

**Minutes of the First Synod Council Meeting
Northeastern Pennsylvania Synod, ELCA
June 28, 2008**

Synod Council Members Present: Nancy Bleam, Ed Cool, Pastor Barbara Davis, David Derr, Scott Edelman, Guy Ehler, Marty Everhart, Fran Ferrari, David Hinrichs, Christie Kaufman, Pastor Cynthia Kennett, Priscilla Kinney, Pastor Roxi Kringle, Catherine Mordosky Pastor Carl Shankweiler, Don Smith. AiM Barbara Taylor, and Pastor Sam Zeiser.

Synod Council Members Excused: Dawn Baxter, Pastor Paul Braden, and Pastor Phyllis Wolford.

Synod Council Member Absent: Madison O'Neil.

Synod Staff Members Present: Pastor Mike Bennethum, Pastor Gene Handwerk, AiM Karen Matthias-Long, Pastor Glenn Simmons, Bishop David Strobel, and Carol Weiser.

The Synod Council Retreat at Topton began with a welcome from Pastor Ginny Biniek. Associate in Ministry Karen Matthias-Long led team building exercises. A presentation on Growing Congregations was given by Ken Inskeep of ELCA Research and Development.

The meeting was called to order by Vice President Kinney at 1:15 PM.

The Minutes

The minutes of the March meeting were approved.

Bishop's Report

- Bishop Strobel reported that the Synod Assembly went well. He thanked Carol Weiser, Ed Cool, Karen Matthias-Long, and Pastor Glenn Simmons for their work.
- He discussed our Companion Synod relationship with Saxony.
- The Bishop announced that the Segura case was settled out of court.

(2008.6.1) Resolved, that the Synod Council endorses the decision to remove the Rev. James Koonen from the roster. The resolution was adopted.

Vice President's Report

A written report was submitted. Priscilla announced that it will be proposed that Pastor Zeiser's term on the Council be filled by Pastor John Hassler.

Secretary's Report

A thank you note from Pastor Kurt Garbe for the Synod Council's kindness during Assembly was read. Barbara thanked everyone for helping out during her recovery from knee replacement surgery.

Treasurer's Report

Dave explained his written report.

Committee Reports

Finance – Fran presented the following resolutions:

(2008.6.2) Resolved, that the 2009 Spending Policy be as follows, based on percentages of the fund's average asset value over the 5 year period from 2003-2007:

- Prosser/Pahse/Mission Fund, 10% of assets, \$56,290
- Student Education Fund, 10.2% of assets, \$25,000
- Leadership Development Fund, 9.1% of assets, \$4,000
- Social Ministry, 7.9% of assets, \$60,000

The resolution was adopted.

(2008.6.3) Resolved, that the Northeastern Pennsylvania Synod, through its Synod Council and the office of the Bishop, recommend to dissolving ELCA congregations and agencies in this synod that a minimum contribution of \$3,000 of their assets, upon dissolution, be made to the Endowment Fund of the Lutheran Archives Center at Philadelphia, the interest of which will be utilized to provide perpetual care for these records; and that if the assets of said congregations and agencies should come to the treasury of the synod without a grant to the Archives Center having been made, that the synod will forward \$3,000 to the Lutheran Archives Center provided that the congregation's or agency's assets are sufficient to cover such a grant. The resolution was adopted.

Administration - Ed presented the following resolution:

(2008.6.4) Resolved, that the Global Mission committee be given permission to contact synod congregations to solicit funds to pay for the shipping of medical supplies to Bulongwa Hospital in the South Central Diocese of Tanzania.

The resolution was adopted.

Program and Review – Pastor Zeiser discussed the election process. The committee will now work on developing a formal report for the Synod Council.

Old Business

None.

Reports of Mission District Liaisons

Scranton-Wilkes-Barre – Marty reported that plans are well under way for the Bishop's Installation on September 27.

Hazleton-Lehigh – No report.

Northern Lehigh Valley – Scott reported that the Mission District is exploring the development of a pastoral care team and of building a Habitat for Humanity home.

Pocono – Fran discussed a famine-awareness event for the youth.

Schuylkill – Pastor Kennett discussed a possible follow-up to the course taught by Pastor Shankweiler entitled “A History of the Middle East.”

Bethlehem/Easton – Pastor Kringle reported on hosting a youth camp focusing on justice.

Lehigh – Cathy Mordosky reported that November 30 is the date for the celebration of the consolidation of St. Michael’s and Nativity.

West Berks – No report.

East Berks – Dave Derr reported that Pastor Tom Irwin was re-elected Dean.

Reports of Liaisons to Agencies

Lutheran Congregational Services – Ed submitted a written report.

Lutheran Men in Mission – Ed submitted a written report.

Women of the ELCA – a written report was submitted. Priscilla discussed several of the highlights.

En Bloc Items

(2008.6.5) Resolved, that up to \$1,500 from the Prosser/Pahse/Mission Fund be allocated for the purchase of worship supplies for use at synod assemblies, the installation of the Bishop and all other synodical worship gatherings.

(2008.6.6) Resolved, that up to \$1,500 from the Prosser /Pahse/Mission Fund be allocated for a keynote speaker for Advocacy Day on November 1, 2008, jointly sponsored by the synod, Lutheran Congregational Services, and LAMPa.

(2008.6.7) 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 (second year): Katie Lyon

(2008.6.8) Resolved, that the Synod Council requests that the ELCA Conference of Bishops approve an extension of on-leave-from-call status beyond the normal three year limit for the Rev. James Covert.

(2008.6.9) Resolved, that the Administration Committee be authorized to review nominations and select a recipient of the 2008 Wilson Touhsaent Award for Significant Social Ministry, on behalf of the Synod Council.

(2008.6.10) 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.

(2008.6.11) 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.

(2008.6.12) Resolved, that a call to special service be issued to the Rev. David Werley to serve as pastor of Christ (Little Moore) United Church of Christ, Danielsville, effective March 31, 2008.

New Business

- Priscilla urged members to subscribe to The Lutheran and The Little Lutheran.
- Karen asked that names of youth interested in the "Lead On" youth event be submitted to her.

(2008.6.13) The following Resolution of appreciation was adopted unanimously:

Resolved, that the following resolution of appreciation be included in the minutes of the Synod Council, and that it be conveyed to the entire Northeastern Pennsylvania Synod through the synod's publications:

RESOLUTION OF APPRECIATION

WHEREAS the Reverend David Richard Strobel has served faithfully as bishop of the Northeastern Pennsylvania Synod from August 1, 1996, and will have completed two full terms in this office on July 31, 2008; and

WHEREAS his service as an ordained minister of the church has also included service to six congregations in Pennsylvania and Illinois; and

WHEREAS throughout his ministry, his wise teaching, insightful preaching, and perceptive leadership have guided and deepened the faith of countless people whose lives he has touched, and

WHEREAS he has served the wider church with distinction, using his gifts in service to the Conference of Bishops, the churchwide structures, our seminaries, agencies and institutions, while at the same time being an effective leader to our synod, its congregations, and its leaders, now therefore be it

RESOLVED, that the Synod Council of the Northeastern Pennsylvania Synod, on behalf of the pastors, associates in ministry, deaconesses, diaconal ministers and congregations of the entire synod, express its heartfelt gratitude to David R. Strobel, our pastor and bishop, our

respected partner, and our wise colleague, who, throughout his ministry has born witness to our Living Lord through his humility, his diligence, his caring, and his always articulate proclamation of the Gospel; and be it further

RESOLVED, that these declarations of esteem be recorded in the permanent records of the minutes of the Northeastern Pennsylvania Synod and a suitably prepared copy be furnished to Bishop David R. Strobel; and be it further

RESOLVED, that, as a further expression of the synod's esteem for Bishop Strobel, he be designated Bishop Emeritus of the Northeastern Pennsylvania Synod.

Bishop Strobel was presented with a framed copy of the resolution.

Bishop Strobel led devotions focusing on Saint Irenaeus. The meeting was adjourned at 3 PM.

The next Synod Council meeting date and location will be announced.

Respectfully submitted,

Barbara Taylor
Secretary