

**Minutes of the Second Synod Council Meeting  
Northeastern Pennsylvania Synod, ELCA  
October 24, 2007**

Synod Council Members present: Dawn Baxter, Nancy Bleam, Ed Cool, Scott Edelman, Guy Ehler, Martin Everhart, Fran Ferrari, Pastor John Hassler, Christie Kaufman, Pastor Cynthia Kennett, Priscilla Kinney, Pastor Roxanne Kringle, Madison O'Neil, Pastor Carl Shankweiler, Don Smith, AiM Barbara Taylor, Susan Wambaugh, and Pastor Sam Zeiser

Synod Council Members excused: Dave Hinrichs, Elaine Molnar, Pastor John Houck, and Ron Mordosky

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 Bob Stover, John Hattery, and Pastor Marcia Johnson

The meeting was called to order at 3 PM by Vice President Kinney at St. Luke Reformation in Noxen. Marty Everhart brought greetings.

Bishop Strobel led devotions.

**The Minutes**

The Minutes of the June meeting were approved as presented.

**Special Order**

Pastor Bob Stover and John Hattery gave a presentation on Bear Creek Camp. The following resolutions were adopted:

(2007.10.1) Resolved, that the Northeastern Pennsylvania Synod Council affirms the decision of the Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod to authorize Bear Creek Camp to enter into a contract(s) with the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania for the purpose of establishing a conservation easement(s) on portions of the camp property. In essence, Bear Creek Camp will be surrendering development rights in perpetuity, as well as agreeing to allow very limited public access in exchange for one time cash payment(s). We understand that the negotiation of the easement(s) will take place in two phases over at least two years. The details of each easement must be reviewed and agreed upon by the synod's legal counsel before any contracts are finalized. The entire proceeds, with the exception of origination expenses, will be placed into an endowment. All income derived from this endowment will be used to benefit Bear Creek Camp, as its Board of Directors sees fit.

(2007.10.2) Resolved, that the Northeastern Pennsylvania Synod Council authorizes Bear Creek Camp's Board of Directors to open a \$100,000 line of credit for short-term expenses related to establishment of the conservation easement(s), to pay for preliminary capital campaign expenses, and for providing working capital for the construction of the Outdoor Chapel/Amphitheater.

### **Bishop's Report**

Bishop Strobel discussed the recent Churchwide Assembly, Wilson Toushaent's funeral, and the Social Ministry dinner. Pastor Bohl from Germany will be a guest at the Synod Assembly. Twenty-five people were present at the "new-to-the-Synod" day. The Bishop proposed the following resolution:

(2007.10.3) Resolved, that the synod council affirms the intent of this synod to hold a second LIFT event in 2009.

The resolution was adopted.

### **Secretary's Report**

Letters received in response to the after-assembly letters were all positive.

### **Vice President's Report**

Priscilla submitted a written report. She highlighted the work of the Program and Review Committee, Tanzania visits, and her meeting at Southern Seminary.

### **The Treasurer's Report**

The Treasurer submitted a written report.

### **Committee Reports**

Program and Review: Pastor Zeiser introduced Pastor Marcia Johnson from the ELCA Office of Synodical Relations. She discussed the process for electing a synod bishop. Pastor Zeiser presented the following resolution, which was adopted:

- (2007.10.4) Resolved, that the following process be used in the election of a bishop in 2008:
1. The synod council has engaged the services of the Synodical Relations and Research and Evaluation sections of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to collect information from rostered leaders and laity of the Northeastern Pennsylvania Synod, and appointed Family Life Services to act as liaison to the ELCA survey team on behalf of the synod council.
  2. At the Synod Assembly, the first ballot will be a nominating ballot on which voting members can submit the name of any ELCA pastor. A nominee must receive three-quarters of the valid votes cast to be elected on the first ballot. If there is no election, the names of all those receiving one or

more votes will be posted publicly so that nominees may withdraw their names if they so choose. All those who do not withdraw will appear on the second ballot. This is the only point in the process at which nominees may withdraw.

3. A nominee must receive three-quarters of the valid votes cast to be elected on the second ballot. If no one is elected on the second ballot, only the top seven vote-getters (plus ties) will remain on the next ballot.
4. The seven candidates who received the most votes on the second ballot will be invited to address the assembly for three minutes each.
5. Following these addresses, the Mission Districts will gather in separate rooms. Each candidate will spend fifteen minutes in each Mission District gathering, engaging in a period of questions and answers.
6. The third ballot will be taken after the Mission District discussions. Two-thirds of the votes cast will be necessary for election. If there is no election, the top three names (plus ties) will be carried over to the fourth ballot. At the conclusion of the session in which the results of the third ballot are announced, each of those three will be given the same Biblical text and asked to prepare a 10-minute Bible study or reflection.
7. The next session will begin with the Bible studies or reflections. The fourth ballot will then be taken.
8. If no one receives 60% of the votes cast on the fourth ballot, the top two names (plus ties) will be carried over to the fifth ballot, on which a simple majority will be needed to elect. If necessary, a sixth ballot will be taken, on which a simple majority will also be required.

Administration: Ed Cool presented the report.

(2007.10.5) Resolved, that the 2008 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 2008 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 2007 figures.

| <b>NAME</b>       | <b>BASE SALARY</b> | <b>HOUSING</b> | <b>SS</b> | <b>TOTAL</b> |
|-------------------|--------------------|----------------|-----------|--------------|
| <b>Strobel</b>    | \$51,886           | \$25,000       | \$6,369   | \$83,255     |
| <b>Ziel</b>       | \$40,689           | \$15,000       | \$4,613   | \$60,302     |
| <b>Bennethum</b>  | \$46,044           | \$18,000       | \$5,305   | \$69,349     |
| <b>Meinschein</b> | \$37,643           | \$17,000       | \$4,527   | \$59,170     |
| <b>Handwerk</b>   | \$39,971           | \$16,500       | \$4,678   | \$61,149     |

| NAME          | BASE SALARY | HOUSING  | SS       | TOTAL    |
|---------------|-------------|----------|----------|----------|
| Simmons       | \$41,020    | \$17,000 | \$4,806  | \$62,826 |
| Garbe         | \$40,784    | \$12,000 | \$4,372  | \$57,156 |
| Matthias-Long | \$48,805    |          | \$3,7341 | \$48,805 |
| Weiser        | \$54,269    |          | \$4,1521 | \$54,269 |
| Schelly       | \$46,429    |          | \$3,5521 | \$46,429 |

<sup>1</sup>Employer's required share (7.65%)  
The resolution was adopted.

Finance: Pastor Hassler presented the committee's report.

(2007.10.6) Resolved, that a grant of up to \$3,000 from the Prosser/Pahse/Mission Fund be given to cover expenses from the Consultations-Congregations/Professional Leaders budget line for supply pastors in a conflicted situation. The resolution was adopted.

(2007.10.7) Resolved, that a grant of up to \$2,000 from the Prosser/Pahse/Mission Fund (above the \$8,000 already authorized by a 1998 continuing resolution) be given to support the 2008 Bishop's Conference at Skytop Lodge, in order to limit cost to participants. The resolution was adopted.

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

No reports were presented.

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

Pennsylvania Council of Churches – Guy submitted a written report. This was his last meeting with the Council. The new policy provides that only the Bishop will participate.

Lutheran Congregational Services – Ed submitted a written report.

### **En Bloc Items**

The following resolutions were adopted:

(2007.10.8) Resolved, that the call to special service previously extended to the Rev. James Bowers to serve as part-time transitional associate pastor of Holy Spirit, Emmaus, be extended to January 15, 2008.

(2007.10.9) Resolved, that the Rev. Robert Machamer, Guy French, and John Greenleaf be elected to terms on the board of directors of Bear Creek Camp.

(2007.10.10) Resolved, that the following persons be elected to terms on the board of directors of Lutheran Congregational Services: Daisy Marin (1<sup>st</sup> term), the Rev. David Newman (2<sup>nd</sup> term), the Rev. Wayne Matthias-Long (2<sup>nd</sup> term), Ms. Kathy Smith (1<sup>st</sup> full term).

(2007.10.11) 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): Christina Johnston

Associate in Ministry (first year, graduate study): Cinda Brucker

(2007.10.12) Resolved, that in accordance with sections 7.31.16. and 7.52.22. of the ELCA Constitution, "on leave from call" status be approved for a period of six months as follows:

Clergy (first year): Kenneth Haubert

**New Business**

No new business was presented.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:30 PM.

The next meeting is scheduled for January 9, 2008, at St. Paul in Douglassville.

Respectfully submitted,

Barbara Taylor  
Secretary