

**Minutes of the Fourth Synod Council Meeting  
Northeastern Pennsylvania Synod, ELCA  
March 12, 2009**

Synod Council Members present: Dawn Baxter, Nancy Bleam, Pastor Paul Braden, Ed Cool, Dave Derr, Guy Ehler, Fran Ferrari, Pastor John Hassler, Dave Hinrichs, Pastor Cynthia Kennett, Priscilla Kinney, Pastor Roxanne Kringle, Cathy Mordosky, Madison O'Neil, Don Smith, AiM Barbara Taylor, Leslie Wagner, and Pastor Phyllis Wolford.

Synod Council Members excused: Pastor Barbara Davis, Scott Edelman, Martin Everhart, and Christie Kaufman.

Synod Staff Members present: Pastor Mary Gade, Pastor Kurt Garbe, Pastor Gene Handwerk, Pastor Niels Nielsen, Smoky Schelly, Pastor Carl Shankweiler, Pastor Glenn Simmons, Bishop Zeiser and Pastor Catherine Ziel.

Guests present: Pastor Craig Settlage, Office of the Presiding Bishop, and Pat Reitnauer, Women of the ELCA.

The meeting was called to order at 3 PM by Vice President Kinney at Friedens Lutheran Church in Oley. Pastor Rowe and Associate in Ministry Kathy Schaffer brought greetings.

Bishop Zeiser led devotions.

The Minutes

The Minutes were approved as corrected.

Special Order

Pastor Craig Settlage of the Office of the Presiding Bishop shared information on Mission Support.

Bishop's Report

Bishop Zeiser discussed:

- The Bishop Conference and its focus on mission.
- Installations, a new pastor, and first call meetings.
- On-going joint meetings with the Deans and the Staff.
- The Conference of Bishops meeting in Chicago that focused on mission support and the sexuality statement.
- Diakon's search for a new CEO.
- The ministry audit being performed for Bear Creek Camp.
- LIFT 2009.
- A memorial service for Dr. Robert Marshall.

- Welcoming new staff members: Pastor Nielsen, Pastor Gade, and Pastor Shankweiler.
- The need to contract with someone to work with West Berks Mission District, as Pastor Bennethum will begin to serve as Director of Evangelical Mission effective April 1.

He reported that synod secretary Barbara-Anne Taylor and synod treasurer Dave Hinrichs will be completing their terms this year. He expressed appreciation for their work and announced that they have both expressed willingness to serve another term.

(2009.3.1) Resolved, that Barbara-Anne Taylor be nominated to serve as Secretary of the Northeastern Pennsylvania Synod. The resolution was adopted.

(2009.3.2) Resolved, that David Hinrichs be nominated to serve as Treasurer of the Northeastern Pennsylvania Synod. The resolution was adopted.

#### Vice President's Report

A written report was submitted. Priscilla reported on the upcoming Lutheran Network workshop.

#### Secretary's Report

Barbara reported that Pastor Shankweiler sent a letter resigning from Synod Council.

#### Treasurer's Report

A written report was submitted. Dave distributed a quiz on mission support.

#### Committee Reports

Finance – Fran presented the report.

(2009.3.3) The following resolution is recommended to the 2009 Synod Assembly:

**Resolved, that the 2010 program proposal (February 1, 2010, to January 31, 2011) be adopted. The Synod Council is hereby authorized to establish the 2010 spending program no later than its January, 2010, 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.)**

(2009.3.4) Resolved, that a one-time grant of \$12,000 from the Prosser/Pahse/Mission Fund be distributed at the rate of \$1,000 per month to Source of Love Indonesian Lutheran Church, contingent upon the successful completion of a background check for the pastor.

Program and Review – Dawn reported on the ARE process and the final report of the Transition Team.

Administration – Ed presented the report.

(2009.3.5) The following resolution is recommended to the 2009 Synod Assembly:

**Resolved, that the 2009 Assembly program (as printed in the Bulletin of Reports) be adopted.**

(2009.3.6) Resolved, that the Synod Staff be granted one additional week of vacation in 2009, in lieu of a raise. Part-time staff will receive extra vacation prorated appropriately. This additional time is for 2009 only. The resolution was adopted.

(2009.3.7) Resolved, that St. Peter, Plainfield, and Trinity, Wind Gap, be given permission to merge at the current location of St. Peter, upon positive votes of both congregations. The resolution was adopted.

#### New Business

A question was asked concerning the appointment of a Task Force to study the Synod's mission. Bishop Zeiser reported that this will be done as part of the ARE program.

#### Reports of Liaisons from Mission Districts and Organizations

East Berks – Dave Derr announced that the assembly is May 7. A three-session Bible study on the "Book of Faith" is being planned.

West Berks – Dawn shared information on activities and on plans to host Synod Assembly in Reading.

Lehigh – Cathy reported on plans for the Mission District Assembly.

Bethlehem/Easton – Pastor Braden announced that planning is underway for the Mission District Assembly.

Schuylkill – Pastor Kennett announced that the assembly is April 27.

Pocono – Fran announced plans to honor Pastor Simmons for his 33 years of ministry in the mission district.

Northern Lehigh Valley – Pastor Handwerk announced that Pastor Martha Sipe is the interim Dean.

Hazleton/Lehigh – Pastor Wolford announced that assembly is April 26.

Scranton/Wilkes-Barre – Pastor Garbe discussed the May 2 Ministry Festival.

Lutheran Congregational Services – Ed submitted a written report.

Lutheran Men in Mission – Ed submitted a written report and discussed the coming retreat.

#### En Bloc Items

(2009.3.8) 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):	Richard Chaveas Dody Freed
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Clergy (second year):	Elizabeth Huweiler
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(2009.3.9) Resolved, that a three-year term call be issued to Lori Kochanski to serve as pastor of St. Paul, Easton.

#### Announcements

- Bishop Zeiser announced that the Deans will be present for the October Synod Council meeting.
- The Bishop thanked Scott Edelman for his continuing work with the Finance Committee as he recovers from his illness.
- Priscilla thanked those completing terms on Synod Council and not eligible for reelection: Dawn, Marty, Cynthia, and Madison.
- Nancy, Don, and Pastor Hassler are completing terms on Synod Council and are eligible for reelection.

The next Synod Council meeting is scheduled for June 17.

Respectfully submitted,

Barbara Taylor  
Secretary