

**LOWER SUSQUEHANNA SYNOD, ELCA  
SYNOD COUNCIL**

**Minutes  
June 5, 2010**

The Lower Susquehanna Synod Council met for a regular meeting on Saturday, June 5, 2010, 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. April Trout led the devotions, reading a story about a dying monastic community. Seeking out a rabbi in their midst, one of the members of this community asked for advice. The rabbi told him, "The Messiah is one of you." As they pondered this, they began to treat one another and themselves with utmost respect, just in case the rabbi was correct and one of them were the Messiah. Their community began to grow; it became a vibrant center of light and spirituality. April led the members of the Synod Council in prayer.

Michael Youse, administrator of the Lutheran Camping Corporation of Central Pennsylvania, gave the mission minute on IMAGINE, the capital campaign being conducted by the Camping Corporation. They have received contributions of or have received pledges of \$448,864 from individuals and \$438,055 from congregations, giving a total of \$886,919. The three levels of the goals of this campaign were the basic goal of \$1.6 million; the victory goal of \$2 million; and the celebration goal of \$2.5 million. They continue to work diligently on the campaign, being more intentional in their approach to both individuals and congregations.

Mr. Youse also informed the members of Synod Council that a new camping season is about to start. Counselors will begin their training tomorrow. Registrations are about par with last year, but this year more campers have registered at Nawakwa and less at Kirchenwald. Having a champion to hold up our outdoor ministry in each congregation makes a big difference in the participation from that congregation. After receiving the appreciation of the Synod Council for his report, Mr. Youse departed.

**ROLL CALL**

<b>Members present:</b>	Bishop B. Penrose Hoover Thomas E. McKee	Ronald R. Price Bruce E. Seagrist
	Thomas C. Benner Lucinda L. Bringman Judy K. Collins Elizabeth D. George Robert H. Getz, Jr. David L. Hefner Mary Anne Kingsborough	Paula L. Murray Timothy W. Sadler Patricia A. Snyder Marcus W. Thomsen April E. Trout Alexis K. Witt Kim Y. Wittel
<b>Liaisons present:</b>	Fred W. Bohls Kathy Hefner	Kirsten Youse
<b>Staff present:</b>	Virginia J. Cover Melvin E. Dick Pamela B. Drenner	Clifton D. Eshbach Joanne Wilhelm
<b>Members excused:</b>	Holly Freas-Webster	Sara A. Gausmann
<b>Staff excused:</b>	David R. Fisher	Charlie Roberts

**MINUTES**

April Trout was excused from the last meeting and was not present as recorded in the minutes. The minutes of the April 24, 2010, meeting of Synod Council were approved as corrected.

**BISHOP'S REPORT**

Bishop B. Penrose Hoover provided a written report.

Bishop Hoover moved the following appointments:

**ADOPTED:** That the Synod Council appoint to the Candidacy Committee the Rev. Brenda J. Kiser, the Rev. Laurie Charles Roberts, George E. Bennett Jr., diaconal minister, the Rev. Jeffrey C. Compton, the Rev. Constance L. Mentzer, and Janet Fitch for a first five-year term, expiring in 2015.  
**SC10.06.36.**

**ADOPTED:** That the Synod Council reappoint to the Worship Committee the Rev. Beth B. Folkemer and Irene Wegehof for a second three-year term, expiring in 2013, appoint the Rev. Brian A. McClinton and the Rev. Traci E. B. Glover for a first three-year term, expiring in 2013, and appoint Pamela B. Drenner as staff consultant.  
**SC10.06.37.**

**ADOPTED:** That the Synod Council appoint the Rev. Kurt S. Strause, Bradley Charles (St. Matthew, Lancaster) and Scott Widdall (Holy Spirit, Lancaster) to the Review Committee for Synod Administration at St. Paul Lutheran Church, Millersville.  
**SC10.06.38.**

Bishop Hoover moved the following motions concerning "on-leave-from-call" status:

**ADOPTED:** That the Synod Council retain "on-leave-from-call" status the Rev. Elizabeth L. Lartz until July 1, 2011; the Rev. Richard D. Schoenly until August 16, 2011; the Rev. Lyla Harold until September 1, 2011; and the Rev. Deborah L. Volker until June 21, 2011; and  
**SC10.06.39.**

That the Synod Council grant "on-leave-from-call" status to the Rev. Paula M. Stecker, effective August 1, 2010, until August 1, 2011.

Bishop Hoover moved the following motion seeking approval for a Non-Stipendiary Ministry:

**ADOPTED:** That Synod Council approve the request of Catherine R. Smith, an approved diaconal minister candidate, to receive a non-stipendiary call from Zion Lutheran Church, Union Deposit.  
**SC10.06.40.**

With the approval of Synod Council and with supporting letters from Catherine R. Smith and Zion Lutheran Church, Union Deposit, this request will be forwarded to the Conference of Bishops.

Bishop Hoover moved the following Synod Council calls:

**ADOPTED:** That the Synod Council issue a call to the Rev. Rodney W. Lilley as full-time chaplain at Country Meadows Retirement Community –Hershey Campus, effective June 14, 2010; and  
**SC10.06.41.**

**ADOPTED:** That the Synod Council issue a call to the Rev. C. Hope Knobler as intentional  
**SC10.06.42.** interim pastor of Tabor United Church of Christ, Lebanon, effective June 14, 2010.

Bishop Hoover moved the following:

**ADOPTED:** That the Synod Council remove from the roster of the Lower Susquehanna Synod  
**SC10.06.43.** and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America the Rev. Norbert G. Mamet,  
without prejudice, his three years on on-leave-from-call-status having expired.

Bishop Hoover informed the members of the Synod Council about St. Paul Lutheran Church, Millersburg, which took its first vote to leave the ELCA on Sunday, May 16, 2010. The vote was 103 yes and 39 no, 72.5%. We have received official notice from the congregation. The bishop's consultation will take place on July 14, 2010.

Pastor David Hefner asked, since the Synod Council is not scheduled to meet until September, would it be appropriate to take advance action on whether or not to grant permission for the congregations who have taken first votes to leave the ELCA if they concur with their initial decisions with at least a 2/3 vote. The members of Synod Council agreed that they would not like to take advance action but that they would like to hear about the conditions of the second vote before making a decision. The possibility of calling a special Synod Council meeting was raised; however, Bishop Hoover assured the members of the council that during the first two consultations the congregations were told that Synod Council would not be making a decision before its September meeting.

### **TREASURER'S REPORT**

Treasurer Bruce E. Seagrist submitted written reports through April 30, 2010, including reports of mission support and Merrill Lynch earnings. He distributed at the meeting a report of the treasurer, a schedule of activities, and a schedule of financial position, all through May 31, 2010. He also presented a resolution of defalcation. Year to date mission support is up 1.46% above last year while total giving is up 20.30%. As of April our permanently restricted funds amount to \$1,004,590. All obligations are being paid in a timely manner; timely remittances are made to the ELCA; and the Lower Susquehanna Synod is functioning within its budget and spending authorization.

The treasurer also shared information about the audit for FY2009. The audit and the accompanying management letter raised no red flags about our financial procedures.

Treasurer Seagrist moved the following plan for the deployment of the restitution and insurance proceeds that we have received:

That \$50,000 be earmarked for the Konde Diocese for tractor and X-ray machine; that \$50,000 be earmarked for Sudanese Seminarian Scholarship; that \$50,000 be earmarked for Global Mission Support for Richard Sarker, ELCA Missionary; that \$25,000 be earmarked for Christ, Harrisburg, Medical Ministry; that \$575,000 be restored to the LSS Endowment Fund; and that \$419,909 be restored to the Lower Susquehanna Synod Operating Fund.

Members of the Synod Council received a letter from Pastor Walter May, ELCA Executive for Synodical Relations, and Christina Jackson-Skeleton, ELCA Treasurer, asking that this synod give \$293,000, or 99.42% of the misappropriated money that they believe was intended for the ELCA. Members also received a letter from Bishop Hoover refuting their claim and stating that none of the misappropriated money was intended for the ELCA.

Members of the Synod Council questioned if the distributions honored the will of the original donors of the various endowment funds or trusts. Pastor McKee shared information that the largest trust, the J. Ezra Foltz Trust, valued at \$417,152.29 as of March 2009, was designated to feed the hungry and to support the Liberian Native Worker Program, a ministry that is no longer in existence. Other funds or trusts designate students in the world mission field and the ministry, the Home and Foreign Mission Society, scholarships for seminarians, funds to help pastors and their families in need; still others leave the distribution to the discretion of this synod, either primarily or secondarily after the stated beneficiary has passed from existence. While none of the proposed recipients are specifically mentioned, all seem to be consistent with the original intents. The members of the Synod Council agreed that a plan quickly needed to be developed for the future distribution of the proceeds of the Endowment Fund. The treasurer informed the members of Synod Council that this is the next and final project in rectifying the fraudulent activities of our former treasurer.

Pastor Paula Murray questioned the restoration of \$419,909 to this synod's Operating Fund. She proposed that all the money received should be used for mission as intended by the original donors.

Pastor Murray moved:

That Treasurer Seagrist's plan be modified so that \$319,376.74 (the amount of the payment of lost wages through miscalculation of social security taxes) be restored to the Lower Susquehanna Synod Operating Fund; and that the remainder of the \$419,909 be restored to the Lower Susquehanna Synod Endowment Fund; and

That this synod adopt a plan for the future distribution of the proceeds of the Endowment Fund that is as close as possible to the original intention of the donors.

Pastor McKee informed the members of the Synod Council that \$84,837 was received as part of the insurance settlement to help reimburse this synod for the legal fees it incurred in helping to obtain an insurance settlement. He stated he believes that this amount also should be restored to the Operating Fund.

Pastor McKee moved:

**ADOPTED: That Pastor Murray's amendment be amended to read that \$404,000 be restored to the Lower Susquehanna Synod Operating Fund; and the \$590,909 be restored to the Lower Susquehanna Synod Endowment Fund.**

Pastor Murray's amendment as amended was before the Synod Council.

**ADOPTED: That Treasurer Seagrist's plan be modified so that \$404,000 be restored to the Lower Susquehanna Synod Operating Fund; and that \$590,909 be restored to the Lower Susquehanna Synod Endowment Fund; and**

**That this synod adopt a plan for the future distribution of the proceeds of the Endowment Fund that is as close as possible to the original intention of the donors.**

Treasurer Seagrist's motion as amended was before Synod Council.

**ADOPTED: That \$50,000 be earmarked for the Konde Diocese for tractor and X-ray machine; SC10.06.44. that \$50,000 be earmarked for Sudanese Seminarian Scholarship; that \$50,000 be earmarked for Global Mission Support for Richard Sarker, ELCA Missionary; that \$25,000 be earmarked for Christ, Harrisburg, Medical Ministry; that \$590,909 be restored to the LSS Endowment Fund; and that \$404,000 be restored to the Lower Susquehanna Synod Operating Fund; and**

**That this synod adopt a plan for the future distribution of the proceeds of the Endowment Fund that is as close as possible to the original intention of the donors.**

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

Vice President Ronald Price reported on four items:

1. The Congregational Assets Task Force has been meeting. They received initial information from former ELCA Secretary Lowell Almen about the closing of congregations and from the New Jersey Synod that has developed a pastoral approach to working with congregations in the process of dissolving.
2. The members of Synod Council are invited to attend an Open House at Kathryn's Kloset on Wednesday, June 23, 2010, at 10:00 a.m. Council members who desire to attend should contact the vice president by Wednesday, June 9. Those going may park at Union Lutheran Church, 408 West Market Street, York, and carpool to Kathryn's Kloset.
3. The vice president met with the Stewardship Committee on May 21, 2010. The Stewardship Committee was concerned that the Synod Council action in authorizing a spending authorization sent a wrong message to our congregations. The vice president contended that the message was based in reality and very clear; we only should plan to spend the money that we expect to receive.
4. Because the plan for the distribution of the Endowment Fund proceeds has not been developed yet, the Audit Committee is requesting that we contract with the same auditor, Lisa Ritter, at MaherDuessel to do our audit in FY 2010. She is fully aware of this situation and willing to do our audit for an additional year.

### **SECRETARY'S REPORT**

The Rev. Thomas McKee, synod secretary, provided an update on the Synod Assembly. Registrations are slightly ahead of last year. People are excited that the presiding bishop will be the churchwide representative. The Bulletin of Reports has been mailed and received by many voting members already. Pam Drenner, assembly manager, has e-mailed an expanded version of the bishop's timed agenda to all Synod Council members so that all can be prepared for what will be happening at the assembly. There will be tables in the front of the hall for Synod Council and also for the Memorials Committee and the Committee of Reference and Counsel.

Pastor McKee moved:

**ADOPTED: That the Synod Council, through the bishop and the secretary, certify the minutes of SC10.06.45. the 2009 Synod Assembly as the official protocol of said assembly, to be deposited in the archives.**

Pastor McKee commented on the decision to distribute the restitution and insurance proceeds, saying that this is another important step in bringing healing and closure to this synod. While there are numerous other ministries worthy of receiving some of the distribution, he believes that these four ministries truly are reflective of the intentions of the original donors. They are important ministries that are supported by many within this synod. That we can finally give these significant gifts for ministry should make the members of this synod feel good. This distribution can give us a foretaste of what we will be able to do with a plan in place for distributing the proceeds of our Endowment Fund to support valuable ministries.

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

Vice President Price reviewed the May 14, 2010, minutes of the Executive Committee.

The vice president presented the following motion (**EC10.05.01**) on behalf of the Executive Committee:

**ADOPTED:** That Synod Council approve signing a contract engagement letter with SC10.06.46. MaherDuessel to audit this synod's financial records for FY 2010 at a cost of \$13,900.

#### **REPORTS OF THE COMMITTEES OF SYNOD COUNCIL**

**ASSEMBLY PLANNING COMMITTEE** provided minutes of its April 26, 2010, meeting.

**MISSION COMMITTEE** provided minutes of its May 2010 meeting. There was discussion about how the Mission Committee is using the work of the previous Mission Committee, much of which was adopted by Synod Assembly action. Lucinda Bringman, chair, said that the committee is working to include information from the previous Mission Committee into the committee's current deliberations and visioning.

#### **REPORTS OF THE LIAISONS**

**LUTHERAN MEN IN MISSION** liaison, Fred Bohls, said that the men are planning to reschedule the cancelled leadership event. The possible date for the rescheduled event is September 11.

**LUTHERAN YOUTH ORGANIZATION** liaison, Kirsten Youse, announced the election of the new LYO officers: Lori Noble, President; Seth Miller, Director for Communications and Social Networking; and Kirsten Youse, Synod Council liaison. Members of the LYO will be serving as pages for the Synod Assembly.

**WOMEN OF THE EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN AMERICA** liaison, Kathy Hefner, announced that the Women of the ELCA does have a nominee for president, Karen Poe. Needed yet are nominees for secretary and treasurer.

#### **REPORTS OF THE EXECUTIVE STAFF**

Vice President Price introduced Pastor Virginia J. Cover, the new assistant to the bishop, to Synod Council. The vice president expressed his appreciation to Pastor Melvin E. Dick for his service as assistant to the bishop. He also wished Pastor Dick blessings in his retirement. The members of the Synod Council responded with applause.

#### **REPORTS OF THE COMMITTEES FOR THE MINISTERIUM**

**Committee of Deans** provided minutes of its May 10, 2010, meeting.

## **REPORTS OF THE SYNODICAL MINISTRIES FOR CONGREGATIONAL LIFE**

### **REPORTS OF THE COMMITTEES FOR MISSION**

**Archives Advisory Committee** liaison, Pastor Thomas McKee, reported that this synod and the other synods in Region 8 East have signed a contract with the Lutheran Theological Seminary at Gettysburg to provide archival services for Region 8. Synods must maintain at least their same level of support, which for the Lower Susquehanna Synod is \$4,000.

**Audit Committee** provided minutes of its April 21, 2010, meeting.

**Bishop's Congregation Mission Fund** provided minutes of its April 22, 2010, meeting.

### **REPORTS OF THE COMMITTEES OF THE SYNOD ASSEMBLY**

**Memorials Committee** provided minutes of its May 5, 2010, meeting.

**Committee of Reference and Counsel** provided minutes of its May 12, 2010. Lucinda Bringman, chair, provided information on the three resolutions to come before the Synod Assembly and walked the members of Synod Council through the committee's recommendations.

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

### **UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

Vice President Price thanked Kim Wittel, Holly Freas Webster, Robert Getz, Pastor Timothy Sadler, and Pastor Sally Gausmann for serving on Synod Council. He expressed his appreciation to them for their dedicated service to this synod.

### **NEW BUSINESS**

Pastor David Hefner expressed his concern that the Executive Staff had refused to advertise a Lutherans Reform event on "Carings and Sharings." Lutherans Reform has as its purposes education and mission. It has a two-fold thrust following the actions of the 2009 Churchwide Assembly: helping those who want to stay in the ELCA cope and helping those who find that they can no longer stay in the ELCA leave according to the ELCA constitutional provisions. By refusing to publicize this event, this synod is hurting those like him, committed to staying in the ELCA for now, who need help and support during this period. Thomas Benner asked if anyone else could remember a discussion at Synod Council about not publicizing a Lutheran Concerned event; no one presently on Synod Council could recall this discussion. Pastor McKee said that, while he is very sympathetic to those who are having difficulty accepting the 2009 Churchwide actions, he changed his mind about this synod supporting Lutherans Reform when he learned that they were part of CORE, a group proposing the formation of a North American Lutheran Church. He himself does not believe that this synod should use its resources to encourage the formation of another Lutheran body. Pastor Murray said that the synod's resources used in publicizing an event on "Carings and Sharings" are minimal.

### **ADJOURNMENT**

Alexis Witt moved:

**ADOPTED: That the meeting be adjourned.**

The meeting was adjourned at with the praying of the Lord's Prayer at 11:35 a.m.

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Thomas E. McKee  
synod secretary

6/5/10

