

**Minutes of the Third Synod Council Meeting  
Northeastern Pennsylvania Synod, ELCA  
January 9, 2008**

Synod Council Members present: Dawn Baxter, Nancy Bleam, Ed Cool, Scott Edelman, Guy Ehler, Fran Ferrari, Pastor John Hassler, Dave Hinrichs, Pastor John Houck, Pastor Cynthia Kennett, Priscilla Kinney, Pastor Roxanne Kringle, Elaine Molnar, Ron Mordosky, Madison O'Neil, Pastor Carl Shankweiler, Don Smith, AiM Barbara Taylor, Susan Wambaugh, and Pastor Sam Zeiser.

Synod Council Members excused: Martin Everhart, Christie Kaufman, and Pastor Phyllis Wolford.

Synod Staff Members present: Pastor Michael Bennethum, Pastor Kurt Garbe, Pastor Gene Handwerk, AiM Karen Matthias-Long, Smoky Schelly, Pastor Glenn Simmons, Bishop David Strobel, Carol Weiser, and Pastor Catherine Ziel.

Guests present: Synod Women of the ELCA President Pat Reitnauer and Pastor John Richter.

The meeting was called to order at 3 PM by Vice President Kinney at St. Paul in Douglassville. Pastor Gregory Frey brought greetings.

Bishop Strobel led devotions.

The Minutes

The Minutes were approved as amended.

Bishop's Report

Bishop Strobel reported that he presided at 13 installations since September. He discussed the memorial service for Bishop Toushaent. Pastor Garbe reported on the synod trip to Argentina and the planned trip to Tanzania. Pastor Bennethum discussed a recent stewardship conversation. Smoky announced that Pastor Charles Kerschmar left \$226,700 to the synod to be used for worship and music events and to support the Bishop's fund. Pastor Ziel described how the Bishop's staff is covering the work formerly done by Pastor Meinschein.

Vice President's Report

A written report was submitted. Priscilla thanked the Program & Review Committee for their on-going work to develop the process for the election of a Bishop.

Secretary's Report

Barbara shared a letter from Pastor Meinschein and a thank you note from Ruth and Ken Miller.

Treasurer's Report

A written report was submitted.

Special Order

Pastor John Richter presented the Report of the Church Council. He explained how the Church Council works and discussed Social Statements that are in process.

Committee Reports

Administration – Ed Cool presented the report. The following resolutions were adopted:

(2008.1.1) Resolved, that in light of revisions to the compensation guidelines for 2008, the 2008 Executive Staff compensation be set in accordance with the following schedule, reflecting 1) total compensation, and 2) for ordained staff members the amount of base salary, social security allowance, and housing allowance. The amounts designated as housing allowance shall apply to calendar year 2008 and all future years unless otherwise provided by this Synod Council. (Numbers are rounded to the nearest dollar.)

<b>NAME</b>	<b>BASE SALARY</b>	<b>HOUSING</b>	<b>SS</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>
<b>Strobel</b>	\$52,703	\$25,000	\$6,437	\$84,140
<b>Ziel</b>	\$43,919	\$15,000	\$4,881	\$63,800
<b>Bennethum</b>	\$46,861	\$18,000	\$5,373	\$70,234
<b>Handwerk</b>	\$44,451	\$16,500	\$5,049	\$66,000
<b>Simmons</b>	\$45,475	\$17,000	\$5,175	\$67,650
<b>Garbe</b>	\$45,396	\$12,000	\$4,754	\$62,150
<b>Matthias-Long</b>	\$49,690		\$3,801 <sup>1</sup>	\$49,690
<b>Weiser</b>	\$57,154		\$4,372 <sup>1</sup>	\$57,154
<b>Schelly</b>	\$49,314		\$3,773 <sup>1</sup>	\$49,314

<sup>1</sup>Employer's required share (7.65%)

(2008.1.2) Resolved, that the Rev. Cheryl F. Meinschein be hired as part-time Assistant to the Bishop in the areas of candidacy and sexual misconduct prevention and intervention, effective January 20, 2008.

(2008.1.3. Resolved, that the following persons be appointed as the synod's Transition Team: Mr. Daniel Brettell, the Rev. Rachael C. Dietz, Mr. Stephen P. Fellman, Ms. Deborah Matern Graf, the Rev. Denton R. Kees (chair), the Rev. Clark W. Kuntz, Ms. Ruth T. Miller, the Rev. Martha S. Sipe.

Finance - Ron Mordosky presented the report. The Treasurer gave a Mission Support presentation, and Ron discussed the audit.

(2008.1.4) Resolved, that the revised 2008 spending proposal be approved. The resolution was adopted.

Program and Review – Pastor Zeiser presented the report.

The next steps in the study process for the election of a Bishop will be meetings in February in which representatives from Churchwide meet with focus groups, Days of Discernment on April 11 and 12, and then Mission District Assemblies.

#### En Bloc items

The following items were approved:

(2008.1.5) Resolved, Resolved, that in accordance with sections 7.31.16. and 7.52.22. of the ELCA Constitution, "on leave from call" status be approved as follows:

Clergy (first year): Lorenzo Tirado-Carrasquillo

(2008.1.6) Resolved, that a call to special service be extended to the Rev. Lori Kochanski to serve as chaplain at Hospice St. John (Wyomissing), Diakon Lutheran Social Ministries, effective November 12, 2007.

(2008.1.7. Resolved, that Patrick J. Brennan, M. D., be elected to a three year term on the board of trustees of Good Shepherd Home, such tern to run from 2007 to 2010.

#### Reports of Mission District Liaisons

Lehigh – Ron reported the next meeting will be on January 22.

Bethlehem/Easton – Elaine reported that a Council Leaders Workshop is scheduled in February and discussed the closing service at St. Peter's in Easton.

West Berks – Dawn distributed the Mission District newsletter.

East Berks – Pastor Houck discussed a pilot program in conjunction with Family Life Services to help Rostered Leaders in times of transition.

Schuylkill – Pastor Kennett announced that the study on peace in the Middle East was completed.

Pocono – Fran discussed a project that will help congregations understand the signs of gambling addiction.

Northern Lehigh Valley – Scott reported that a pastoral care team will be developed.

Hazleton/Lehigh – Pastor Garbe announced that they held their fall Mission District meeting on electing a Bishop.

Scranton/Wilkes-Barre - Pastor Garbe reported that the Ministry Festival is scheduled for May 1.

#### Reports of Agencies and Organizations

Pennsylvania Council of Churches – Guy reported that as the reorganization progresses, lay involvement will be needed on committees.

Lutheran Congregational Services – Ed submitted a written report and discussed the formation of the endowment fund.

Diakon – Susan is no longer on the board.

Lutheran Men in Mission – Ed reported that the next meeting is February 2 at 9 AM at the Synod Office in Wescosville.

Women of the ELCA – Pat thanked Bishop Strobel for his support and announced that the organization is celebrating its 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary.

Bear Creek Camp – Pastor Simmons reported that the conservation easement work is progressing. Ben Larson has resigned and the camp will hire a new assistant program director.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:40 PM.

The next meeting is scheduled for 3 PM on March 13 at Zion United in Brodheadsville.

Respectfully submitted,

Barbara Taylor  
Secretary