

**Minutes of the Third Synod Council Meeting
Northeastern Pennsylvania Synod, ELCA
January 28, 2009**

Synod Council Members present: Nancy Bleam, Pastor Paul Braden, Ed Cool, Pastor Barbara Davis, David Derr, Scott Edelman, Guy Ehler, Martin Everhart, Fran Ferrari, Pastor John Hassler, Dave Hinrichs, Pastor Cynthia Kennett, Priscilla Kinney, Pastor Roxanne Kringle, Cathy Mordosky, Madison O'Neil, Pastor Carl Shankweiler, Don Smith, AiM Barbara Taylor, and Pastor Phyllis Wolford

Synod Council Members excused: Dawn Baxter and Christie Kaufman.

Synod Staff Members present: Pastor Michael Bennethum, Pastor Kurt Garbe, Pastor Gene Handwerk, AiM Karen Matthias-Long, Smoky Schelly, Carol Weiser, Pastor Catherine Ziel, and Bishop Samuel Zeiser.

The meeting was called to order at 3 PM by Vice President Kinney via a conference call, due to an ice storm that made travel too difficult.

Bishop Zeiser offered two prayers from *Evangelical Lutheran Worship*, one concerning the commemoration day of Thomas Aquinas and one on the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity.

The Minutes

The Minutes were approved as presented.

Bishop's Report

Bishop Zeiser reported on his process of discernment in selecting those he presented to serve on his staff. The listing of names and duties presented is attached to the official copy of these minutes.

Vice President's Report

Priscilla had no specific items to discuss.

Secretary's Report

Barbara reported that the Synod Council vote calling Pastor Mary Gade to serve on the Synod Staff was unanimous.

Treasurer's Report

Pastor Shankweiler submitted a chart reviewing the Synod budget over the last thirty years. Dave Hinrichs will distribute a sheet on his thoughts for finances in the future.

Committee Reports

Finance - Fran Ferrari presented the report.

(2009.1.1) Resolved, that the 2009 Spending Proposal as revised be adopted, with this proposal based on a projected income of \$2,800,000, a deficit not in excess of \$130,000, a synod-ELCA ratio of 49-51%, and a grant to the Philadelphia Seminary of \$160,000.

Following the adoption of the budget, the bishop's staffing recommendations were presented for action.

(2009.1.2) Resolved, that 2009 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 2009 and all future years unless otherwise provided by this Synod Council. (Numbers are rounded to the nearest dollar.)

NAME	BASE SALARY	HOUSING	SS	TOTAL
Zeiser	\$55,186	\$15,000	\$5,814	\$76,000
Ziel	\$43,919	\$15,000	\$4,881	\$63,800
Bennethum	\$40,861	\$24,000	\$5,373	\$70,234
Garbe	\$45,396	\$12,000	\$4,754	\$62,150
Gade	\$39,257	\$18,000	\$4,743	\$62,000
Handwerk	\$3,724	\$5,000	\$723	\$9,447
Simmons¹	\$10,753	\$4,250	\$1,640	\$16,913
Simmons²	\$10,678	\$12,750	\$1,941	\$25,369
Matthias-Long	\$49,690		\$3,801 ³	\$49,690
Weiser⁴	\$57,154		\$4,372 ³	\$57,154
Schelly	\$49,314		\$3,773 ³	\$49,314

¹For period 2/1/09 through 4/30/09

²For period 5/1/09 through 1/31/10

³Employer's required share (7.65%)

⁴Salary shown is full year; anticipated retirement 2/28/09

(2009.1.3) (Resolved, that the Rev. Carl Shankweiler be hired as part-time Associate of the Bishop relating to the Schuylkill Mission District, effective February 1, 2009.

(2009.1.4) Resolved, that the Rev. Niels Nielsen be hired as part-time Associate of the Bishop relating to the Pocono Mission District, effective February 1, 2009.

Returning to the report of the Finance Committee, Fran reported on a request from Bear Creek Camp for matching funds for a special appeal.

(2009.1.5) Resolved, that \$10,000 be taken from the Prosser-Pahse-Mission Fund for a special grant to Bear Creek Camp for a matching-funds appeal in 2009.

The resolution was adopted.

The committee proposed a re-visioning of the ways in which the Synod finances ministries. The Executive Committee will appoint a Task Force and develop a timeline for that process and report back at the March Synod Council meeting.

Program and Review – Bishop Zeiser noted that discussion of our outreach emphasis will continue at spring Mission District Assemblies. He urged Synod Council members to be present at assemblies. A written report reviewing the process used to elect the Bishop was submitted. Questions and comments are to be directed to Dawn Baxter.

En Bloc items

(2009.1.6) Resolved, that a call to special service be extended to the Rev. Charles Oldland to serve as interim pastor of St. Peter, Reinerton, effective January 1, 2009.

(2009.1.7) Resolved, that a call to special service be extended to the Rev. George Grubb to serve as interim pastor of Allegheny, Knauers, effective November 17, 2008.

(2009.1.8) Resolved, that a call to special service be extended to the Rev. Harry Heffelfinger to serve as chaplain, Arcadia Hospice, effective February 1, 2009.

(2009.1.9) Resolved, that Christopher Carter be elected to a term on the board of Bear Creek Camp.

Reports of Agencies and Organizations

Lutheran Congregational Services – Ed Cool submitted a written report.

Lutheran Men in Mission – Ed Cool submitted a written report.

Women of the ELCA – A written report will be distributed later.

EOCM – Pastor Simmons submitted a written report.

New Business

Bishop Zeiser reported that he:

- is willing to speak with congregations about his trip to Israel and Palestine.

- celebrates the commitment of members of the Synod evidenced at both the Advocacy Day and Learning Ministries Day.
- gained a deeper sense of the ministries in the northern tier as he visited them with Pastor Garbe.
- met with over 700 people representing more than two-thirds of the Synod congregations at “Evenings with the Bishop.”
- and Pastor Simmons attended the closing of Grace, East Stroudsburg.
- celebrates with Nativity/St. Michael in Allentown and with St. Luke/Christ in Reading as they live into ministry in their newly consolidated congregations.
- continues to work with the Mission District Deans. Pastor Carol Kehler is the new Dean of the West Berks mission district. Pastor Joe Scholtes will not stand for election to another term as Dean of the Schuylkill Mission District.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:10 PM.

The next meeting is scheduled for 3 PM on March 12 at Friedens, Oley.

Respectfully submitted,

Barbara Taylor
Secretary