

**Minutes of the Second Synod Council Meeting
Northeastern Pennsylvania Synod, ELCA
October 18, 2006**

The meeting was called to order by Vice President Kinney at 3 PM at Friedens, Hegins.

Synod Council Members Present: Dawn Baxter, Nancy Bleam, Ed Cool, Guy Ehler, Pastor John Hassler, Pastor John Houck, Terry Karhan, 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: Martin Everhart and David Hinrichs.

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

Guests present: Pastor Paul Braden and Pastor Warren Egebo.

Bishop Strobel led devotions based on Luke.

Pastor Egebo welcomed Council members.

The Minutes

The minutes were approved as presented.

Special Order

Pastor Braden gave a presentation on proposed Compensation Guidelines.

Bishop's Report

Bishop Strobel expressed thanks for the gift in celebration of his 35th anniversary of ordination. He discussed the meeting of the Conference of Bishops and the dedication of the new Good Shepherd campus. He distributed minutes from the meeting of the Synod Cabinet.

(2006.10.01) Resolved, that a call to special service be issued to the Rev. Paul D. Hansen to serve as staff chaplain at Reading Hospital, effective October 10, 2006. The resolution was adopted.

(2006.10.2) Resolved, that \$1,000 be taken from the Prosser Pahse Mission Fund to be given to the Institute for Jewish Christian Understanding in support of the "Echoes from the Fog" program. The

resolution was adopted.

Vice President's Report

A written report was submitted. Priscilla discussed the meeting of the Vice Presidents of the synods, the Global Mission Event, and the Pennsylvania Lutheran Network.

Secretary's Report

Several letters were received in reply to letters sent following Assembly. A thank-you note from Pastor Meinschein was read and the audit report on Bear Creek Camp was shared.

Treasurer's Report

A written report was submitted.

Committee Reports

Program and Review: Pastor Mitchell reported on the planning for the 2008 bishop election.

Finance: Ron reported that the committee met and arranged to move the \$3,740,000 in the Synod Endowment Investment Fund into the ELCA Foundation.

Administration: Ed presented the following:

(2006.10.3) Resolved, that the 2007 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 2007 and all future years unless otherwise provided by this Synod Council. (Numbers are rounded to the nearest dollar.) This reflects an increase of 2% over 2006 figures.

NAME	BASE SALARY	HOUSING	SS	TOTAL
Strobel	\$50,856	\$25,000	\$6,284	\$82,140
Ziel	\$39,659	\$15,000	\$4,528	\$59,187
Bennethum	\$45,014	\$18,000	\$5,220	\$68,234
Meinschein	\$36,614	\$17,000	\$4,441	\$58,055
Handwerk	\$38,941	\$16,500	\$4,593	\$60,034
Simmons	\$40,990	\$16,000	\$4,721	\$61,711
Garbe	\$39,754	\$12,000	\$4,287	\$56,041
Matthias-Long	\$47,690		\$3,648 ¹	\$47,690
Weiser	\$53,154		\$4,066 ¹	\$53,154
Schelly	\$45,315		\$3,467 ¹	\$45,315

¹Employer's required share (7.65%)

Staff Reports on Real Results

Pastor Ziel reported on congregations in transitions. A support manual has been developed and a call process follow-up process has been implemented.

Pastor Bennethum discussed progress in the area of stewardship and invited Guy to report on the Mission Interpreters program.

Pastor Simmons presented a written EOCM Mission Director's report.

(2206.10.4) Resolved, that Reading/Berks Lutheran Mission Center for Latino Hispanic Ministry be recognized as a synodically authorized worshipping community, in accordance with ELCA bylaw 10.02.03. The resolution was adopted.

Reports of Mission District Liaisons

Lehigh – Ron announced that congregations are working together in clusters.

Bethlehem/Easton – Elaine reported on the up-coming Social Ministry Dinner, a "Safe Kids" workshop, and the planning for the 2007 Synod Assembly.

West Berks – Dawn shared that the summer camp programs worked well and that the Interfaith Hospitality Network is up and running.

East Berks – Pastor Houck announced that copies of *Ask, Thank, Tell* were distributed to the congregations.

Schulykill – Pastor Kennett reported that Pastor Peter Pettit would be presenting a workshop on Christianity and Islam.

Pocono – Terry shared discussed disaster response work and the LYF retreat.

Northern Lehigh Valley – Pastor Mitchell announced that congregations continue to go to Mississippi to aid in disaster response. A truckload of supplies was also sent.

Scranton/Wilkesbarre – Pastor Garbe reported on rostered leaders meetings and on how well the 2005 assembly had gone.

Hazleton/Lehigh – Eileen reported on plans for a dinner in celebration of Martin Luther's birthday.

Reports of Liaisons to Agencies

Pennsylvania Council of Churches- Guy reported that he will attend the next board meeting.

Lutheran Congregational Services – Ed submitted a written reported and highlighted several items.

Diakon – Susan gave an update on several programs.

En Bloc Items

The following resolutions were adopted:

(2006.10.5) Resolved, that a call to special service be issued to the Rev. Christopher M. Thomforde to serve as president of Moravian College and Seminary, Bethlehem, effective August 1, 2006.

(2006.10.6) Resolved, that a call to special service be issued to the Rev. Peggy Sue Pfeffer, to serve as chaplain of Hospice Saint John's Hazleton office, Diakon Lutheran Social Ministries, effective July 11, 2006.

(2006.10.7) Resolved, that in accordance with sections 7.31.16. and 7.52.22. of the ELCA Constitution, a request for "on leave from call" status be approved as follows:

Associate in Ministry:

First year: Kathleen Yenser
Joy V. Gerhart

(2006.10.8) Resolved, that the 2007 Spending Policy be as follows:

Prosser-Pahse Mission Fund, 8% of assets, \$40,750
Student Education Fund, 10% of assets, \$25,383
Leadership Development Fund, 8% of assets, \$3,012
Social Ministry, 8.5% of assets, \$65,746;

and that the Witness and Service Team be asked to emphasize awarding grants to congregational projects rather than to institutions' projects.

(2006.10.9) Resolved, that in fiscal year 2006 the Candidacy Committee be permitted to use an additional \$7,000 from the Student Education Fund for financial aid to students in seminary and that additional money be taken as needed from the Prosser-Pahse Mission Fund so that the fall 2006 grants can be \$ 1, 500 per student for those who need that level of assistance.

(2006.10.10) Resolved, that changes to the synod's personnel policy, detailed in the attached document, be adopted.

Old Business

The following resolution was approved by mail vote and conveyed to the Conference of Bishops:

(2006.10.11) Resolved that this Synod Council requests of the ELCA Conference of Bishops a waiver of the three-year parish rule for Lorenzo Tirado-Carrasquillo and, provided this waiver is granted, that he be called

to the position of Mission Director of the Reading/Berks Lutheran Mission Center for Latino Hispanic Ministry.

Bishop Strobel reported that the waiver was granted, so the call will be extended, effective October 10, 2006.

New Business

Dawn reported on grants available from Ministry Teams. Priscilla announced that two committees have been formed – one to work on a Synod Council Ministry Description and one to work on a process to be used with congregations considering leaving the ELCA.

The meeting was adjourned. The next meeting is scheduled for January 18, 2007, at the Good Shepherd campus in Allentown.

Respectfully submitted,

Barbara Taylor
Secretary