

**Minutes of the Fourth Synod Council Meeting
Northeastern Pennsylvania Synod, ELCA
March 15, 2007**

The meeting was called to order at 3 PM by Vice President Kinney at St. Peter, Mantzville.

Synod Council Members present: Dawn Baxter, Ed Cool, Guy Ehler, Martin Everhart, Dave Hinrichs, Pastor John Houck, Terry Karhan, Christie Kaufman, Pastor Cynthia Kennett, Priscilla Kinney, Eileen Koehler, Pastor Roxanne Kringle, Pastor Barry Mitchell, Elaine Molnar, and Ron Mordosky Pastor Carl Shankweiler, Don Smith, AiM Barbara Taylor, Susan Wambaugh, and Pastor Sam Zeiser

Synod Council Members excused: Nancy Bleam, Pastor John Hassler, and Michael Reitz

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

Guests present: Pastor John Richter and Susan Schellenberg

Bishop Strobel led devotions.

The Minutes

The Minutes were approved as presented.

Bishop's Report

Bishop Strobel and staff members provided updates on candidates for first call, an appeal filed, and the cancelled trip to Tanzania.

Vice President's Report.

A written report was filed. Priscilla discussed the recent Pennsylvania Lutheran Network conference.

Secretary's Report

Secretary Taylor attended the Region 7 Consultation. A letter of thanks from the Institute for Jewish/Christian Understanding was read.

Treasurer's Report

A written report was filed. Mission District representatives were asked to call congregations in their districts that have not returned their mission support forms.

Reports of Mission District Liaisons

Lehigh – Ron reported that the EMBRACE multicultural ministry is working.

Bethlehem/Easton – Elaine announced that plans are in progress for the Synod Assembly.

West Berks – Dawn reported on a Lenten Breakfast, “Taste Worship,” a Thrivent grant, and staff transitions.

East Berks – Pastor Houck reported on “Walk through the Bible.”

Schuylkill – Pastor Kennett announced that the Mission District Assembly is April 30.

Pocono – Terry reported that chaplains are needed for the Outdoor Ministry, the Pennsylvania State Bowling Association will meet in the Poconos, and that the Mission District Assembly is April 29.

Northern Lehigh Valley – Pastor Mitchell reported that six congregations have already sent 120 people to Mississippi and that they completed five homes.

Hazleton/Lehighton – Eileen reported that they are planning for their assembly.

Scranton/Wilkes-Barre- Marty reported on the Mission Festival planned for May 5.

Committee Reports

Finance: Ron presented the first resolution from the committee.

Resolved, that none of the synodical grants for social ministry purposes in 2008 go to Diakon Lutheran Social Ministries.

After discussion among Council members and the guests, the following motion was proposed:

(2007.3.1) Resolved, to postpone the vote on the motion until after discussion of the 2008 Budget Proposal.

The resolution was adopted.

Ron presented the second resolution from the committee.

(2007.3.2) Resolved, that the 2008 program proposal (February 1, 2008, to January 31, 2009) be adopted. The Synod Council is hereby authorized to establish the 2008 spending program no later than its January, 2008, 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.)

After discussion, the following resolution was proposed.

Resolved, that in the 2008 Spending Proposal the word "Grant" be changed to "Support" and the words in parenthesis be deleted.

By a vote of 10 to 8, the resolution was defeated.

After discussion, the following resolution was proposed.

(2007.3.3) Resolved, that the 2008 Spending Proposal line "Social Ministry Support" amount be increased to the 2007 level of \$70,000 and that the amount of \$70,000 be added to the line "Income from other Sources (if needed)" to balance the budget.

The resolution was adopted by a vote of 13 to 4.

The Council reconsidered the original motion from the Finance Committee. The resolution was not adopted.

Ron presented the third resolution from the committee.

(2007.3.4) Resolved, that a grant of \$10,000 from the Prosser/Pahse Mission Fund be given to San Martin de Porres to help provide support for a part-time social worker.

The resolution was adopted.

Program and Review: Pastor Mitchell explained the planning process for the election of a bishop in 2008. At its spring assembly, each Mission District is asked to set a fall assembly date. The fall meeting will be used to discuss the process.

Old Business

Karen discussed the June 9 LIFT event at Muhlenberg College.

New Business

Priscilla thanked those completing Synod Council terms:

Eileen Koehler

Terry Karhan

Michael Reitz

Pastor Mitchell.

She also thanked Guy Ehler, Ed Cool and Pastor Zeiser for standing for election to a second term.

En Bloc Items

The following items were approved *en bloc*.

(2007.3.4) 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): Michael Peters
Clergy (third year): Kim L. Lengert
AiM (second year): Nancy Steltz

(2007.3.5) Resolved, that a call to special service be extended to the Rev. Thomas Reinsel to serve as interim pastor of Hope, Bowers, effective February 1, 2007.

(2007.3.6) Resolved, that a call to special service be extended to the Rev. Michael A. Fazio to serve as interim pastor of Jerusalem, Western Salisbury, effective January 31, 2007.

(2007.3.7) Resolved, that the Rev. Frank Stinner be elected to fill a vacant term on the board of directors of Lutheran Congregational Services, effective immediately and expiring May 31, 2009.

(2007.3.8) Resolved, that the Rev. John Kunkel be elected to fill a vacant term on the board of directors of Lutheran Congregational Services, effective immediately and expiring May 31, 2007, and then to a subsequent three-year term, expiring May 31, 2010.

(2007.3.9) Resolved, that Robert Gadomski be elected to a term on the Board of Trustees of Good Shepherd Home, expiring 2009.

(2007.3.10) The following resolution is recommended to the 2007 Synod Assembly:

Resolved, that the 2007 Assembly program (as printed in the Bulletin of Reports) be adopted.

Reports of Liaisons to Agencies

Diakon – Susan had nothing to report.

Lutheran Congregational Services – Ed announced the 35th anniversary celebration on May 23.

Pennsylvania Council of Churches – Guy announced that the group will meet in April.

The meeting was adjourned at 6:50 PM. The next meeting is the annual retreat scheduled for June 30 at the Lutheran Home at Topton.

Respectfully submitted,

Barbara Taylor
Secretary