

**Minutes of the First Synod Council Meeting  
Northeastern Pennsylvania Synod, ELCA  
June 10, 2006**

Synod Council Members Present: Dawn Baxter, Ed Cool, Guy Ehler, Pastor John Hassler, Christie Kaufman, Pastor Cynthia Kennett, Priscilla Kinney, Eileen Koehler, Pastor Roxi Kringle, Pastor Barry Mitchell, Elaine Molnar, Ron Mordosky, Michael Reitz, Pastor Carl Shankweiler, Don Smith, AiM Barbara Taylor, Susan Wambaugh, and Pastor Sam Zeiser.

Synod Council Members excused: Nancy Bleam, Marty Everhart, David Hinrichs, Pastor John Houck, and Terry Karhan.

Synod Staff Members present: Pastor Gene Handwerk, AiM Karen Matthias-Long, Pastor Cheryl Meinschein, Smoky Schelly, Bishop David Strobel, Carol Weiser, and Pastor Catherine Ziel.

The Synod Council Retreat began with a welcome from AiM Larry House and a tour of the Brossman Center at the Lutheran Theological Seminary at Philadelphia. Associate in Ministry Karen Matthias-Long led team building exercises. Pastor Ziel presented the Synod Council orientation. Staff members present gave reports on their ministries based on the "Real Results" program.

The meeting was called to order by Vice President Kinney at 1 PM.

**The Minutes**

The minutes of the March meeting were approved as corrected.

**Bishop's Report**

Bishop Strobel reported that the Synod Assembly went well, and he thanked the local committees, Carol, and Catherine. 350 people attended the pre-gathering meeting for San Antonio. He discussed his liaison work with LAMPA.

**Vice President's Report**

A written report was submitted. Priscilla discussed her time at Lutheran Day in Harrisburg. She shared a letter from Bishop Harold Weiss that thanked everyone for the gifts to the IJCU in honor of his 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of ordination.

**Secretary's Report**

There was no correspondence to share.

**Treasurer's Report**

Smoky explained the hand-outs.

### **Committee Reports**

Finance – Pastor Shankweiler announced that Ron Mordosky was chosen to chair the committee. The following resolution was presented:

(2006.6.1) Resolved, that Synod Council support the LIFT program with a grant of \$3,000 from the Prosser, Pahse Mission Fund.

The resolution was adopted.

Administration- Ed Cool reported that all action items were under the en bloc items.

Program and Review – Pastor Mitchell announced that the group is working on the process for the election of a bishop in 2008.

### **En Bloc Items**

The following resolutions were adopted:

(2006.6.2) Resolved, that a call to special service be extended to the Rev. Ned Dresher to serve as interim pastor of St. John, Tamaqua, effective April 25, 2005.

(2006.6.3) 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): William (Woody) Maxon  
Associate in Ministry (first year): Nancy Steltz

(2006.6.4) Resolved, that Sandra Jarva Weiss be elected to a term on the Board of Trustees of Good Shepherd Home.

(2006.6.5) Resolved, that Peggy Gumpert be elected to a term on the Board of the Eastern Pennsylvania Camp Corporation.

(2006.6.6) Resolved, that Kathy A Smith, Cathy A. Davis, the Rev. Laura A. Csellak, Scot Williams, and Cindy Zimmermann be elected to terms on the board of directors of Lutheran Congregational Services.

(2006.6.7) Resolved, that the Administration Committee be authorized to review nominations and select a recipient of the 2006 Wilson Touhsaent Award for Significant Social Ministry, on behalf of the Synod Council.

(2006.6.8) Resolved, that the Synod Secretary be instructed to send a letter to those pastors residing on the territory of this synod who were absent from the synod assembly without submitting an excuse, reminding them of the constitutional responsibility in this regard.

(2006.6.9) Resolved, that the Synod Secretary be instructed to write to the secretaries of the congregations which had no registered lay voting members or only one lay voting

member and presented no excuse for such absence, calling attention to the constitutional requirement in this regard, and to send copies of the letters to the respective deans; and that, in the case of congregations that had no voting members and did not present excuses, personal consultation as deemed appropriate by the Mission District dean be effected between Congregation Councils and pastors of those congregations and a representative or representatives of the Synod (Mission District deans, Synod staff persons, or Synod Council members), with arrangements for such consultation to be initiated by the Mission District deans. This resolution was adopted.

### **Reports of Mission District Liaisons**

Lehigh – Pastor Meinschein reported that work continues on a Multicultural Ministry Strategy.

Bethlehem/Easton – Elaine reported that a workshop on child abuse prevention is scheduled for October 14 and that the Habitat Build went well,

West Berks – Dawn reported on plans for the summer day camps and that the Family Promise program is up and running.

East Berks – Pastor Handwerk reported that things are going well.

Schuylkill – Pastor Shankweiler noted that the visioning process is continuing.

Pocono – there was no report.

Northern Lehigh Valley – Pastor Mitchell reported that they are working to fill a 53 foot trailer for Mississippi.

Hazleton – Eileen and Pastor Hassler reported on several youth projects.

Scranton-Wilkes-Barre – there was no report.

### **Reports of Liaisons to Agencies**

Pennsylvania Council of Churches – Guy submitted a written report.

Lutheran Congregational Services – Ed reported that there are now ten board members and that three groups will go to Camp Noah.

Diakon – Susan noted that the Benefactors Dinner was a success.

Mission Interpreters – Guy announced that ELCA Stewardship Specialist Erika Kennedy will lead a training workshop on September 23.

**New Business**

Priscilla presented gifts to Pastor Meinschein and Pastor Ziel in recognition of their 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of ordination and to Bishop Strobel in recognition of his 35<sup>th</sup> anniversary of ordination.

Pastor Ziel announced upcoming events:

- Synod Council Meetings – October 18, 2006,  
January 24, and March 15, 2007
- Synod Assembly – June 1-2, 2007  
June 5-7, 2008

Bishop Strobel led devotions. The meeting was adjourned at 2:30 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Barbara Taylor  
Secretary