

Synod Council Meeting
Northeastern Pennsylvania Synod, ELCA
October 15, 2009

Synod Council Members present: Pastor Randele Albers, Dawn Baxter, Ed Cool, Pastor Barbara Davis, David Derr, Pastor Lee Diefenderfer, Scott Edelman, Guy Ehler, Fran Ferrari, Mark Hammond, Pastor John Hassler, Dave Hinrichs, Pastor Roxanne Kringle, Lois Sterling, AiM Barbara Taylor, and Pastor Phyllis Wolford.

Synod Council Members excused: Nancy Bleam, Pastor Paul Braden, Christie Kaufman, Catherine Mordosky, Don Smith, and Leslie Wagner.

Synod Staff Members present: Pastor Michael Bennethum, Pastor Kurt Garbe, Pastor Gene Handwerk, Pastor Niels Nielsen, Smoky Schelly, Pastor Glenn Simmons, Bishop Samuel Zeiser, and Pastor Catherine Ziel.

Mission District Deans present: Pastors Charlie Grube, Dick Gardner, Tom Irwin, Bruce MacLaughlin, Deb Scheffy, Martha Sipe, Bob VonFrisch, and Carol Kehler.

The meeting was called to order at 3 PM by Vice President Baxter at Trinity, Leighton.

Bishop Zeiser led devotions and thanked Pastor VonFrisch and the members of Trinity for serving as hosts.

Special Order

Next Steps in Strategic Planning – the group reviewed ways to begin the implementation of the five Strategic Directions adopted by the Synod Assembly. As a first step, Deans will offer names of persons from their Missions Districts to relate to the Synod Ministry Teams.

The Minutes

The Minutes were approved as presented.

Bishop's Report

Bishop Zeiser reported on Churchwide Assembly, the Conference of Bishops, and Evenings with the Bishop. He and Pastor Mary Gade are working to clarify the role of a SALM. The Synod Council will be receiving information from LTSP regarding a campaign to develop more scholarship aid for students.

Vice President's Report

Dawn submitted a written report. She thanked everyone for their help and patience as she learns about the Synod and her role as Vice President.

Secretary's Report

Barbara announced that the following correspondence was received:

- "Thank yous" from Bishop Zeiser, Pastor Bennethum, Pastor Simmons, and Pastor Garbe for the gifts received on the anniversaries of their ordinations.
- A letter of thanks from the Institute for Jewish-Christian Understanding for the support received in the amount of \$10, 649.11.
- A report from Patricia Reitnauer, President of the Synod Women of the ELCA, on her trip to Tanzania.
- A letter of thanks from Priscilla Kinney for the gifts she received upon the completion of her service as Synod Vice President.

The Treasurer's Report

Treasurer Dave Hinrichs reported that Synod finances for the first three quarters of the year are doing a bit better than expected.

Committee Reports

Administration: Ed Cool presented the report.

(2009.10.1) Resolved, that 2010 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 2010 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	\$57,131	\$15,000	\$5,975	\$78,106
Ziel	\$43,552	\$17,000	\$5,016	\$65,568
Bennethum	\$4,979	[\$24,000]	\$412	\$5,391
Garbe	\$46,986	\$12,000	\$4,886	\$63,872
Gade	\$37,843	\$21,000	\$4,874	\$63,718
Handwerk	\$3,966	\$5,000	\$743	\$9,709
Simmons	\$8,218	\$25,000	\$2,752	\$35,970
Matthias-Long	\$51,181		\$3,915 ²	\$51,181
Weiser	\$16,686		\$1,276 ²	\$16,686
Schelly	\$50,793		\$3,886 ²	\$50,793

¹The bulk of Pastor Bennethum's salary and all of his housing allowance is provided by the ELCA. The synod provides only the \$5,391 salary supplement shown here.

²Employer's required share (7.65%)

The resolution was adopted unanimously.

The following motion was presented by Pastor Wolford with a second by Guy Ehler:

(2009.10.2) Resolved, that for 2010, all staff members receive one additional week of paid vacation.

The resolution was adopted with one member voting no.

(2009.10.3) Resolved, that the following persons be elected to three-year terms on the board of trustees of Good Shepherd Rehabilitation Network: Robert Gadomski, the Rev. Eric Shafer, and Gerald A. Nau.

The resolution was adopted unanimously.

(2009.10.4) Resolved, that a call to special service be extended to Jane Mason to serve as a Diaconal Minister in the position of chaplain, Hospice St. John, Honesdale, effective December 12, 2009.

The resolution was adopted unanimously.

(2009.10.5) Resolved, that a call to special service be extended to Sr. Ramona C. Daily, a member of the ELCA Deaconess Community, to serve as chaplain, St. Luke's Hospital, Bethlehem, effective September 14, 2009.

The resolution was adopted unanimously.

(2009.10.6) 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:

Associate in Ministry (first year): Leesa Wimmer

The resolution was adopted unanimously.

Finance: Fran presented the committee's report.

(2009.10.7) Resolved, based on the review of the Synod Outreach Working Group, that a loan in the amount of \$45,000 to Good Shepherd, Krediersville, be made from the church loan Development Fund for the purpose of repairs and reduction of bank debt loads. Terms of the loan are 60 months at 2% interest, with monthly payments of \$788.75. Additional conditions of the loan are that the congregation tithe the proceeds of the sale of the parsonage for mission support and that they work towards restoring their synodical mission support to the level it had been before the current cash flow crisis.

The resolution was adopted with one abstention.

(2009.10.8) Resolved, that assets, including real estate, from dissolving congregations, unless the congregation expresses a specific benevolent purpose for the assets, shall be added to Prosser, Pahse Mission Fund.

The resolution was adopted unanimously.

(2009.10.9) Resolved, that the "Declaration of Trust" here following be the synod's *Church Loan Development Fund*.

All assets currently held in the Church Loan Development Fund, including income earned on these assets, will be used to provide loans to congregations to assist in the purchase of improvement or capital repair of real estate and to assist mission congregations.

The Synod Outreach Working Group shall meet with the congregation to discuss their needs and appropriateness of a loan from these funds and to recommend terms to be reviewed and approved by the Finance Committee before submission to Synod Council for authorization.

The amount of any loan should not exceed 15% of the assets of the fund, including principal balances on other outstanding loads, as determined at the time of the loan.

The interest rate shall be zero for new mission congregations up to 1% elow Federal Reserve prim rate for all other loans. Each loan is to be secured by a judgment note or read estate mortgage maturing in not more than seven years.

The resolution was adopted unanimously.

New Business

No new business was presented.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:30 PM.

Next Synod Council meeting --- January 20, 2010.

Respectfully submitted,

Barbara Taylor
Secretary