

Report on the Defeated Bylaws Amendment on the Frequency of Synod

On July 3, 2011 the Twenty-eighth General Synod, meeting in Tampa, Florida, defeated a proposed Bylaws amendment to change the frequency of Synod from every two years to every three or four years, as was the recommendation of the Synod committee that considered the issue. During the committee's deliberations it was decided to further recommend to the Synod that the Executive Council of the General Synod be directed to establish a working group to conduct a study on the frequency of Synod and report back to the Twenty-ninth General Synod in 2013. However, when the Twenty-eighth General Synod defeated the Bylaws amendment on frequency, it also rejected the call for the working group and study, as the two issues were not properly separated and came to the Synod as one item, which was defeated in its entirety.

Because of the intent of the committee and the expectation of many delegates, the Executive Council determined the issue fell within the purview of its newly created Governance Implementation Task Force and it undertook such a study during the course of its two-year charge.

The task force, meeting with representatives of the Council of Conference Ministers and polity experts, meeting September 13-15, 2012, considered the ramifications, positive and negative, of altering the frequency of Synod. The central issue boiled down to a significant cost savings realized by conducting Synod less often versus the benefit of denominational community building and maintaining lines of communications between all settings of the Church provided by the current two-year Synod cycle. While there was a difference of opinion among some representatives of the Council of Conference Ministers, and among some members of the taskforce, itself, it was the consensus of the taskforce that a change in the frequency of Synod is not in the best interest of the Church and its membership at this time.

Subsequently, at the October 2012 meeting of the Executive Council, its Governance Implementation Taskforce brought a recommendation of *no recommendation* on the frequency of Synod and it was received by the Executive Council without additional action.

Respectfully submitted;

Lee Foley

Secretary to the Corporation-

The Executive Council of the General Synod of the United Church of Christ

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