the secretaries in R-205A. You will have those instructions in your organizational meetings of the various legislative committees.

BISHOP MORGAN: All right. Are any of the committees to report out?

MARSHALL: The presiding officers.

BISHOP MORGAN: I beg your pardon.

MARSHALL: The presiding officers.

BISHOP MORGAN: The presiding officers. I will recognize the chair of the presiding officers, go to Microphone 7, Paul. Is that close enough? Or whichever one you choose, sir. Microphone 7, please. It needs to be turned up a little bit, please. The microphone needs to be turned up on 7, please. We're having a report now, and we're ready to adjourn as soon as he finishes his report.

PAUL EXTRUM-FERNANDEZ (California-Ne vada, Chair of the Presiding Officers Committee): Tomorrow morning we will be having Bishop Sharon Rader presiding in the morning session and the afternoon session if that is necessary, and then in the evening Bishop Peter Weaver will be presiding.

BISHOP MORGAN: All right, thank you, Paul. This evening the music will be at 8:30, and the session will begin at 9. We

will adjourn now. Go in peace. May the peace of God go with you.

End-Text

Start-TextPro-032

(following Bishop Nacpil's address)

BISHOP MORGAN: Well, Bishop Nacpil, the General Conference has expressed its gratefulness to you, and we give thanks to God for the blessing that you have offered with us this evening. We are deeply indebted to you. Turn now to Carolyn Marshall for any announcements; then I am turning to Bishop Granadosin, who will offer the closing prayer. Carolyn.

CAROLYN MARSHALL: Two announcements. The first one being, the Committee on Presiding Officers needs to meet immediately after this evening's session. The Committee is asked to meet by microphone stand number three. Microphone stand number three, Committee on Presiding Officers. And just a reminder, also, that the Committee on Plan of Organization and Rules of Order, which was elected this afternoon, will need to meet for organizational purposes in the businessman's office, Room 223, following this session. Thank you.

BISHOP MORGAN: Thank you Carolyn, and, I remind the body that we should be in our places in the morning at 8:00 for choral music that will be presented for us, and then at 8:15, our worship together. Bishop Granadosin... this evening is the evening of the Philipines.

BISHOP GRANADOSIN: Let us rise. We bring our grateful hearts unto you this evening, our Heavenly Father, for all of the blessings of this day and what the events have meant to us and to your church. We have heard you speak to us, and our hearts we have tried to keep open for the promptings of your Holy Spirit, that we might respond to the challenges of this age in which we find ourselves, and to be able to face whatever challenges come our way because of your presence and your guidance upon each of us. We thank you for this General Conference, O Heavenly Father. We thank you for The United Methodist Church and the way that you have made yourself manifested in many ways, that we might be able to be faithful to the discipleship to which all of us have been called. And that your Holy Spirit might be with us at all times as we are guided by you. And so as we bring to a close this day of so many blessings, we ask for you special blessing upon

each of us once more. The Lord bless you and keep you. The Lord smile upon you and be gracious unto you. The Lord turn his face upon you and give you peace. Now and always. Amen.

BISHOP MORGAN: Amen. All right. Thank you, Bishop.

End-Text

Start-text PR03-043

WILLIAM HATCHER: We believe the yearnings of God's people are inspired by the very Spirit of God. After prayerful deliberation, the CPT now recommends five transformational directions to enable the people called United Methodist to respond to God's call. We recommend that we center on Christian formation, call forth covenant leadership, empower the connection for ministry, strengthen our global connection and ecumenical relations, and encourage doctoral and theological discourse. This report then offers strategies that implement the five transformational directions and the '96 General Conference mandate. Hear, now, these strategies.

(videopresentation)

End-text

Start-Text PR03-044

MARCUS MATTHEWS: The transformational directions assume that healthy denominational life emerges from the relationships formed in Christian community, where disciples are formed in their love of God and neighbor, gathering at God's table and committing to discerning together God's vision for the church that is essential to our mission. The transformational directions focus our attention on how the whole body lives from a common vision and mission rather than on the limited and some times divided work of each part of our church body. Our call for bishops and district superintendents to serve among us as spiritual servant leaders affirms that the church looks to the general superintendency to model a leadership for the church in the very spirit of Jesus. It is also an attempt to respond to the concern of those who have been called to serve as bishops and district superintendents. That support for administrative details lodged in the superintending office is needed in order

for our leaders to be more accessible to congregations, covenant communities of congregations, and annual conferences, as well as serve as key leaders in the world in behalf of the church.

The covenant council is a table of spiritual and prophetic lay and clergy persons who will gather for discernment, discussion, decision-making, and disciple-making. Together these persons will seek to know God's vision for the church, set priorities for the ministry that supports the vision, and allocate resources. Rather than centralized power in the church, the covenant council creates a space for connecting the nurture, outreach, witness ministries, leadership, administrative and fiscal ministry areas created by the 1996 General Conference, and allows for the flexibility of the structuring adopted by the 1996 General Conference. The covenant council also responds to the recent ruling of the Judicial Council, in which it states that the connectional polity of The United Methodist Church requires that there must be parallel structures throughout the connection that serve to hold us together as a connectional church. The covenant council will serve as this parallel structure, while allowing for flexibility of structuring.

The recommendation for a global conference is an effort to gather United Methodists internationally to plan and act in ways that help us to gather together to address issues confronting God's creation from a holistic perspective. It gives participation to all regions of The United Methodist Church on matters of ecclesiastical nature that affect all of us; raises up a different witness of what it means to live in global community in contrast to the negative consequences of economic globalization. Rather than adding another bureaucratic level, the creation of a global conference and a U.S. central conference recognizes the complexity of twenty-first-century ministry and frees us to pay attention to the subtle ties and richness of global and regional missional needs.

The question is this: Who needs to be at the table in order for The United Methodist Church to fulfill its mission mandate in a new millennium, regionally and globally. A clear-cut description of global and central conference responsibilities can emerge only as we join in together over the next eight years. The CPT understands that the need for the elimination of racism and sexism continues to grow rather than diminish. We believe it is time for all of us to take responsibility for those important issues at every point of the connection. It is time for us to hold each other accountable in every place. The report advocates, concretely, inclusive representation at every denomina-

tional setting to address the need among our general boards and agencies for better collaboration, visioning, and strategizing from the context of our United Methodist vision and mission.

The CPT brings the boards and agency leaders to gather around the covenant council table. We affirm board and agency leadership but call for a new level of cooperation and accountability that will enable The United Methodist Church to move in a more focused way in making disciples of Jesus Christ and the proclamation of God's reign of justice and peace. The ultimate determination of a new board and agency relationships occurs when their leaders engage each other and other church leaders in dialogue and discernment.

End-Text

Start-Text pro 045

PR03-045.doc

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Sisters and brothers, a very appropriate concern of all of us as we consider together the recommendations of the CPT is their financial implications. The CPT commissions our Financial Implications Committee, composed of CPT and GCFA members, to examine the issue of the cost factors related to the reports. The Financial Implications Committee thoroughly reviewed the entire report. The findings of the Financial Implications Committee indicate that the one place when new dollars would be required would be in the creation of the United Methodist Global Conference. The CPT recommendation is that the United Methodist Global Conference to be initiated in 2008. Taking into consideration inflation, the Financial Implications Committee estimates that the additional new dollars for United Methodist Global Conference in 2008 would be \$500,000. Other cost factors to the CPT by the reporter to the CPT by the Financial Implications Committee reflect costs that would be covered through the dollars that are already budgeted in local churches, districts, annual conferences, and general agencies. If The United Methodist Church affirmed the transformational directions recommended by the CPT it would begin to function in a different way, and its resources would begin to be allocated to support the transformational directions.

Sisters and brothers, the CPT report recommends gradual changes—gradual changes that would enable The United Methodist Church to move, to move to a holistic process—a holistic process that focuses the verdict (?) of all the parts. In this process a realignment of resources would occur.

BISHOP SHARON CHRISTOPHER BROWN: One day at 3:00 in the afternoon, Peter and John were on their way to the Temple for a prayer meeting. At the same time there was a man crippled from birth being carried up. Every day he was set down at the Temple gate to beg from those going into the Temple. When he saw Peter and John about to enter the Temple, he asked for a handout. Peter, with John at his side, looked him straight in the eye and said, "Look here." He looked up expecting to get a handout. Peter said, "I don't have a nickel to my name, but what I do have I give you. In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, walk." He grabbed him by the right hand and pulled him up. In an instant, his feet and ankles became firm. He jumped to his feet and walked.

A United Methodist church decisively, passionately, and compassionately offering our hand in the name of Jesus Christ to all who are begging at the gate, for all who are begging for a new way to walk through life. This is the vision from which the CPT report is born. This report is not a revolutionary fix that—for all that ails our church. Rather, with the soul of the church at heart, it is an invitation to a journey toward a new yet very old way of being church together for a new millennium. Grounded in deep and abiding appreciation for all that has brought us to this moment, it is an invitation to take some baby steps toward a new perspective and a new way that is large enough to hold our biblical mandate and the desperate, human cry for a new walk in these times. It honors our Wesleyan style of living anchored in personal and social holiness and liberated through a salvation process of going on to perfection. This report is an occasion for this General Conference body to lower its defenses, to release its fears and anxieties, to lay aside its personal self-interests in order to think and pray quietly together as Christian community about who God is calling us to be for these times in all of our world. It provides a window for our listening to God and to one another and then daring to be faithful to what we hear.

The CPT report is far from perfect. It requires the ongoing conferencing that we

hope will occur in this General Conference session. A conferencing that needs to include all sectors of the church, that needs to listen to the hurts of our world, and, above all, needs to hear God's voice. We offer it to you in the spirit of the One who commands us to pick up our mat and walk. In the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

(applause)

End-Text

Start-text pro 046

BISHOP BRUCE BLAKE: When General Conferences act and commission a group to work on our behalf and to report to the next General Conference, these persons have given as volunteers an incredible amount of time to present to you for your consideration the report. And I'm sure your applause indicates your appreciation for bringing these issues before the Conference. Let me explain that we will have two or three matters now to facilitate the work of the Conference, but, so, with our minds focused on the Connectional Process Team report, what will soon occur will be a break. Twenty minutes after that break you will convene in small groups a cross-section of delegates will be represented in each group. This is the golden rod sheet you have before you. What you need to know to figure this out is simply your section, your seat number and to find your room and you will be convened in that setting by a presiding bishop. All of us have been oriented. You will be following a similar process in all the groups. There will be a time for you to identify where you concur in your thinking with the report, where you dissent in your thinking from the report, and an opportunity for questions to be raised. So that will be the purpose of the final part of our morning session in small groups, but a holding order because we have some matters that need to come before us again. We express our appreciation to the connectional process team for this presentation. First of all, is Ann Marshall here in the room? I know she is not a Delegate and we will have to suspend the rules if she is here, for a matter of personal privilege. Ann, or those around her if she is here—She is here, so I would ask Mary Alice Massey to come and move to suspend the rules since Ann Marshall is not a delegate to allow her to speak in a matter of personal privilege. Microphone 2.

MARY ALICE MASSEY: Bishop, Mary Alice Massey, Florida, and chair of the

Agenda Committee. I move we suspend the rules to hear from Ann Marshall.

BISHOP BLAKE: Is there a second? We will vote electronically so that all votes can be recorded. Vote yes, number one, No, number two. Please vote when the light appears. You have suspended the rules, this is recorded and Ann would you come forward at this time. Ann, come right up. And as she comes I would ask her to come to the podium and ask Bishop Dan Solomon to come and stand with her. April 19, 1995 was a day that the world was called to attention, United States experienced violence, Oklahoma City experienced tragedy, and some individuals and families experienced loss. Ann Marshall is a staff member of the General Commission on Christian Unity and Inter-religious Concerns. Bishop Solomon was her Bishop on April 19, 1995. And the Agenda Committee has approved this three-minute time for a personal privilege from Ann Marshall. Ann, you have the privilege to speak.

ANN MARSHALL: Bishops and delegates and guests, I couldn't do this four years ago in Denver. But by God's grace and continued presence in my life, I can stand before you today to say thank you for all the prayers, the support, and acts of kindness that you offered to my family and to the community of Oklahoma City. On April 19, 1995 my life was changed forever. I lost my best friend and spouse, and his name was Raymond Johnson. He was a volunteer in the Social Security office. He didn't have to be in the building that day, but he always wanted to help people, and that is what he was doing that day. And normally he always parked his car on the street. That morning some one was sick and he was able to park in the garage. Otherwise he would have been plugging the parking meter that morning. It's been a difficult journey, and God has offered me many opportunities to fill the void that at times were so empty. And because of my church community I have not walked alone and God has worked through you.

This last anniversary that happened a couple of weeks ago, it was a very different gathering for all the 168 families and the more than 500 survivors and also all the rescue workers who always come back to be with the families. This time I left with a sense of peace that I didn't ever have before. Our family even laughed this time. Because my husband, as I mentioned earlier, he was always a person that always wanted to help people, and he always worked behind the scenes and always wanted people to take credit. Well, as we gathered and as we were going down to the memorial, we were looking for his particular chair we found that he

was on the front row and in the center. So we all laughed, we thought, I wonder what Raymond would think to day if he knew that his chair was on the front row and in the center?

The community has changed. The Murrah building is no longer there. They have erected a beautiful, beautiful memorial that would help with the healing and the reconciling for the families. But the tragedy has brought the community together that was once fragmented. There is an Institute on Domestic Terrorism to try to insure that this doesn't happen again on American soil or any where in the world. Oklahoma City became the model for mass destruction, on how do you respond to that? But the act of violence did not destroy the community. It imposed the choice that we do not choose to have to live with and that means being having our lives changed for ever. The church was there, is there, and will be there for people as we heal and reconcile through God's grace.

I would like to personally invite you, when you come to Oklahoma City, that you go to the memorials to look at the 168 chairs. And at night, I have not seen it, but they light up. And they say from a hill far away, to see those lights glimmering in the dark is very breath-taking. But it also reminds us of a huge loss that we all suffered. So I would like to invite you to the Oklahoma City memorial. But, I also want you to know that as a member of the Oklahoma Missionary Conference and also as a staff of the General Commission on Christian Unity and Inter-religious Concerns, you don't know how much of an impact you had on our lives on April 19, 1995—how quickly you responded, how quickly you prayed for us. And we really felt the sense of those prayers and those supports and all the acts of kindness on that day. And Bishop Solomon, I will always be indebted to you because he would call me early, early, early in the mornings, but I was already gone and my mother would always say, "Well, Bishop Solomon called to see how you were doing." And then even as I got back to the office, he always called me to see how I was doing. And with those types of—that's how God works through us. And I am just thankful for all, for The United Methodist Church being there for me and for the community. God bless you all.

End-text

Start-Text pro 047

PR03-047

(*applause*)

BISHOP BRUCE P. BLAKE: Thank you. To facilitate our work in the morning, I would like to call on Myron McCoy to make another motion to suspend the rules in order to distribute material that is already scheduled on your program. He's coming to microphone 6, please.

MYRON MCCOY: Yes, I'd like to move the suspension of the rules for the distribution to delegates and to those of you on the platform of the *Telescope Messenger* from the Center of the Evangelical United Brethren Heritage and a piece developed by The United Methodist Publishing House related to the 200th anniversary celebration of the Evangelical United Brethren Church.

BISHOP BLAKE: Is there a second? Please vote 1, "yes"; 2, "no." Please vote when the light appears for the suspension of rules for the distribution of this material. "Yes," 875; "No," 51. [The motion carried.] You have suspended the rules for that purpose. That material will be on your tables in the morning. Yes, what is—do you have a request? Come to the microphone 2. We're moving to recess here in a couple minutes. Yes?

DAVID WILSON (Oklahoma Indian Missionary Conference): Bishop, let me ask for a...

BISHOP BLAKE: Please identify yourself and your conference.

DAVID WILSON: I'm sorry. David Wilson, Oklahoma Indian Missionary Conference. I move to temporarily suspend the rules so that we might distribute information from the National Plan for Hispanic Ministries, and the Native American Comprehensive Plan arrived at the convention center late for distribution yesterday.

BISHOP BLAKE: This is a motion. Is there a second? It's seconded. You've heard the reason. Let me explain that this puts—when we make these motions—this puts you in control of what you receive rather than other persons making the decisions. You might think these motions sort of get in our way, but I assure you that then this puts the body in control of the information you receive. The motion is to suspend the rules to receive information from the Native American Comprehensive Plan and the Hispanic Plan—materials that arrived here late. Please vote when the light appears, 1 for "Yes," and 2 for "No," for the suspension of the rules for that purpose. "Yes," 831; "No," 97. [The motion carried.] You have suspended the rules for that purpose.

Now, I'll turn to Carolyn Marshall, our secretary, for information or announcements she has for us.

CAROLYN MARSHALL: Two of them involve the process that we'll just be about as far as the CPT report. It's been brought to our attention that the DCAs which we received this morning, on page 17, number 6, reports what was in the original presentation as was printed in your *Advance Handbook*, rather than what was adopted yesterday. Let me simply share that with you, and then an announcement for those persons who will be involved. In place of what is printed on 1715, number 6, should read: "On Thursday evening, May 4, immediately following the opening worship, the CPT will provide the General Conference with a written summary of the small group meetings." And then this announcement: The meeting of the CPT discussion group convenors and recorders is scheduled during the dinner hour, Wednesday, May 3rd, in Room B301, pipe and drape area, north of the food court. This is the same room we are meeting with the recorders at 9 a.m.

BISHOP BLAKE: There's been an additional question about your assigned groups. Section A, seats 1 and 2, all the way back through Section A, seats 1 and 2, and then, seats 3 and 4, all the way back in each section; so, your row does not determine where you—which group you go to—your section and your seat number determines that. After our closing prayer, we will—the bell choir will be presenting music as we leave. Out of respect for them, I would just invite you as you leave to curtail your conversation until you move out of the arena. These persons have come to share their talent with us; and for those who want to stay, this will allow them to hear, because it gets pretty noisy in here otherwise. This will not be our norm, but this is how we will handle it to day, and just ask you to curtail the conversation 'til you move from the room. The small groups will convene in 20 minutes. We're on schedule. Thank you for your cooperation, enabling us to meet our schedule. You will be meeting in legislative committees this afternoon and this evening. We will reconvene in plenary here in the morning at 8 a.m. I've asked Bishop John Russell to come and offer our closing prayer.

BISHOP JOHN RUSSELL: Let us pray. Our heavenly Father, we're grateful for this church and the opportunity to minister here. We're thankful for the inspiration and the challenges of the morning. Now as we depart to work in small groups, grant, our Father, that we may be responsive to your Spirit and to your will. In Christ's name. Amen.

End-Text