

Advisory Committee 2, Synodical Services and Structure II, Rev. Elizabeth Guillaume-Koene reporting, presents the following:

I. Response to Overture 47, 48 and Communications 15-26

A. Materials

1. Overture 47, supplement
2. Overture 48, supplement
3. Communication 15, pp. 587-590
4. Communication 16, pp. 590-591
5. Communication 17, pp. 592-594
6. Communication 18, pp. 595-596
7. Communication 19, pp. 596-597
8. Communication 20, pp. 597-598
9. Communication 21, pp. 598-600
10. Communication 22, pp. 600-601
11. Communication 23, pp. 602-603
12. Communication 24, pp. 603-604
13. Communication 25, pp. 604-605
14. Communication 26, pp. 605-614

B. Background:

Both Synod 2022 and 2023 encouraged their decisions to be starting places for discussions. The churches, communities and members who wrote letters of protest have expressed a desire to communicate with their councils, classes, Synod, and the whole church body. We need to honor their transparency.

C. Recommendation

1. That Synod receive Communications 15-26, understanding that they were written with much prayer, wrestling and lament.
2. That Synod declare this its response to Overture 47, Overture 48, and Communications 15-26.

Grounds:

- a. It is important that these laments are heard by the whole church body as we fulfil the Biblical instruction to “Rejoice with those who rejoice; mourn with those who mourn. Live in harmony with one another” (Romans 12:15-16a).
- b. When issues that go this deep and affect lives greatly, it is important to ensure that we are not ignoring the issue but set up our conversations to be fair, helpful and have the possibility of meeting the goal of being able to stay in covenant community.

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