

**2004 SYNOD ASSEMBLY
PLENARY SESSION THREE**

Saturday, June 5, 2004
1:30 PM

Bishop Strobel called the assembly to order and called upon Pastor Martha Sipe to present the Report of the Elections Committee.

Churchwide Assembly – Group C, Clergy:

Number of votes cast: 481	Richard Chaveas - 193
Number of illegal votes: 9	Lori Kochanski – 242
Number of legal votes: 472	Lyn Langkamer – 250
Number needed to elect: 237	Scott Lingenfelter – 230
	Glenn Miller – 162
	Thomas Reinsel – 242
	Martha S. Sipe – 270
	Jimmy Lee Werley – 167
	Grant Wickert – 153
	William Maxon – 242

Bishop Strobel declared Lori Kochanski, Lyn Langkamer, Thomas Reinsel, Martha Sipe, and William (Woody) Maxon elected.

Churchwide Assembly – Group C, Lay Male:

Number of votes cast: 472	Edward Cool – 270
Number of illegal votes: 4	Guy Ehler – 275
Number of legal votes: 468	Scott Fackenthall – 181
Number needed to elect: 235	Robert Hensley – 159
	Rene Rodriguez – 205
	Charles Rush – 155
	Bruce Ilgen – 218
	Ernest G. Siegfried - 215

Bishop Strobel declared Edward Cool and Guy Ehler elected.

Churchwide Assembly – Group C, Lay Female:

Number of votes cast: 517	Nancy Bleam – 270
Number of illegal votes: 0	Pam Bonina – 193
Number of legal votes: 517	Janet Marsh Catina – 220
Number needed to elect: 259	Barbara A. Keener – 288
	Sherry Lockhart – 270
	Jean Sandberg – 217
	Susan Schellenberg – 231

Bishop Strobel declared Nancy Bleam, Barbara A. Keener, and Sherry Lockhart elected.

The Bishop called on Pastor Paul Braden to present the 2005 compensation guidelines.

2005 MINIMUM COMPENSATION GUIDELINES

At the request of the 1983 convention of the Northeastern Pennsylvania Synod, LCA, the former Professional Development Committee created annual “*Minimum Base Salary Guidelines*” for pastors and lay professional leaders. The following guidelines are recommended by the Leadership Development Team for the approval of the 2004 Assembly of the Northeastern Pennsylvania Synod, ELCA.

**PARISH PASTORS
2005 Minimum Salary Guidelines**

Resolved that:

1) The 2005 *minimum* base salary for pastors in the Northeastern Pennsylvania Synod of the ELCA be in agreement with the following guidelines:

Years of service In ordained Ministry	Minimum Salary (Parsonage Provided) \$	Minimum Salary (including Housing Allowance) \$
Newly ordained	22,844	35,916
One year	23,298	36,368
Two years	23,873	36,945
Three years	24,504	37,575
Four years	25,037	38,109
Five years	25,584	38,656
Six years	26,120	39,189
Seven years	26,654	39,725
Eight years	27,200	40,272
Nine years	27,735	40,807
Ten years	28,354	41,425
Eleven years	28,817	41,889
Twelve years	29,352	42,424
Thirteen years	29,886	42,958
Fourteen years	30,421	43,493
Fifteen years	30,968	44,039
Sixteen years	31,490	44,562
Seventeen years	32,135	45,206
Eighteen years	32,584	45,656
Nineteen years	33,119	46,189
Twenty years	33,666	46,737

A minimum of \$440 should be added to this *minimum* base salary for every year of experience over twenty.

This grid gives pastors a 3% increase over last year's figures. Higher general cost of living in particular areas of the synod should be taken into consideration for adequate compensation.

2) It is the responsibility of each congregation to provide housing for its pastor(s). This may be accomplished in either of two ways:

a) Housing Allowance. A portion of the pastor's salary may be designated as a housing allowance. This amount will vary, depending upon location and the needs of the pastor. Congregations and pastors should check current tax laws in establishing this figure. This amount should be established before the beginning of each year by a resolution of the Congregation Council or the listing of an amount in the congregation's budget.

b) Parsonage. This is free use of a church-owned house, including utilities. A portion of the pastor's base salary may be set aside for furnishings and other housing expenses according to the IRS code. An annual equity allowance of a minimum of 3%-5% of salary is recommended for all parsonage situations.

3) **Congregations should remember that the figures in the grid are *minimum*. Congregations are encouraged to exceed these minimum guidelines. Congregations are urged to consider how other professionals with comparable education, training, and commitment are generally compensated.**

4) **Additional compensation should be provided based on criteria such as continuing education, special skills, responsibilities, merit, and local conditions.**

5) **Each congregation shall establish a Mutual Ministry Committee to facilitate the discussion by which these criteria are evaluated (as well as for carrying out the other functions of mutual ministry).**

6) **A congregation that fails to meet the synodical guidelines shall submit a report to the bishop on a form to be provided, detailing the reasons why these minimums are not being met and the steps that will be taken to establish these minimums as soon as possible.**

The following minimum benefits should be provided in addition to salary:

1) A **Social Security Allowance** equal to one half of the pastor's social security liability. This allowance is taxable for income tax purposes. For 2003, the Social Security liability is expected to be equal to 15.3% of the combined base salary and housing provision. (Parsonages are subject to the fair rental value of the house for tax purposes).

2) An **Automobile Allowance** equal to IRS guidelines per mile for business travel. Pastors reimbursed for auto expense on a per mile basis do not have to report this allowance as income if they submit written mileage to the calling institution.

3) **Continuing Education** provisions including a congregation/agency providing at least \$550 for tuition, books, etc., and two weeks of time (not vacation), and the pastor providing at least \$250. It is recommended that this money be deposited in the synod's PACE program. (Programs that include Sundays must be negotiated with the congregation council.) It is encouraged that congregations/agencies and pastors work towards a partnership goal of \$1,000.

4) Four full weeks of **vacation** time annually.

5) One to two **days off** per week, and, at least once a month, two consecutive days off.

6) For the purposes of **Worker's Compensation**, pastors are considered to be employees of the congregation and therefore should be included in Worker's Compensation insurance.

7) **Health and pension benefits** according to the guidelines of the ELCA, including a 12% pension provision.

8) Congregations may also reimburse the pastor(s) for **professional expenses** such as dues, entertainment, supplies, and malpractice insurance.

PASTORS WITH PART TIME CALLS

Pastors with part time calls should be compensated on a prorated basis in line with the above guidelines, in consultation with the Office of the Bishop. Vacation and continuing education provisions should be prorated, as well. Pension and health benefits are according to the guidelines of the ELCA, including a 12% pension provision.

**ROSTERED LAY PROFESSIONALS
2005 Minimum Salary Guidelines**

Resolved that:

1) The 2005 *minimum* salary for rostered lay professionals in the Northeastern Pennsylvania Synod of the ELCA be in agreement with the following guidelines:

Years of service in Rostered Ministry	Minimum Salary (Bachelor's Degree) \$	Minimum Salary (Master's Degree) \$
Newly Commissioned	25,539	27,899
One year	26,046	27,993
Two years	26,690	28,933
Three years	27,342	29,872
Four years	27,997	30,417
Five years	28,555	30,962
Six years	29,113	31,518
Seven years	29,708	32,075
Eight years	30,243	32,619
Nine years	30,812	33,165
Ten years	31,372	33,721
Eleven years	31,930	34,267
Twelve years	32,501	34,812
Thirteen years	33,060	36,368
Fourteen years	33,986	35,914
Fifteen years	34,188	36,470

A minimum of \$460 should be added to this *minimum* salary for every year of experience over fifteen.

This grid gives rostered lay professionals a 3% increase over last year's figures. Higher general cost of living in particular areas of the synod should be taken into consideration for adequate compensation.

2) Congregations should remember that the figures in the grid are *minimum*. Congregations are encouraged to exceed these minimum guidelines. Congregations are urged to consider how other professionals with comparable education, training, and commitment are generally compensated.

3) Additional compensation should be provided based on criteria such as continuing education, special skills, responsibilities, merit, and local conditions.

4) Each congregation shall establish a Mutual Ministry Committee to facilitate the discussion by which these criteria are evaluated (as well as for carrying out the other functions of mutual ministry).

5) A congregation that fails to meet the synodical guidelines shall submit a report to the bishop on a form to be provided, detailing the reasons why these minimums are not being met and the steps that will be taken to establish these minimums as soon as possible.

The following *minimum* benefits should be provided in addition to salary:

- 1) An **Automobile Allowance** equal to IRS guidelines per mile for business travel. Rostered lay leaders reimbursed for auto expense on a per mile basis do not have to report this allowance as income if they submit written mileage to the calling institution.
- 2) **Continuing Education** provisions including a congregation/agency providing at least \$550 for tuition, books, etc., and two weeks of time (not vacation), and the leader providing at least \$250. It is recommended that this money be deposited in the synod's PACE program. (Programs that include Sundays must be negotiated with the congregation council.) It is encouraged that congregations/agencies and rostered lay professional leaders work towards a partnership goal of \$1,000.
- 3) Four full weeks of **vacation** time annually.
- 4) One to two **days off** per week, and, at least once a month, two consecutive days off.
- 5) For the purposes of **Worker's Compensation**, rostered lay professional leaders are considered to be employees of the congregation and therefore should be included in Worker's Compensation insurance.
- 6) **Health and pension benefits** according to the guidelines of the ELCA, including a 12% pension provision.
- 7) Congregations may also reimburse the lay professional leader(s) for **professional expenses** such as dues, entertainment, supplies, and malpractice insurance.

Pastor Braden presented the guidelines for clergy; Bishop Strobel asked for discussion and the vote. Pastor Braden presented the guidelines for lay rostered leaders; Bishop Strobel asked for discussion and the vote.

The resolution was adopted.

The Bishop then invited Bob Sitze to the stage for the second presentation on the Assembly Theme.

The third ballot was distributed. Pastor Sipe informed the assembly that ballots would be collected by the ushers. The balloting was closed.

Bishop Strobel announced:

- \$2,954.90 was received in the Hunger Offering
- June 12 is the Bike for Hunger

The West Berks Mission District Stewardship Team "Fools for Christ" gave their presentation.

Bishop Strobel called on Lloyd Wertz, chair of the Synod Council Finance Committee, to present the 2005 Program Proposal, which begins on p. 58 of the Bulletin of Reports.

Mr. Wertz then moved its adoption:

Resolved, that the 2005 program proposal (February 1, 2005 to January 31, 2006) be adopted. The Synod Council is hereby authorized to establish the 2005 budget no later than its January, 2005, meeting, making any necessary adjustments to the budget proposal in light of both realistic anticipation of receipts and synod priorities (in consultation with the ELCA Treasurer with respect to the ELCA portion thereof.)

Bishop Strobel asked if there was discussion and called for the vote. The resolution was adopted.

The Assembly, with a standing ovation, thanked Smoky Shelly for all her good work.

Bishop Strobel installed the Deans:

- Roxanne Kringle, Bethlehem-Easton
- John Fritch, Lehigh
- Dennis Moore, Northern Lehigh Valley
- David Rowe, East Berks
- Michael Bennethum, West Berks
- Fred Fisher, Schuylkill
- David Searing, Hazleton-Lehigh
- Charles Grube, Scranton/Wilkes-Barre
- Niels Nielsen, Pocono

The bishop called on Pastor Martha Sipe for the report of the third ballot.

Churchwide Assembly – Group C, Lay Male:

Number of votes cast: 378
Number of illegal votes: 0
Number of legal votes: 378
Number needed to elect: 190

Scott Fackenthall – 179
Rene Rodriguez – 165
Bruce Ilgen – 206
Ernest G. Siegfried - 176

Bishop Strobel declared Bruce Ilgen elected.

Churchwide Assembly – Group C, Lay Female:

Number of votes cast: 396
Number of illegal votes: 0
Number of legal votes: 396
Number needed to elect: 199

Janet Marsh Catina – 143
Susan Schellenberg – 253

Bishop Strobel declared Susan Schellenberg elected.

Bishop Strobel indicated that the reports of all synod Ministry Teams, committees, and task groups were before the assembly. This is an opportunity to ask questions of any reporting group, based either on their written report in the Bulletin of Reports or on their displays.

The Bishop called the attention of the assembly to the evaluation that was handed out as they entered the Assembly and asked participants to complete the evaluation, if they had not already done so, and return it at the end of the Assembly. He noted that the evaluations are an important source of information and ideas for future assemblies.

Bishop Strobel called for the final report of the Committee of Reference and Counsel, which was presented by Pastor David Rowe.

II. The committee received the following motion from Pastor Gary Langensiepen:

WHEREAS, the secretaries of Northeastern Pennsylvania Synod congregations, at their annual seminar, have become aware of wide variations in the wages and benefits given to parish secretaries; and

WHEREAS, it is always the mission of the Church to see that all people are treated justly and are honored for the talents that God has given to them and which they offer in service to the church, therefore be it

RESOLVED, that the Northeastern Pennsylvania Synod in assembly urges all of its congregations to review the wages and benefits provided to lay employees, seeking to ensure that

- **Wages are commensurate with skills, expectations and responsibilities**
- **The possibility of offering health benefits is explored when needed and possible**
- **Opportunities to gain new skills are provided**

- **A forum for addressing concerns or grievances is made available**

The committee recommended adoption. Bishop Strobel called for the vote, and the resolution was adopted.

III. The committee received the following resolution from Pastor Peter Pettit:

HONORING 350 YEARS OF JEWISH COMMUNAL LIFE IN NORTH AMERICA

Whereas the biennium, 2004-2005, brings the 350th anniversary of the arrival of the Jewish community in North America;

Whereas, in its 1994 "Declaration to the Jewish Community" the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America expressed the "urgent desire to live out our faith in Jesus Christ with love and respect for the Jewish people";

Whereas, the partnership of the Jewish community with the lay members, clergy, congregations, agencies, and institutions of the Northeastern Pennsylvania Synod strengthens our witness and service in God's name and educates us in God's will for the world;

Whereas, the Northeastern Pennsylvania Synod has steadfastly committed itself to building mutual understanding among Jews and Christians through such partnership and through the work of the Institute for Jewish-Christian Understanding of Muhlenberg College;

Whereas, the Jewish congregations, community centers, and federations in the region comprising the Northeastern Pennsylvania Synod share our devotion to God and a commitment to bring greater peace and justice to our local communities, our society, and the world, and have consistently contributed to the achievement of those aspirations; and,

Whereas, the 108th Congress of the United States of America, in its first session, adopted Concurrent Resolution 106, recognizing and honoring the efforts of "The Commission for Commemorating 350 Years of American Jewish History," including the designation of September 2004 as "American Jewish History Month"; therefore be it

RESOLVED, that the Northeastern Pennsylvania Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America hereby extends its congratulations and best wishes to the Jewish community on the occasion of the 350th anniversary of the arrival of the Jewish community in North America; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Northeastern Pennsylvania Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America reaffirms its commitment to continue to nurture mutual understanding among Jews and Christians through the work of its congregations and agencies, including the Institute for Jewish-Christian Understanding of Muhlenberg College; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the congregations of this synod shall be encouraged to use the occasion of American Jewish History Month, September 2004, as an opportunity for joint celebrations and commemorations with the Jewish community and as an opportunity for Christian education in the areas of American Jewish History and the significance of Judaism for Christian self-understanding; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Northeastern Pennsylvania Synod memorialize the 2005 biennial assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to recognize and honor the Jewish community for its 350 years of life, work, civic involvement, and faithfulness in North America; and be it finally

RESOLVED, that the Secretary of the synod shall communicate this assembly action to the Jewish congregations, community centers, and federations on the territory of the synod.

The committee recommended the adoption of the resolution. The motion was adopted.

IV. The Committee received the following resolution from Pastor John Hart:

WHEREAS, Stewardship which is composed of service, mission, witness, financial giving, Bible study, and regular worship, and is our response to the gift of Salvation, offered to all by God through Jesus Christ; and

WHEREAS, the ELCA faces a vision crisis as reported in the May 2004 issue of *The Lutheran* which will, if not addressed, lead to “the fraying of our common life and the reach of life-giving ministries will be shortened,” as stated in the May 2004 issue of *The Lutheran*; and

WHEREAS in this same issue Bishop Hanson in his article on page 69 of the May 2004 issue of *The Lutheran* invites all to join him: in starting and renewing congregations, expanding our commitment to global mission, renewing worship, living out our faith by working to reduce human suffering and poverty, growing our support for families and congregations, pursuing the ELCA’s commitment to become more multicultural and multigenerational, supporting ELCA colleges, universities and campus ministries, providing pastors and lay leaders who are grounded in Scripture and the Lutheran confessions and deepening our commitment to the body of Christ while tending to our Lutheran identity and relationships; therefore be it

RESOLVED, that all congregations who are awaiting candidates to fill a pastoral vacancy shall be required to make a four year commitment to be involved in an ELCA sponsored stewardship program before they can receive names of candidates. The cost for enrollment into an intentional stewardship program shall be covered by the congregations and implemented by the Bishop’s office.

The committee recommends adoption of the following substitute:

WHEREAS, Stewardship is composed of service, mission, witness, financial giving, Bible study, and regular worship, and is our response to the gift of Salvation, offered to all by God through Jesus Christ; and

WHEREAS, the ELCA faces a vision crisis as reported in the May 2004 issue of *The Lutheran* which will, if not addressed, lead to “the fraying of our common life and the reach of life-giving ministries will be shortened,” as stated in the May 2004 issue of *The Lutheran*; and

WHEREAS in this same issue Bishop Hanson in his article on page 69 of the May 2004 issue of *The Lutheran* invites all to join him: in starting and renewing congregations, expanding our commitment to global mission, renewing worship, living out our faith by working to reduce human suffering and poverty, growing our support for families and congregations, pursuing the ELCA’s commitment to become more multicultural and multigenerational, supporting ELCA colleges, universities and campus ministries, providing pastors and lay leaders who are grounded in Scripture and the Lutheran confessions and deepening our commitment to the body of Christ while tending to our Lutheran identity and relationships; therefore be it

RESOLVED, that, recognizing that we are all “blessed to be a blessing,” congregations of the Northeastern Pennsylvania Synod be strongly encouraged to make the ministry of stewardship a high priority; and be it further

RESOLVED, that all congregations, but especially those in time of pastoral transition, be encouraged to review their current stewardship ministries, develop four-year stewardship plans and draw upon the resources offered by the ELCA and the synod to grow in the theology and practice of stewardship.

Following brief discussion, the motion was adopted.

V. The committee recommended the adoption of the following resolution:

WHEREAS the assembly returned in 2004 to take another ride on the Reading, and

WHEREAS our journey to take this ride was short, but our esteemed guests Bishop and Mama Manyiewa journeyed even farther - crossing both the Sahara Desert and the Atlantic Ocean to be with us, and

WHEREAS the far greater and more sacred journey is the pilgrimage of faith that God began with all of us in Holy Baptism, therefore

BE IT RESOLVED, that we give thanks for all the people and gifts that have made this assembly possible:

- Our bishop, David R. Stobel, who quite appropriately used a *nyengo*, a Tanzanian harvesting tool, for his crosier, since once again the refreshing spring rains fell on an event convened by our bishop, giving hope for a bountiful Berks County Harvest
- Mama and Papa Manyiewa, as they are affectionately called in Tanzania, who gifted us with a statue of a mother giraffe and her calf expressing the reciprocal and mutually nurturing relationship between the South Central Lutheran Diocese and the Northeastern Pennsylvania Synod
- Mama Strobel and her troupe joyfully dancing in the street to the rhythms of the World Percussion Ensemble
- Bob Sitze, one of only two Bobs in the assembly, who not only taught us about sneezing, but about God's bountiful blessings during both danger and opportunity, despite the fact that he never got around to giving his report - which we are sure would have been nothing to sneeze at
- Jo Chadwick, who will not only convey our prayers for the renewed health of Michael Meier, but graciously answered questions about the mission and ministry of the ELCA with us
- Presiding Bishop Mark Hanson, who via video reminded us "we are defined by Word and Sacrament, and our mission in the world"
- Mayor Tom McMahan, who called our attention to the wonderful architecture throughout the city of Reading, which includes, some of the women of the assembly discovered, a long, narrow rest room in the Sovereign center that had originally been a bowling alley
- Trinity and St. John's Lutheran Churches, who having hosted the assembly of the Ministerium of Pennsylvania and Adjacent States long ago during which Father Christian Heyer volunteered to go as a missionary to India, once again extended gracious hospitality to this assembly during which ties were strengthened between this gathering and the fruit of German missionary efforts - the Tanzanian Lutheran Church
- The Sovereign Performing Arts Center (locally known as the old Raja Theater, or as we say it in Berks County, the "Raya" Theater) for providing exotic decor in the lobby, as well as meeting spaces with names such as the Arab Patrol Room and the Potentate Room
- Mark Mummert and the assembly choir for introducing four-part harmonies to the assembly, as well as African rhythms to those of us who are rhythmically challenged in the Northeastern Pennsylvania Synod
- Beverly Kriner, Stephen Longenecker, Basic'ly Brass, the Bell Choir, and all the musicians who helped us live out Luther's remark that "next to theology, music is the highest gift"
- The patience of coffee drinkers, who were denied their "fuel"
- The members of the Ministry Teams, committees, and agencies, who showed us the scope of the ministry that is the Northeastern Pennsylvania Synod, and also shared with

us the nugget of wisdom that it is better to be an adaptable cockroach than a inflexible dinosaur

- **The many volunteers from the West Berks Mission District who welcomed us to Reading with open arms and pretzels, reminded us of the ELCA's promise that indeed we are "in the city for good"**
- **The long-suffering, late-working, early-rising synodical support staff, who once again overcame malfunctioning office equipment to supply us with handouts and information**
- **Judy Gifford, faithful servant of the synod and the wider church upon her retirement, for lifting spirits as she worked "down under"**
- **The assembly planners, ushers, tellers, and countless other volunteers whose talents helped us move smoothly through the work of the assembly**
- **The worship leaders who gathered and centered us in Word and Sacrament, while our bishop exhorted us not only to be God's salt, but Lutheran gourmet salt in the ecumenical spice rack**
- **And finally, empowered by God's call first given in Holy Baptism, we leave this assembly with the words of the African hymn ringing in our ears—"NINASADIKI - I BELIEVE!"**

P.S. In the lyrics of the Worship and Spirituality Ministry Team, "This is our story, Two thousand four; now we are headed right out the door."

The assembly adopted the resolution resoundingly.

The bishop called on Pastor Martha Sipe for the report of the fourth ballot.

Churchwide Assembly – Group C, Lay Male:

Number of votes cast: 409

Scott Fackenthall – 226

Number of illegal votes: 0

Ernest G. Siegfried - 183

Number of legal votes: 409

Number needed to elect: 205

Bishop Strobel declared Scott Fackenthall elected.

Bishop Strobel asked if there was any unfinished business.

He called on Pastor John Pearson to present the report of the Committee on Minutes.

Bishop Strobel called on Pastor William Zimmerman to present the report of the Committee on Registration and Excuse. Pastor Zimmermann presented his report and asked that corrections be sent to the synod office immediately.

1. There were 751 persons in attendance, consisting of 262 ordained pastors on the synod roster (including 33 retired pastors), three UCC pastors, 1 Moravian pastor, and 1 Reformed Church in America pastor), 408 lay voting members (218 women and 190 men), 21 Associates in Ministry and 3 Deaconesses on the synod roster, 52 visitors, guests and assembly staff,
2. The following 26 pastors presented an excuse for absence: Daniel Bell; Paul Buzzard; Carl Filer; Mark Fritch; Gilbert Furst; Richard Gardner; Lynda Haring; David Kidd; Richard Nelson; Peter Pettit; Vicki Reeser; Glenn Segond; Eric Shafer; Donald Stricker; Gary Walbert; Carl Wenzel; Jimmy Lee Werley; Ronald Yergey; F. Peter Muhr; James Henderschedt; Henry Wohlgemuth; Carl Shankweiler; Mary Laufer; Ellen Anderson; Paul Schaediger; Christopher Hershman.
3. There were 13 absent pastors who did not present an excuse: Oliver Brown; Edward Cloughen; Werner Koch; John Kunkel; George Mathews; Niels Nielsen; Paul Schoffstall; Sherrie Sneed; Meyers Stine; Robert Stover; Jay Wetzel; Timothy Boyer; Ivis LaRiviere-Mestre

4. The following Associates in Ministry presented an excuse for absence: Ethel Cloughen; Patrice Kidd; Melanie Werley; Leesa Wimmer
5. One hundred and nine retired pastors (out of 142), 4 retired AiMs (out of 7) and 3 retired Deaconesses (out of 4) were absent and are automatically excused from attendance.
6. Fourteen congregations presented an excuse for having no lay voting members: Grace, Bethlehem; Salem, Audenried; St. Paul, Beaver Meadows; St. John, Brandonville; Zion's Stone Church, Snyders; St. Mark, Wilkes-Barre; Altalaha, Rehrersberg; Trinity, Valley View; Messiah, Wilkes-Barre; Good Shepherd, Reading; Trinity, Lansford; Zion, Minersville; St. Peter (10th St.), Allentown; St. John, Jim Thorpe Hgts.
7. Fifty six congregations had no lay voting members and did not present an excuse: St. Stephen, Bethlehem; Zion First Hungarian, Bethlehem; Arndts, Easton; Christ, Easton; St. Peter, Easton; New Jerusalem, Saucon Valley; Maidencreek, Blandon; St. Paul, Hamburg; New Jerusalem, New Jerusalem; New Bethel, Kempton; Zion, Maxatawny; Zion, Moselem; St. Peter, Beckers; Zion, Perry Twp.; Trinity, Topton; St. Paul, Big Creek; St. Luke, Freeland; St. Peter & Paul, Freeland; St. John, Jim Thorpe East; Grace, Lehighton; Christ, Mahanoy City; Holy Trinity, Palmerton; Ascension, Quakake; Christ, Barnesville; St. John, Shenandoah; Jerusalem, Trachsville; Redeemer, Allentown; St. James, Allentown; St. Joseph, Allentown; St. Matthew, Allentown; St. Peter Union, Macungie; San Martin de Porres, Allentown; St. John, Bath; St. John, Coplay; St. Peter Union, Lynnvillle; Holy Cross, Moorestown; Holy Trinity, Northampton; St. Paul, Cementon; Holy Trinity, Dingmans Ferry; St. Mark, Minisink Hills; St. John, Scotrun; Christ, Stone Church; St. Luke, Archbald; St. Mark, Pond Hill; Holy Trinity, Kingston; St. John, Auburn; Friedens, Llewellyn; English, Minersville; Trinity, Buck Run; Zion, Orwigsburg; St. John, Pine Grove; Outwood, Pine Grove; St. Paul, Port Carbon; St. Paul, Middleport; St. Paul, Gordon; St. John, Gibraltar.
8. Eight congregations had only one lay voting member and presented an excuse: St. John, Ringtown; Prince of Peace, Johnsonville; St. Matthew, Ravine; St. John, Fogelsville; Grace, Macungie; St. John, Mahoning; Zion Lehigh, Alburtis; Christ, Allentown.
9. Twenty four congregations had only one lay voting member and did not present an excuse: St. Matthew, Bethlehem; Zion, Packerton; St. Paul (Blue), Coopersburg; Weisenberg, Weisenberg Twp.; Grace, Gouldsboro; St. John, Nanticoke; St. James, Zenith; St. John, Scranton ; St. Mark, Scranton; St. Peter, Scranton; Good Shepherd, Ashland; St. John, Tremont; Jerusalem, Schuylkill Haven; Peace, Reading; Community, Vinemont; Rosemont, Bethlehem; Mt. Zion, Zion Grove; Emmanuel, Nuremberg; St. Paul, Allentown; Holy Trinity Memorial, Catasauqua; St. John, Sinking Spring; Grace, Reading; Trinity, Bangor; Christ (Spangsville), Oley.

The committee recommends:

- a. **that names of the ordained pastors absent without submitting an excuse be brought to the attention of Synod Council for appropriate action;**
- b. **that congregations having only one (male or female) or no lay voting members without submitting an excuse be brought to the attention of Synod Council for appropriate action;**

The recommendation was adopted by a voice vote.

Bishop Strobel indicated the conclusion of business. He reminded the Assembly that next year's assembly would be held on June 10-11, 2005. He also reminded them to turn in their evaluation forms at the registration table.

Secretary Taylor gave the final announcements, including the fact that approximately \$1,000 will be added to the gifts to Tanzania as a result of the lunches at Trinity and St. John's Churches.

The meeting was adjourned.

A motion to adjourn was adopted by a voice vote.

The Bishop conducted the Order for the Closing of a Synod Assembly.

ORDINATION AND COMMISSIONING

The service of ordination and commissioning was held in Faith Lutheran Church, Whitehall, on Sunday, August 8, 2004, at 4:00 p.m. Bishop David R. Strobel was the presiding minister and preacher, and Synod Vice President Priscilla Schlenker Kinney was the assisting minister. Bishop Strobel conducted the Order for Commissioning an Associate in Ministry and the Order for Ordination. The candidate for commissioning was Cinda J. Brucker; her sponsor was Judy K. Collins, AiM. Ordinands and sponsors were Maritza Torres Dolich/ the Rev. Herbert C. Dolich and the Rev. Cheryl F. Meinschein; Dana D. Heckman-Beil/the Rev. Henry Wohlgemuth; Katie Elizabeth Lyon/the Rev. Kurt G. Garbe, the Rev. Neal Halvorson-Taylor; Michael L. Reist/ the Rev. Harry S. Bohn, Jr., the Rev. Canon Calvin C. Adams.

Attendance was 256. The offering for the Bishop's Fund was \$754.10.