

**LOWER SUSQUEHANNA SYNOD, ELCA**  
**SYNOD COUNCIL**  
**Minutes**  
**April 25, 2009**

The Lower Susquehanna Synod Council met for a regular meeting on Saturday, April 25, 2009, at 9:00 a.m. in the Board Room of the United Church Center, Harrisburg, Pennsylvania. Vice President Ronald R. Price called the meeting to order. Pastor Patricia Snyder led the members of Synod Council in devotions.

**ROLL CALL**

<b>Members present:</b>	Bishop B. Penrose Hoover Thomas E. McKee	Ronald R. Price
	Jon R. Adams Thomas C. Benner Lucinda L. Bringman Allison L. Carlson Holly Freas-Webster Sara A. Gausmann Richard B. Geib	David L. Hefner Mary Anne Kingsborough Paula L. Murray Timothy W. Sadler Patricia A. Snyder Cody Teitman Marcus W. Thomsen
<b>Liaisons present:</b>	Marisa Hunt	
<b>Staff present:</b>	Melvin E. Dick David R. Fisher	Barbara A. Myers Joanne Wilhelm
<b>Members excused:</b>	April E. Trout	Kim Y. Wittel
<b>Liaisons excused:</b>	Fred W. Bohls	Kathy Hefner
<b>Staff excused:</b>	Pamela B. Drenner	Charlie Roberts

**MINUTES**

The minutes of the February 21, 2009, meeting of Synod Council were approved as distributed.

**BISHOP'S REPORT**

Bishop B. Penrose Hoover provided a written report.

Bishop Hoover moved the following appointments and elections:

**ADOPTED:** That the Synod Council appoint Sharon Kaya and reappoint Lois Ann Griffiths to the Church in Society Committee for a three-year term expiring in 2012;

That the Synod Council appoint the Rev. Miriam L. Nicholson and the Rev. Kenneth Jetto and reappoint the Rev. Keith H. Eslinger and the Rev. Darlis J. Swan to the Synodical Worship Committee for a three-year term expiring in 2012;

**That the Synod Council reappoint the Rev. Janyce C. Jorgensen and the Rev. David A. B. Rike to the Ecumenical and Inter-religious Affairs Committee for a second three-year term expiring in 2012;**

**ADOPTED: SC09.04.17. That the Synod Council elect to the board of directors of Luthercare the Rev. Deborah Brumbaugh, the Rev. Dr. Roger A. Bucy, and Mr. N. Steven Ricker and reelect Mr. Bernard J. LaPine and Ms. Anna Laura Thompson for a three-year term expiring April 30, 2012.**

Bishop Hoover moved the following motion regarding “on-leave-from-call” status:

**ADOPTED: SC09.04.18. That the Synod Council continue on “on-leave-from-call” status for one additional year the Rev. Norbert G. Mamet, until June 15, 2010; Tammy L. Rade, diaconal minister, until June 15, 2010; and the Rev. Thomas D. Hartman, until June 1, 2010.**

Bishop Hoover moved the following approval for retirement:

**ADOPTED: SC09.04.19. That Synod Council approve the retirement of the Rev. James A. DeLong, effective June 30, 2009.**

Bishop Hoover moved the following renewal of a Synod Council call:

**ADOPTED: SC09.04.20. That the Synod Council renew its call to the Rev. Peter S. Bergstresser to serve as intentional interim pastor of St. Paul Lutheran Church, Wertzville Road, Enola, for one additional year.**

Bishop Hoover moved the following parish dissolution:

**ADOPTED: SC09.04.21. That the Synod Council approve the dissolution of the Hellam-East York Lutheran Parish consisting of St. James Lutheran Church, Hellam, and Our Saviour Lutheran Church, York, effective April 26, 2009.**

Bishop Hoover mover the following approval of a congregational merger:

**ADOPTED: SC09.04.22. That the Synod Council approve the merger of Our Saviour Lutheran Church, York, and Luther Memorial Lutheran Church, York, effective April 26, 2009. Luther Memorial Lutheran Church, York, will be the surviving congregation following the merger.**

Bishop Hoover gave a brief report from the Conference of Bishops, which he attended in March. The bishops spent time planning for the Churchwide Assembly and discussing issues surrounding the proposed Social Statement on Human Sexuality. The bishop also attended the annual meeting of PLN and a gathering of Project Connect.

Bishop Hoover said that he has been deliberately opaque about where he is on the proposed social statement because he believes, as do many other bishops, that his first role is to uphold the unity of this church at a time when across this church people of good faith and conscience have differing opinions

about this important subject and when what is said about this matter affects relationships across this church.

However, through the discussions at the Conference of Bishops and his own discernment, he has come to believe that this is not the time to make sweeping changes in our policies. He has found the second dissenting statement prepared by the Rev. Dr. Scott Suskovic; the Rev. Corinne Johnson; and the Rev. Carol S. Hendrix to be compelling, especially as they raise concerns for the unity of this church.

*Statement by Three Dissenting Members of the  
ELCA Task Force on Human Sexuality*

We begin with a word of thanks and gratitude for the opportunity to serve on the ELCA Task Force for Human Sexuality. Even though the three of us often disagreed with the other 27 members and advisors of the task force on traditional biblical interpretation and theological principles, we were treated as the minority voice with great kindness, dignity and respect. Because we firmly believe the current policies of the ELCA, when enforced, are consistent with the biblical witness, Christian moral tradition, and the view of the vast majority of Christians in the world, we refused to sign off on both the social statement and the recommendations and are submitting our dissent. Changing current policies would sever the ELCA from the ecumenical church and the Christian consensus down through the ages. These policies include:

1. People who are homosexual in their orientation must live a celibate lifestyle in order to serve on the roster of the ELCA. (*Vision and Expectations and Definitions and Guidelines for Discipline.*)
2. The 1993 Statement of the ELCA Conference of Bishops states that “there is basis neither in Scripture nor tradition for the establishment of an official ceremony by this church for the blessing of a homosexual relationship.” However, this statement by ELCA bishops acknowledged that local pastors within their contexts are to “provide pastoral care for all to whom they minister.”

Of critical importance when considering sexuality is the role of God’s commandments—his Law—in the moral ordering of the Christian life. We are convinced that God’s intention for marriage--life-long covenant of fidelity between a man and a woman--established as the First Institute in Genesis 2 and re-affirmed by Jesus in Mark 10:6-9, serves as the center around which all Christian sexual ethics are defined. That original design, echoed throughout scripture and even depicted as the ideal relationship between Jesus and his bride (Revelation), the Church, has been shattered due to human sin (the Fall; see Genesis 3). Because of sin, humans have turned away from God’s intent for their sexual lives, bringing into the world such behaviors as polygamy, divorce, abuse, adultery, homosexual acts, pornography, etc., that no longer reflect the established pattern and ideal set forth by God.

However, by focusing on trust, freedom, and love of neighbor, the social statement, *Human Sexuality: Gift and Trust*, strains forward to see what God might be doing anew within the community of faith, particularly in regards to conduct of persons who are homosexual, rather than building on the foundation depicted in the creation accounts of Genesis. The concept of freedom of the Christian, while helpful in our understanding of salvation by faith alone, cannot be the justification for a lifestyle and behavior contrary to the biblical witness and the moral tradition. From Galatians (5:13) we heard often, “For you were called to freedom.” However, we did not hear often enough the next line, “Only do not use your freedom as an opportunity for the self-indulgence.” By centering on justification by faith, the social statement minimizes the role of the Law in Christian life, contrary to Luther’s exposition of the Christian life in the catechisms, and is at odds with the Lutheran Confessions—Article VI of the *Formula of Concord*. Justification by faith does not nullify the commands of God; to argue thus is to fall into “antinomianism.”

We contend that the recommendations proposed in *Report and Recommendations*, which advocate same-gender unions and the ordination of non-celibate homosexual persons, have little biblical, historical or traditional support. The proposed recommendations advocate a radical departure from long-held moral tradition and biblical interpretation, thus distancing us further from the Roman Catholic Church, Orthodox Churches, evangelical churches and most of the churches in the Protestant mainstream. We believe this is a very serious step that should not be taken by a sharply divided church, particularly without passage by a 2/3<sup>rd</sup> vote at the 2009 Churchwide Assembly.

Because of these theological and pragmatic concerns and because the proposed recommendation threatens to fragment the ELCA as a church by allowing synods and individual congregations to determine their own practice, we felt compelled to draft Dissenting Position #1 (found in the Appendix). Recommending broad change in the present policies is extremely unwise and unfaithful. There may come a day in which a new consensus in the Church might mandate a change in teaching and practice, as was seen with slavery and Apartheid. Or, over time, this church might find that its resolve grows even stronger to maintain its foundational core beliefs, such as with the authority of scripture (II Timothy 3:16), justification by faith alone (Romans 3:28),

and the primacy of Christ (Acts 4:12). Lack of consensus does not mandate change. In fact, it argues for the opposite: maintaining current policies.

Because longstanding biblical interpretation and teachings of the apostolic faith, all of which are shared with ecumenical church partners and partner churches of the Lutheran World Federation, argue against changing the current ELCA policies, we recommend the following to the 2009 Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America:

1. Affirm and uphold the current policies of the ELCA, including both rostering and discipline, as stated in *Vision and Expectations* and *Definitions and Guidelines for Discipline*.
2. Affirm the pastoral guidance of the 1993 Statement of the ELCA Conference of Bishops, that "there is basis neither in Scripture nor tradition for the establishment of an official ceremony by this church for the blessing of a homosexual relationship." However, pastors within their local contexts are to "provide pastoral care for all to whom they minister."

The ELCA is a church deeply divided on the issue of human sexuality. The recommendations of the majority of the task force represent a radical change that not only is contrary to scripture and the apostolic faith, but is one that will splinter our congregations, alienate many of our members, further divide the unity of this church and, we believe, grieve the heart of God. We pray this tragedy will not occur.

Submitted in the name of God: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit

The Rev. Dr. Scott Suskovic; The Rev. Corinne Johnson; The Rev. Carol S. Hendrix

### **TREASURER'S REPORT**

Linda Lubold, administrative assistant in the treasurer's office, provided a Merrill Lynch Report for February and March 2009; Mission Support Statements for the two months ended February 28, 2009, and February 29, 2008 and three months ended March 31, 2009 and 2008; Mission Support by Conferences for January 1, 2009, through March 31, 2009; and combined budget reports for February and March 2009.

Vice President Price explained that the vast decrease in mission support received in March 2009 from mission support received in March 2008 can be explained by the fact that our new auditor has stated that the treasurer's office must close the treasurer's books at the end of each month instead of keeping the books open for ten days into the new month in order to credit deposits to the previous month. This difference will be noted throughout fiscal year 2009. The members of Synod Council were pleased by the number of congregations that had reported their mission support goals for 2009 and thanked the deans and the synod secretary for their work in securing these commitments. They also requested that the treasurer's office make available alternate mission support statements that could be compared to last year's mission support statements as well as flow sheets showing income and expenditures.

### **VICE PRESIDENT'S REPORT**

The vice president reported that aspects of his report will be shared as the meeting progresses.

### **SECRETARY'S REPORT**

Pastor McKee reported that the first of two meetings of this synod's voting members of the 2009 Churchwide Assembly was held; the voting members were given the opportunity to get to know each other and to receive a brief orientation to the assembly. He announced that the bulletin of reports is available on this synod's Web site as is other information relating to the 2009 Synod Assembly. Registration may be completed online. He reported that there have been some complaints about the cost of this year's assembly and about the plans that require the purchase of at least two meals. The secretary continues to contact congregations that have not submitted their congregation report for 2008, certified their voting members, or reported their mission support commitments for 2009.

### **REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**

The Executive Committee provided minutes of its April 3, 2009, meeting. Vice President Ronald Price led the members of the Synod Council through the minutes.

Mr. Price moved **EC09.04.01**, on behalf of the Executive Committee:

**ADOPTED:** That the ELCA mission support in the 2010 proposed budget be reduced  
**SC09.04.23.** to \$1,998,550 to maintain the 50-50 split.

**REPORTS OF THE COMMITTEES OF SYNOD COUNCIL**

**ASSEMBLY PLANNING COMMITTEE** presented minutes of its March 12, 2009, meeting. Pastor Hefner reviewed the minutes. He announced that the Thursday evening worship and the Saturday morning worship have been moved to the Hostetter Chapel. The sound system in the chapel is better than the one in Brubaker Auditorium. We continue to look for volunteers to serve at the assembly; each volunteer will be offered the complimentary package. Those interested in serving as volunteers should contact Pamela Drenner.

Pastor Hefner moved the following recommendation on behalf of the Assembly Planning Committee:

**ADOPTED:** That the Synod Council designate one half of the assembly offering for the  
**SC09.04.24.** Bishop's Congregational Mission Fund and one half of the assembly offering for student scholarships to Manow Lutheran Secondary School, a school of the Konde Diocese.

**CONSTITUTION COMMITTEE** provided minutes of its March 24, 2009, meeting. Holly Freas-Webster announced that the committee met to review the request from the Nominating Committee to consider recommending an amendment to **S10.01.03**, so that the Synod Council youth member would be a confirmed member of a congregation of this synod and under twenty-one years of age at the time of election. Because the committee received notice of a proposed required provision that would include on Synod Council both a youth member, who would be confirmed and eighteen years of age or under at the time of election, and a young adult member, who would be between the ages of eighteen and thirty when elected, the committee deferred action on this proposal until after the 2009 Churchwide Assembly. The committee did review the other proposed amendments and offered perspectives about defining parish arrangements, making a reasonable effort to include youth and young adults on Congregation Councils, making the synodical Audit Committees more independent from Synod Councils, and being more prescriptive about the requirements for annual audits.

**FINANCE AND BUDGET COMMITTEE** provided minutes of its March 26, 2009, meeting. Jon Adams, committee chair, reviewed these minutes with the members of Synod Council.

Jon Adams moved the following amended recommendation from the Finance and Budget Committee:

**ADOPTED:** That the Synod Council recommend to the Synod Assembly for adoption the  
**SC09.04.25.** proposed 2010 budget in the amount of \$3,995,650.00.

**PERSONNEL COMMITTEE** distributed copies of the adopted Personnel Policies of this synod to each member of Synod Council.

**REPORTS OF THE LIAISONS**

**LUTHERAN MEN IN MISSION** liaison, Fred Bohls, provided a packet of information. The annual gathering for Lutheran Men in Mission will be held on May 2, 2009, at Christ Lutheran Church, Elizabethtown. Pastor Kerry Nelson will be the speaker. The Women of the ELCA will be joining the men at this gathering. Registration for this event is still open. The Lutheran Men in Mission are presenting each middler at Gettysburg Seminary with a Master Builder Bible and a book, Pastoring Men, by Pat Morley.

**LUTHERAN YOUTH ORGANIZATION** liaison, Marissa Hunt, reported that the LYO board met the first Sunday in April and adopted a new structure. In May, the members of the LYO will elect a new slate of officers. The members of the LYO are planning to be pages at the Synod Assembly again and are getting ready for the Churchwide Youth Gathering and the LYO Churchwide Assembly as well as leadership training camp at Camp Nawakwa.

**REPORTS OF THE EXECUTIVE STAFF**

Pastor Melvin Dick reported that the Bishop's Convocation, which will be held September 14, will be a follow-up on the Churchwide Assembly.

Pastor David Fisher reported on the progress he is making in defining his new position of three months as a Director for Evangelical Mission deployed to this synod. There are four full-time and four part-time director positions in the eight synods of Region 8.

Pastor Clifton Eshbach was welcomed to synod staff on this his first day of call as assistant to the bishop. This was also his birthday.

**REPORTS OF THE COMMITTEES FOR THE MINISTERIUM**

**COMMITTEE OF DEANS** provided minutes of its March 16, 2009, meeting.

**COMPENSATION AND BENEFITS COMMITTEE** provided a report of its March 1, 2009, meeting that included two recommendations for minimum base salaries for rostered leaders. The chart that was developed for ordained pastors gives a 2% increase for the first six years and a 1% increase for each additional year. Even in these difficult economic times, the committee came to the conclusion that a modest increase in the minimum salary guidelines was necessary.

Lucinda Bringman moved that the Synod Council adopt Recommendation 1 for Synod Assembly action:

**ADOPTED:** That the Lower Synod, in assembly, adopt the minimum base salary and housing allowance for 2010 for a pastor serving full time according to the following table and year of ordination.

**BASE SALARY AND HOUSING ALLOWANCE  
SHOULD EXCEED THE FOLLOWING AMOUNTS IN 2010**

Year Ordained	Minimum Base Salary And Housing Allowance Combined (No Parsonage)			Minimum Base Salary Only (Parsonage Provided)
	Not Less Than			Not Less Than
2010	44,840	-	53,830	31,350
2009	45,280	-	54,350	31,660
2008	45,460	-	54,450	31,980
2007	46,100	-	55,090	32,620
2006	46,760	-	55,740	33,270
2005	47,420	-	56,410	33,940
2004	47,630	-	56,530	34,280
2003	48,320	-	57,220	34,970
2002	48,670	-	57,570	35,320
2001	49,030	-	57,920	35,670
2000	49,380	-	58,280	36,030
1999	49,740	-	58,640	36,390
1998	50,110	-	59,000	36,750
1997	50,470	-	59,370	37,120
1996	50,840	-	59,740	37,490
1995	51,220	-	60,120	37,860
1994	51,590	-	60,490	38,240
1993	51,970	-	60,870	38,620
1992	52,360	-	61,260	39,010
1991	52,750	-	61,650	39,400
1990	53,150	-	62,040	39,790
1989	53,540	-	62,440	40,190
1988	53,940	-	62,840	40,590
1987	54,350	-	63,250	41,000
1986	54,760	-	63,660	41,410
1985	55,180	-	64,070	41,820
1984	55,590	-	64,490	42,240
1983	56,010	-	64,910	42,660
1982	56,440	-	65,340	43,090
1981	56,870	-	65,770	43,520
1980	57,310	-	66,210	43,960
1979	57,750	-	66,650	44,400
1978	58,200	-	67,090	44,840
1977	58,640	-	67,540	45,290
1976	59,100	-	67,990	45,740
1975	59,550	-	68,450	46,200
1974	60,010	-	68,910	46,660
1973	60,480	-	69,380	47,130
1972	60,950	-	69,850	47,600

1971	61,430	-	70,330	48,080
1970	61,910	-	70,810	48,560
1968	62,890	-	71,790	49,540
1967	63,390	-	72,290	50,040
1966	63,890	-	72,790	50,540

Pastor David Hefner moved that the Synod Council adopt Recommendation 2 for Synod Assembly action:

**ADOPTED:** That the Lower Susquehanna Synod, in assembly, adopt the minimum salary for SC09/04.27. 2010 for deaconesses, diaconal ministers, associates in ministry who serve full time according to the following table and years of experience.

**MINIMUM SALARY SHOULD EXCEED THE FOLLOWING AMOUNTS  
IN 2010 DEPENDING ON POSITION DESCRIPTION AND QUALIFICATIONS**

<b>Years Experience</b>	<b>RANGE</b>	
0 - 4	32,190	40,240
5 - 9	35,070	43,830
10 - 14	38,570	48,220
15 +	40,500	50,630

**REPORTS OF THE SYNODICAL MINISTRIES FOR CONGREGATIONAL LIFE**  
**RESOURCE CENTER** submitted reports for February and March 2009.

**CONGREGATIONS TOGETHER IN MISSION 2010** Steering Committee provided minutes of its February 10, 2009, meeting.

**REPORTS OF THE COMMITTEES FOR MISSION**

**ARCHIVES ADVISORY COMMITTEE** met April 23, 2009. The committee is recommending to the Region 8 bishops that the salary of archivist Elwood Christ be raised from \$12 per hour to \$15 per hour. Pastor Thomas McKee and President Michael Cooper White are working on a recommendation to relate the Region 8 Archives to the Lutheran Theological Seminary at Gettysburg and to have the seminary archivist serve as the Region 8 archivist after Elwood Christ's retirement.

**AUDIT COMMITTEE** provided minutes of its February 18 and March 2, 2009, meetings. Lisa Ritter, Boles Metzger Brosius and Ritter, met with the committee and gave a preliminary report on the 2007 audit.

Ron Price, liaison to the Audit Committee, reported that a discussion was held about the previous auditors, Wildeman and Obrock. Lisa Ritter raised concern about the errors that they made and breaches of generally accepted accounting principles that they failed to report. However, before confronting Wildeman and Obrock, she stated that we should consult with our attorney and consider the cost that would be involved in bringing a suit against what we may gain from the confrontation. The vice president indicated that he would need the guidance of Synod Council in making such a decision.

**CHURCH IN SOCIETY** is planning Racial Justice Training for October 19-20, 2009. Members of Synod Council are to attend this training session.

**REPORTS OF COMMITTEES FOR THE SYNOD ASSEMBLY**

Pastor McKee reported that Bishop Hoover has appointed the Memorials Committee and the Committee of Reference and Counsel for the 2009 Synod Assembly. The Committee of Reference and Counsel will meet on Monday, May 4; the Memorials Committee will meet on Tuesday, May 5.

**REPORTS OF AGENCIES AND INSTITUTIONS RELATING TO THE LOWER SUSQUEHANNA SYNOD**

**UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

Pastor Melvin Dick reported on the information we have received from our legal counsel, Lawrence B. Abrams, III, Esquire, Rhoads and Sinon LLP, about persons qualified to solemnize marriages under Pennsylvania law. It is his advice “that ordained Lutheran pastors who are rostered with the Lower Susquehanna Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, and thus current and in good standing with the ELCA, are authorized under the Pennsylvania Marriage Law, specifically section 1503(a)(6) to solemnize marriages between persons that produce a Pennsylvania marriage license in this Commonwealth. Of course, whether or not a Lutheran pastor agrees to marry a particular couple is always in the pastor’s discretion, and whether or not a wedding ceremony may be celebrated in any particular church building is under the control of the Congregation Council.”

**NEW BUSINESS**

Pastor David Hefner moved that:

**The Synod Council adopt the memorial affirming the current ELCA Policy and Declining to Accept Recommendations on Ministry Policy.**

The members of the Synod Council had a lengthy discussion on the substance of the memorial and on differing understandings of how the Synod Council should lead, whether by taking a stand on a controversial subject or by remaining neutral and letting the assembly come to its own decision. Before the members of the Synod Council voted, Bishop Hoover led the council in prayer.

**ADOPTED: Memorial Affirming the Current ELCA Policy and Declining to Accept  
SC09.04.28. Recommendations on Ministry Policy  
9 yes, 6 no**

**WHEREAS**, the 2007 ELCA Churchwide Assembly voted “to direct the Task Force for ELCA Studies on Sexuality specifically to address and to make recommendations to the 2009 Churchwide Assembly on changes to any church policies that preclude practicing homosexual persons from the rosters of this church;” and

**WHEREAS**, the 2009 ELCA Churchwide Assembly will consider recommendations from the *Report and Recommendations on Ministry Policies* from the Task Force for ELCA Studies on Sexuality; and

**WHEREAS**, the *Report and Recommendations on Ministry Policies* asks the ELCA to change its teaching and policy to affirm the possibility of same-sex sexual relationships for pastors and other rostered leaders in the ELCA; and

**WHEREAS**, the Confession of Faith of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America states: “This church accepts the canonical Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments as the inspired Word of God and the authoritative source and norm of its proclamation, faith, and life” (*ELCA Constitution, 2.03*); and

**WHEREAS**, many ELCA members and most Christian churches — including most churches in the Lutheran World Federation — believe that Scripture is clear in its teaching about marriage and homosexual behavior; and

**WHEREAS**, a synodical or congregational option on ministry standards would represent a real change in the teaching of our church forcing even those synods and congregations that do not agree with this change implicitly to accept the premise that Scripture is not clear in its teaching about marriage or about homosexual behavior; and

**WHEREAS**, the interdependent relationship between the churchwide, synodical, and congregational expressions of the ELCA requires one Office of Ministry, one roster of pastors, and one set of expectations for pastors and other rostered leaders throughout the ELCA; and

**WHEREAS**, the ELCA currently expresses its expectations of pastors and other rostered leaders through documents called *Vision and Expectations* and *Definitions and Guidelines for Discipline* which have served the ELCA well for most of its history; therefore be it

**RESOLVED**, that the Lower Susquehanna Synod Assembly thank the members of Task Force for ELCA Studies on Sexuality for their work; and be it further

**RESOLVED**, that the Lower Susquehanna Synod Assembly memorialize the 2009 ELCA Churchwide Assembly to decline to accept the proposals in the *Report and Recommendations on Ministry Policies* from the Task Force for ELCA Studies on Sexuality; and be it further

**RESOLVED**, that the Lower Susquehanna Synod Assembly memorialize the 2009 ELCA Churchwide Assembly to reaffirm the ELCA's current standards for pastors and other rostered leaders as expressed in *Vision and Expectations* and *Definitions and Guidelines for Discipline*.

Pastor McKee provided information about the fidelity bond coverage that the Synod Council in 1995 authorized this synod to provide to our congregations through the Brotherhood Mutual Insurance Company. Coverage was \$50,000 and was conditional upon the congregations performing an annual financial audit. A \$2,500 deductible applied to the bond coverage but was never enforced. The cost of this coverage in 2008 was \$14,587.16. On April 8, 2009, James O. Bower Insurance Company notified the Lower Susquehanna Synod that due to the five dishonesty claims since 1995, our fidelity bond coverage will be reduced to \$10,000 at an adjusted premium of \$8,883.00. The insurance carrier explained that we are the only entity that currently provides this kind of blanket coverage. He recommended that we drop this coverage and encourage each congregation to carry their own fidelity bond insurance. If the Lower Susquehanna Synod would drop the fidelity bond coverage for its congregations, this synod as a single entity could purchase \$50,000 dishonesty coverage for \$3,953.00. Pastor McKee asked the members of Synod Council for advice about how to proceed.

Pastor Hefner moved:

**ADOPTED: That the Lower Susquehanna Synod maintain the \$10,000 blanket fidelity bond SC09.04.29, coverage for our congregations for one additional year.**

Members of the Synod Council desire that the congregations be notified about this change and that they be encouraged to obtain greater coverage. Also they express the desire that this synod, and especially the new treasurer, work with our congregations to help them understand the importance of good accounting principles, maintaining a proper system of checks and balances, and having a yearly audit performed.

Bishop Hoover expressed his appreciation to Synod Council for recommending to the Synod Assembly an increase in the minimum salary guidelines despite bad economic times. He said that he believes that this shows the value we place on ministry and the people we call to lead in that ministry.

There was no further new business.

**ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting was adjourned at 11:40 a.m. with the praying of the Lord's Prayer.

Thomas E. McKee  
synod secretary  
4/27/09