



## **The Cloud and the Box: The Image for the Future of Our Association**

CMBA, several other associations in our state, and the SC Baptist Convention are involved in a process known as Denominee. This process will help CMBA clarify our identity and focus our actions for years to come. It is led by the Future Church organization. (Find them at [www.FutureChurch.co](http://www.FutureChurch.co).)

The specific focus of the Denominee process for CMBA is about succession planning. It is about moving from our current executive director – George Bullard – to the next executive director with a clear focus of where we are headed. The goal is for the new executive director to begin their ministry with an association already in movement to the future God has for it.

The Denominee process has three phases or semesters of work over an 18-month period. The first semester was the Fall of 2021 and the second is now underway in the Winter/Spring of 2022. The third semester will be the Fall of 2022. This timing is intentional so that the new executive director can guide to finalization of the future after his service begins around July 1, 2022.

A core concept of Denominee is the Cloud and the Box. This is a concept developed by Guy Safford of the Evangelical Free Church of America three decades ago. Future Church adopted it for use in Denominee. Here is the concept.

### **The Cloud and the Box Explained**

The movement of congregations is like a Cloud. It is ever-changing, ever-moving, ever-reshaping. The existence of denominational structures is like a Box. It is bounded, organized, and not easily moved.

The Cloud created the Box to serve the movement of congregations. The Box did not create the Cloud. However, at times the Box acts like it created, owns, and instructs the Cloud. The Cloud definitely did not create the Box for the Box to tell the Cloud what it must do. Yet there is an interdependent relationship between the Cloud and the Box.

The Cloud keeps moving and changing. The Box finds it hard to move and change.

Once created by the Cloud, the Box serves the Cloud. The Cloud funds the Box so these services can be provided.

Often the Cloud will move – even morph – faster than the Box. When that happens, a value gap is created between what the Box provides and what the Cloud wants and needs.

During the Denominee process, CMBA is evaluating how it serves our family congregations so that the value we provide is in keeping with the movement of our congregations.

Want to know more about the Cloud and the Box concept? Check out this video:  
<https://vimeo.com/505807742>.