

EASTERN DISTRICT BOARD OF DIRECTORS

FRIDAY - SATURDAY, MAY 6 - 7, 2016

Meeting Room at the Comfort Inn, Batavia, New York

REGULAR MEETING

Directors Present: President Chris Wicher; Chair Gordon Tresch, ESQ; Vice Chair Claire Carlson; Secretary Karl W. Haeussler; Jacqui Green; Mark Erbelding; Maureen Grunder; Terry Miller; Deaconess Jacqueline Duke; Melissa Fultz; Bradley Dreier; Pastor John Pingel; Pastor Carl Prostka.

Directors Absent: Pastor Murray Brindle; Pastor Daniel Strussenberg.

Special Guest: Rick Porter

FRIDAY, MAY 6, 2016

Meeting called to Order. After the Chair and the Secretary took notice of attendance and found the necessary quorum, the meeting called to order by the Chair at 1:10 P.M.

Opening Devotion. The opening devotion was given by Deaconess Jacqueline Duke. It was based upon Exodus 3 centering upon God's commissioning of Moses. We too often question God when His Spirit moves us to undertake a task for His Kingdom. Yet, like Moses, we move forward in faith trusting that His Spirit is with us. God promises us: "I will be with you." We closed the devotion as we sang "Guide Me, O Thou Great Redeemer."

Approval of Minutes. It was noted that the minutes from the special meeting of January 7th were approved unanimously at the regular meeting of February 12th. The Chair asked the Secretary to attach the resolution that was passed with them.

It was noted although the Chair and the President received the minutes of the Friends of Pioneer meeting of February 12, they were not posted online for the other members to review. The Secretary went to make copies for everyone. The Chair then instructed the Directors to review them that night so they could then be approved during the Saturday morning session.

A motion was made and seconded to approve the regular meeting minutes from February 12th. The motion was approved unanimously.

Approval of the Agenda. After a review of the proposed agenda a motion was made and seconded for its approval. It was approved unanimously.

Member Sharing. The Chair asked the Directors to keep their sharing brief and everyone complied.

Comments from the Chair.

* Concerning the upcoming Synodical Convention, the Chair encouraged the Directors to review the proposed resolutions concerning Lay Deacons and Ecclesiastical Supervision. It was shared that while congregations will not receive a hard copy of the Convention Workbook, it is possible to download a copy from the Synodical website and print it out.

* The Chair spoke about a recent experience with the Northtown Pregnancy Center. He shared the powerful influence that pro life ministries are having, notably pregnancy centers that provide pro life counseling. This is something that all Christians are called to support.

President's Report.

* Futures2 Update. Committees have been formed and some of them are working to answer the following questions: What is the church? How does District reach out to congregations? What can District do to help congregations and their members mature in faith? How do we know that churches care? Does District matter? What are ways in which we can mobilize congregations? Chris is on a committee that is dealing with the first question, what is the church? (Kris Burris, a former member of the Board of Directors is on his committee.) They are specifically focusing on how our churches can be ready to receive and assimilate Millennials. The facilitator for Futures2 is Darryl Piecan from Faith Lutheran in Penfield, New York. Chris will have members of Futures2 present at our next meeting. The next Futures2 meeting is scheduled for June 11 at State College, Pennsylvania.

* Clyde Update. A frustrating saga continues. The husband of the couple to which we have been working to sell the property suffered a stroke which has delayed the process. Along with this, the couple is now redoing paperwork so everything can be given to their daughter. While the attorneys for the District put the sale papers together in March, the wife of the couple claims that she just received them. Chris, and all of us, are anxious to get this sale done which has been dragging on for a couple of years now. The following motion was made and seconded: "Should the Clyde property not be transferred by June 1, the District President has permission from the Board of Directors to put the property back on the market." This motion was approved unanimously.

* A motion was made and seconded to approve the revised Constitution for Christ Lutheran Church in New Castle, Pennsylvania. It was approved unanimously.

* Final papers for sale of the Alpha property in Rochester were signed on Wednesday, May 4. This is now a done deal!

* There have been many unanswered questions concerning the status of Concordia Lutheran Church in Jamestown, New York. Chris recently learned from a former member who was also the organist that after the building was sold four years ago, the congregation continued meeting in a private home, yet the congregation hasn't held an official meeting for years now. They have no building, no Pastor,

and no worship. The following motion was made and seconded: "Concordia Lutheran Church in Jamestown, New York, is officially closed." It was approved unanimously.

* Upcoming calendar items:

+ Retired Church Workers Retreat will be held on October 4-5 of this year and will be led by Jerry and Terry Kieschnick.

+ Fall Pastors Conference will take place October 17-19 of this year at Pioneer Camp and Retreat Center. The main topic will be preaching. Sadly, Chris commented that on his travels he often doesn't hear good Gospel preaching, specifically the love of God in Jesus Christ and the difference it makes in our lives, our congregations, our communities and our world. Chris has heard this outstanding presentation at Best Practices and at Council of Presidents.

+ Professional Church Workers Conference is set for November 8-10 of next year in Niagara Falls, New York. (We will not be returning to Canada.) Kathy Fretthold is helping to organize this.

* New workers for the Eastern District include the following:

+ Jeff Swords, who is a native Canadian, and after nearly a year of waiting has finally secured a visa to work in the United States, will be the new Pastor at St. John Lutheran in Angola, New York.

+ Tim Anas is the new Pastor, assigned from Seminary, at Our Savior Lutheran in Buffalo, New York.

+ John Zimmerman, assigned from Seminary, is the new Pastor at Immanuel Lutheran in Scranton, Pennsylvania.

+ Robert Wacker, assigned from Seminary, is a new Chaplain at Concordia Lutheran Ministries at Cabot, Pennsylvania.

+ Scott Nagy, assigned from Seminary, is a new Chaplain at Concordia Lutheran Ministries at Cabot, Pennsylvania.

+ Josh Ulm will serve his Vicarage at Zion Lutheran Church in Bridgeville, Pennsylvania.

+ Jeremiah Jording will serve his Vicarage at St. John Lutheran Church in Orchard Park, New York.

* A motion was made and seconded to nominate the following to the Commission on Handbook (COH) and the Commission on Constitutional Matters (it was noted that Gordie was already nominated by our Board):

Rev. Phil Esala ESQ from the Ohio District;

Rev. Chuck Mueller, Jr. from the Northern Illinois District;

Dr. Gerhard Bode, from the Missouri District;

Rev. Gerhard Bode from the Minnesota District;

Rev. Paul Sieveking from the Missouri District; and,

Rev. Keith Kohlmeier from the Kansas District.

The motion was approved unanimously.

* Visitations. The official visitation of every congregation in the Eastern District has begun. Each visit will be made either by the District President or by those trained officially, twenty-five in all, to represent him. All visits will be completed by June of 2017. Chris will bring general observations from these visits to the Board. He stressed that each visit is meant to be very positive in nature.

* St. Paul Lutheran in Clarence, New York, recently rejoined the Eastern District. Ron Habedank has been serving as their vacancy Pastor. They are very small, yet, under Ron's pastoral leadership, they are showing signs of life in an area that is bursting with potential.

* Holy Cross in Clarence, New York has asked for information about the District Budget which is a great sign! Chris and Gordie will attend their leaders' meeting in a few weeks.

* Chris has completed his goal of visiting all 16 Circuits of our District with a presentation on worker wellness. As he continues to emphasize: "When leaders are healthy, the congregations are healthy."

* Meetings for delegates to the fast approaching Synodical Convention were held in April. The Buffalo Region meeting had around 30 in attendance while the Pittsburgh Region meeting had about 20 in attendance. The meetings scheduled for the Rochester and Philadelphia regions were cancelled due to very low registrations.

* Audit Updates. The Eastern District audit has been completed. The Pioneer Camp and Retreat Center audit has yet to be completed. They are still waiting for the new financial staff at Pioneer to sift through the many details lingering from when their Business Manager unexpectedly left in August of 2015. They are hopeful that their audit will be completed by mid June.

* The President reviewed the present District staff:

Bob Foerster - e communications, FaceBook, agendas, homepage.

Kathy Fretthold - Accreditation of schools, Educator's gathering, CM Fall gatherings, regular contacts.

Lyle Heggemeier - Natural Church Development training, Best Practices, conferencing, research.

Bob Wirth - Foundation with Eastern District and Southeastern District.

Rick Porter - Lutheran Church Extension Fund with Eastern District and New Jersey District.

* Small congregation options. Small congregations that cannot afford a full time Pastor have had the following options in the past: close; merge with another small congregation; remain independent yet share a Pastor; a dual parish arrangement; or utilize a Lay Deacon. A new approach is becoming a satellite congregation. This is when a smaller, struggling congregation becomes a subservient willing partner of a strong host congregation that can handle this extra work and stress. The host church "overwhelms" the satellite church with its ministry styles and approaches. The satellite congregation follows the instructions of the host congregation with no

questions asked about any subject including worship, administration, and so on. Along these lines, everything that belongs to

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the satellite congregation now belongs to the host congregation. This arrangement has already taken place with St. John Lutheran in Hamburg which has now become an official satellite of St. John Lutheran in Orchard Park.

* Projects underway.

+ A Bylaws and Regulations Committee is being established in preparation for 2018 District Convention.

+ Concerning the District Office, a worker benefits policy revision is underway. The question has arisen of what to do if a spouse wants to be covered under our District policy?

+ Searching for smaller congregations that would be willing to become satellite congregations and larger, stronger congregations that would be willing to serve as hosts.

End of President's Report.

Break.

Eastern District Governance Policy Work.

The Chair explained why our Governance Policies are so important and why we are dedicating time to this. Our Governance Policies guide the work of our Board and, therefore, the work of the District.

The Chair called upon Rick Porter to lead this section.

Adding to the Chair's comments, Rick affirmed that the more we understand proper Policy Governance, the more it will help to set a more efficient and productive agenda. It will also help us in establishing our District budget.

We looked at 4.1.5.1. as this was still pending from the Board meeting of May 2, 2015. Rick suggested adopting this, yet the Chair wanted to change this to include other LCMS related financial institutions such as the Lutheran Federal Credit Union. 4.1.5.1. was then revised to read as follows: "The District President shall not allow investments outside of LCMS related institutions, e.g. Lutheran Church Extension Fund, LCMS Foundation and Lutheran Federal Credit Union."

We then turned to what Rick had planned for us to review at this meeting. First, however, we addressed 2.4. - DEVELOPING GOVERNANCE POLICIES.

2.4.1. was approved. "Board policies are to be active and dynamic. They are meant to be

changed and refined regularly, based on the intent of each section, the values of the Board, resolutions of the District Convention and the changing context within which the Eastern District functions.”

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As for 2.4.2., Rick stated that Governance Policies are split into four different areas. The first one concerns why we exist. The subsequent three concern how we accomplish our business. It was noted that the upcoming Futures2 report will help us redefine the first area.

2.4.2 was affirmed. “The Board shall maintain written policies of four types:

- * Policies of Outcome Results: Affirmative statements setting forth the purposes, effects and acceptable costs of operation. (What good, for what people, at what cost?)
- * Policies of Board Self-Governance: Statements setting forth the style and rules of the Board’s own tasks and procedures. (How will we function together as a Board?)
- * Policies of Board and Staff Relationships: Clarifying statements about delegation of authority to, and monitoring of management activities.
- * Policies of Executive Limitations: Statements that limit the ways the District President may pursue the desired outcomes of the Eastern District.”

We then turned to 2.5 - RESOLUTIONS.

2.5.1 refers to resolutions concerning the work of the Board, not the specific work of the President. A suggestion was made about whether or not the statement should include Synodical Conventions. After a short discussion over this, another discussion took place over what to do if a secular law forces us to violate our consciences. 2.5.1 was then revised to read as follows: “The Board will pass resolutions for specific actions only where the action will affect the Board or is specifically required by these policies, law, District Convention and/or Synod Convention, and is consistent with Biblical and Confessional standards.

We then moved onto 2.6. - ACTIONS REQUIRED OF THE BOARD. The Introduction was affirmed. “Certain areas are left specifically to Board action because of their unique nature or requirement of the Board or other governing body.”

Rick then introduced the idea of Consent Agenda. Matters that only need a “rubber stamping” go under consent agenda. An example of this would be when we are asked to approve Congregational Constitutions.

A Policy Governance section was added to APPENDIX, 5.6 - CONSENT AGENDA.

5.6.1 was added. “The Board will approve congregation constitutions [Policy 2.6.6; LCMS Bylaws 2.3.1 and 2.4.1].”

5.6.2 was also included. “The Board will issue calls and/or ratify contracts for personnel [2.6.7].”

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We then jumped back to 2.11 - BOARD AGENDA STRUCTURE. In view of the above inclusion, another new Governance Policy, 2.11.5 was added. “Through the year, the Board will attend to consent agenda items as expeditiously as possible.”

Because this was added, previously existing 2.11.5 was renumbered as 2.11.6.

Moreover, adding consent agenda prompted the inclusion of 4.8 - COMMUNICATION AND SUPPORT TO THE BOARD along with 4.8.1. - “The District President shall not fail to submit to the Board a consent agenda containing items delegated to the District President yet required by law, regulation, or contract to be Board approved, along with applicable monitoring information.”

We returned to 2.6 - ACTIONS REQUIRED OF THE BOARD.

Also in view of the above concerning consent agenda, 2.6.6. and 2.6.7 under Official Acts were revised respectively: “The Board will approve congregation constitutions per the Consent Agenda [LCMS Bylaws 2.3.1 and 2.4.1].” and “The Board will issue calls and/or ratify contracts for personnel per the Consent Agenda.”

We continued with 2.7 - EXECUTIVE ACTIONS - and revised 2.7.1 - “All Board decisions governing the actions of the District President shall be done through policy development.”

We moved onto 2.8 - POLICY REVIEW.

We discussed 2.8.1 - “Any Board member or the District President may request a review of specific policies. The Board will annually review all policies.” There was some discussion about changing annually to triennially. The Board decided to table this for our next meeting.

We continued with 2.9 - BOARD OFFICERS.

2.9.1 was revised. “At its Fall meeting following District Convention, the Board will elect from its membership a Chair and a Vice Chair. The Secretary of the District will be the Secretary of the Board. These are the Officers of the Board.” This was revised as this has been the practice of our Board which has been approved by consent.

Rick proposed that we delete 2.9.2. “The Board Chair will work in close consultation with the District President to: help prepare the Board of Directors meeting agenda; facilitate Board of Director meetings; follow up on needed actions from the Board of Directors meetings. The Chair wanted to maintain this, yet perhaps phrase it differently. It was decided to table this discussion until our next meeting.

2.9.2(a) was affirmed. “The Board Chair is empowered to chair Board meetings with all the commonly accepted functions of the chair (e.g. ruling, recognizing).”

2.9.2(b) was affirmed. “The Board Chair has no authority to make decisions about policies created by the Board.”

2.9.2(c) was affirmed. “The Board Chair has no authority to supervise or direct the District President.”

2.9.2(d) was affirmed. “The Board Chair or other designated board member, shall represent the Board to outside parties in announcing board-stated positions.” It was strongly emphasized that the Board speaks with one voice!

2.9.2(e) was affirmed. “The Vice Chair may serve in the stead of the Chair and as assigned.”

The Governance Policy work ended at 4:48 p.m. The Chair wanted to return to the President’s Report. This would necessitate amending the agenda so we could continue beyond 5:00. Consent to do this was given by the Board.

Eastern District Budget.

The President made the following comments concerning the Eastern District budget.

* Directors were encouraged to review how each Circuit and the congregations within them have been giving, or not giving, to the District. Congregational giving to the District continues to drop. As more and more congregations struggle financially, this affects giving to the District.

* Congregational assessments have been sent out in preparation for the next District Convention.

* A huge gift from the LWML was given toward the Presidential Scholarship.

* The New Worker Assistance program helps our new workers with their all too often huge educational debt (4 years of College followed by 4 years of Seminary tuition). The program provides \$100 a month for 5 years which will service about \$10,000 of their debt. (The average student enters Seminary around \$40,000 in debt and enters the pastoral ministry more than \$100,000 in debt.)

* It helps that Bob Foerster sold his house and that the District no longer needs to provide him with a car.

* Our line of credit is at zero balance.

* As we discussed at our February meeting, Pioneer is still working on its plan to repay loans from the District.

* The Ignite and Light loan balance which was originally at \$200,000 has presently been reduced

to

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\$57,000!

President's Report continues.

* Synodical Convention. The Synodical Convention will be held July 9-14 in Milwaukee. Election for Synodical President will begin June 11. The three candidates on the ballot are Synodical President Matthew Harrison, Concordia Seminary President Dale Meyer, and Michigan District President David Maier. There are 590 overtures along with 35 District reports and 43 additional reports. 80 elections will be held.

The Chair touched upon the resolutions concerning Ecclesiastical Supervision. According to the present dispute resolution process, established at the 2004 Synodical Convention, the process was streamlined and any charges were handled by the District President. Before this, anyone, anywhere at anytime could charge someone. Certain resolutions proposed for this Convention would displace our current system and give our Synodical President direct supervision over all church workers on all circumstances.

There was also discussion concerning proposed resolutions that would essentially bring an end to all Lay Deacons within two years and how this would be devastating many of our Eastern District congregations.

The Convention will also likely deal with the CCM interpretation that any and all support for Missions must be coordinated by St. Louis.

Chris has been sharing all of this at the Regional preparatory meetings for delegates as well as at Circuit meetings.

Motion to Adjourn. A motion was made and seconded to adjourn at 5:18 p.m. It was approved unanimously. A prayer was said by Deaconess Jacqueline Duke.

SATURDAY, MAY 7, 2016. Meeting room at the Comfort Inn in Batavia, New York.

Meeting Called to Order. The Meeting was called to order by the Chair at 8:32 a.m.

Opening Devotion. The devotion was given by Mark Erbelding. He began with a focus upon Judges 2:10 which, to him, is a most depressing verse in the Bible. "And all that generation also were gathered to their fathers. And there arose another generation after them who did not know the Lord or the work that He had done for Israel." He showed us a picture of the Choluteca Bridge in Honduras. It is a bridge to nowhere that is built next to river. Originally, it was built over the river and, then, Hurricane Mitch moved the river. The point of Greg Finke, author of *Joining Jesus on His Mission: How to Be an Everyday Missionary*, is that too many churches are operating like it was the pre hurricane world. Churches then didn't need to strategize for outreach as we lived in a Biblically literate and church supportive society and the people within it naturally came

to our churches. Our

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world has changed dramatically and now our entire nation and our communities are the mission field. We are called to build a new bridge to our culture. (The sobering fact was quoted that more Christians worshiped in China last Sunday than worshiped in our nation!) The Good News for us is that unchurched people today are looking for an authentic community where there is real service and sacrifice, real love and peace. We looked at John 4:35 and Ephesians 3:20. “The river has moved, but Jesus is ready!” We closed with Psalm 67 and a prayer. (It was noted that Greg Finke will be speaking in Niagara County in the near future!)

Approval of Minutes. The Chair reminded us that we were asked to review the Minutes from the Owners of Pioneer Meeting held on February 12th. A motion was made and seconded to approve them. The motion was approved unanimously.

Eastern District Governance Policy Work continued. The Chair shared a message from Rick Porter. While reviewing 2.10.1 the question arose: “Does our Executive Committee really operate this way?” Our President consults with them, yet they do not make decisions for the Board and only set the agenda for meetings. It was recommended that we fine tune this section of our Governance Policy. The Chair made this a homework assignment for our Fall meeting.

The Wholeness Wheel. The President passed out The Wholeness Wheel: A Tool for Understanding Whole Person Health. Chris shared this with the Pastors at each of the 16 Circuit meetings he attended. He strongly believes that as the overall health of the Pastor goes, so goes the overall health of the congregation.

Secondary traumatic stress is a major threat to the well being of church workers. This is stress that comes from caring for people, especially during very difficult times including crises. Pastors need to acknowledge the inevitable letdown and give themselves time to recover. “The greater the stress level, the greater the need for radical self care.”

The Secretary encouraged the lay members on the Board to encourage their Pastors (and all Pastors) to attend their Circuit meetings and District conferences and retreats so they can find such support. This can also happen to lay leaders in a congregation as Melissa shared her recent experiences. Chris shared a time of struggle that he went through. It was pointed out that John is our District representative in this area.

Chris shared some specific advice that he gives to congregational presidents: get a Millennial on your major boards.

*** District Viability Report.**

Our President led this discussion with the Chair supplying much additional feedback. This report originated with a resolution our Eastern District submitted to the 2010 Convention. This survey seeks to provide answers to the following questions:

Is it good to have 35 Districts? Should there be more or less?
What about the viability of the two non geographic Districts?
Should District Presidents be full time or part time?
How large or small should a District be?

What makes a District viable (functional)?

The resulting survey contained eight questions. In our Eastern District, there were 228 responses (21.6%) which is a great response for a survey!

1) The Eastern District provides resources for the district president to carry out ecclesiastical supervision as defined in the Synod's Constitution and Bylaws in a reasonable and timely manner?

A strong majority agreed with this statement. The Chair brought forth individual comments asking whether or not the Circuit Visitors and Regional Vice Presidents should be more proactive in contacting congregations directly.

2) The Eastern District provides resources for the district president in carrying out the minimum requirements for official visits to each of the members congregations as outlined in the Bylaws of Synod, including coming to the pastors and member congregations at least once every three years as a brotherly adviser, "reminding them of the joy of serving in the mission and ministry of the church"?

A good majority agreed that the District President positively visits each congregation at least once every three years. The President mentioned that he gets a lot of help in this from the Circuit Visitors and Regional Vice Presidents. The Chair brought up a specific complaint that the District Budget isn't available for review which simply is not true. The President responded that he does his best to provide congregations with resources and input so they can identify what their specific mission is. Which brings us to . . .

3) The Eastern District provides appropriate guidance and support to member congregations for participating in the mission God has given to the Church, including how that is carried out in the various missions and ministries of the church?

Again, a good majority agrees that the District does provide appropriate guidance and support to congregations in carrying out the Mission that God has given to the Church. Previously, President Belasic worked toward this by providing encouragement while President Brunner worked toward this by supplying grants. Presently, we are striving for congregations to support regional mission organizations. The Chair brought forth some specific responses along these lines: "What has the District ever done for us?" It was noted that the E Communicator has been helpful in bringing information about the District directly to lay people. The comment was made by Becky that we should encourage congregational secretaries to publicize and promote this within their congregations. The comments was also made just how important it is for Pastors to share information about the

District and to do so positively.

4) The Eastern District provides encouragement and needed congregational services (e.g. stewardship, conflict resolution, crisis counseling, calling process, collaborative efforts, networking and help with evangelistic outreach, etc.) to member congregations struggling to carry out their core functions?

While most agree with this statement, we lament that the District simply does not have the resources and the staff to provide all of the congregational services both it and member congregations would desire to have. Nonetheless, the District does do a great job of being there for member congregations in time of crisis and/or conflict.

5) The Eastern District adapts to new circumstances and meets changing needs related to the mission and ministry of the church?

While most agree, the percentage is a little lower. The President replied that adapting to new circumstances and changing needs is what he is all about! The Chair brought forth some specific comments that the District does a poor job with youth. Could the District provide more youth events? It was mentioned that Pioneer has been helping with this and could provide even more assistance. It was also brought about that there is a lack of social media help in this area.

The question was asked about what, if anything, is going on in the Syracuse area. It was shared that while we lost our one congregation in Syracuse, efforts are being made to begin a mission start both from District and grass roots levels.

6) The Eastern District meets its financial responsibilities and obligations, and receives sufficient financial resources from its membership to (i) support the mission and ministry of the church in the district, and (ii) financially assist the mission and ministry of the Synod?

This received the lowest percentage of all the agrees (32.8%) and the highest percentage of the disagrees (28.4%). It also received the highest percentage of no opinion (38.1%).

7) The Eastern District finds itself to be of a size and configuration to be effective, efficient, and capable of serving all who make up its constituency?

While most agree a bit more disagree (compared to other responses). Yes, the long drive from Buffalo to Philadelphia does present challenges. It was also noted that while the Eastern District is smaller than most Districts it is still larger than others.

8) The Eastern District provides adequate assistance and support to allow the district president to carry out the functions and obligations of the office of district president as set forth in the Bylaws?

It is good to see that there is both strong agreement and low disagreement. A discussion arose over

what exactly are the functions and obligations of the District President? The Chair brought forth specific statements that the District is all but invisible to the average parishioner. We referred back to Becky's earlier suggestion of congregational secretaries and others publicizing and promoting the E Communicator within our congregations.

Concluding observations from the President.

* While some, unfortunately, remain in the dark about District, we will continue striving to bring them into the light with proactive information.

* Some of these tensions concerning expectations of the District exist because many remember the golden age of big district budgets and staff. Others unrealistically expect the District to be able to solve the problems of their congregation.

* It's great to see that there is such strong support of the District at present.

* There is a growing level of anxiety and frustration in our congregations (struggling with how the river has moved).

* Yes, we can always do better and we will strive to do so.

* Referring back to Question 6, the Chair brought forth the question of what can the District be doing that it is not presently doing? The comment was made that when congregational budgets grow tight, one of the first things to be cut is giving to the District. It was also noted that District cannot possibly get any thinner concerning staff. The Secretary pointed out that this is one reason why the President's presentation concerning Worker Wellness are so important for when leaders are healthier their congregations tend to be healthy, and healthier congregations can give more to District.

Board Calendar. Not gathering in the Scranton area for this meeting was regrettable. We will most likely return to the Philadelphia area before we meet again in the Scranton area.

Meeting Evaluation. The Secretary commented that this was one of the best meetings ever during his three terms with the Board. There was very good and positive comments made from every Director. Not having to discuss anything at all about Pioneer (because Pioneer is now operated by its own Board of Directors) freed us up to focus more fully on other matters. Meeting at the hotel was also beneficial. The President asked the question of do we have to meet overnight? The comment was made that it does seem to build the comradery between the Directors. He asked us to think about this.

Closing Prayer. A closing prayer was offered by Mark Erbelding.

Motion to Adjourn. A motion to adjourn was made and seconded. It was approved unanimously at 10:46 a.m.

