

Advisory Committee 1, Synodical Services and Structure I, Rev. Henry Kranenburg reporting, presents the following:

## **I. Response to Overture 73 (Deferred from 2021) Majority**

### *A. Materials*

Overture 73, pp. 401-02

### *B. Recommendations*

1. That synod appoint a small task force to report to Synod 2025 to clarify the distinctions in categories of synodical pronouncements, decisions, reports, positions, and advice and the nature and extent to which each is 'settled and binding' on members, office bearers and churches.

#### *Grounds:*

- a. Interpretations made with respect to the extent to which the "pastoral advice" set forth in the 1973 report on homosexuality is binding have led to turmoil and questions about the actual status of such advice.
  - b. In 1995, Overture 2 from Classis Wisconsin asked for clarification of the meaning of the phrase "settled and binding." Synod 1995 defeated the majority report's recommendation on what the phrase means but did not further respond to Overture 2's request for clarification.
  - c. The statements adopted by Synod 1975 (Synodical Decisions and the Confessions) "expressing the use and function of synodical pronouncements on doctrinal and ethical matters and their relation to the confessions" are not uniformly interpreted by those who read them.
  - d. The potential impact of how the above statements are understood is too important at this time in our denomination's history to seek a quick answer even from an Advisory Committee of 26 very competent people.
  - e. Recent decisions of synod have led to uncertainty and 'angst' about how to interpret pronouncements of synod.
  - f. The decisions to be made by Synod 2024 may have significant influence on how the statements of Synod 1975 are understood and so there is wisdom in waiting for these decisions.
2. That synod declare the above recommendation and grounds to be the mandate for the task force.
  3. That synod appoint members to the team, possibly from the following categories: a church polity person, one or more members of Advisory Committee 1, a pastor, and/or a person knowledgeable in the area of synod history.

4. That this be synod's response to Overture 73.

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