

**LOWER SUSQUEHANNA SYNOD, ELCA
SYNOD COUNCIL**

**Minutes
June 7, 2008**

The Lower Susquehanna Synod Council met for a regular meeting on Saturday, June 7, 2008, 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 Timothy W. Sadler presented devotions, using the idea of evangelism as a drama in three scenes – Biblical interpretation developed by Walter Brueggmann. The three scenes are: 1.) God’s victory over the forces of chaos and death; 2.) the announcement of that victory; and 3.) appropriation by those who hear the announcement. Pastor Sadler provided eight examples of the development of these three scenes, highlighting the story of Easter as found in 1 Corinthians 15:54-58. He quoted Walter Brueggmann, “Evangelism is currently a passionate preoccupation of the U.S. church. This accent on evangelism is no doubt a reflection of the deep crisis facing the church. On the surface, there is a ‘drive for survival’ as mainline churches notice diminished membership, diminished dollars, and eroding influence and importance. Below the surface agenda, there is growing awareness among us of the resistance of our culture to the primary claims of the gospel...” Pastor Sadler noted two causes of resistance: secularism and fearful legalism. He noted that the ground of evangelism is found in the gospel itself. “Evangelism needs to be a revolutionary way of enacting the hope and energy of the believing community.” Pastor Sadler led the members of the council in prayer.

Vice President Price welcomed Paige Shaver, St. Luke, Schaefferstown, who was representing the Lutheran Youth Organization.

ROLL CALL

Members present:	Bishop B. Penrose Hoover Thomas E. McKee	Ronald R. Price
	Jon R. Adams Thomas C. Benner Allison L. Carlson Eric H. Crump Holly Freas-Webster Sara A. Gausmann Richard B. Geib	David L. Hefner Melissa H. Hoffman C. Dee Lockman Paula L. Murray David L. Ritterpush Timothy W. Sadler Kim Y. Wittel
Liaisons present:	Fred W. Bohls Kathy Hefner	Paige Shaver
Staff present:	Pamela B. Drenner David R. Fisher	Joanne Wilhelm
Members excused:	Carrie E. Gross	Cody Teitman
Liaisons excused:	Brandt Zimmerman	
Staff excused:	Melvin E. Dick Barbara A. Myers	Charles R. Roberts

MINUTES

Pastor McKee noted that Dr. Eric Crump should have been marked excused from the April 26 meeting of Synod Council. The minutes of the April 26, 2008, meeting of Synod Council were approved as amended.

BISHOP'S REPORT

Bishop B. Penrose Hoover provided a written report.

Bishop Hoover moved the following committee appointments:

ADOPTED: That the Synod Council reappoint Sister Davia Baldauf to the Committee for Church in Society to a second three-year term, expiring in 2011, and appoint the Rev. Rochelle Lewis for a first three-year term, expiring in 2011;

That the Synod Council appoint Terri Abruzzese and Celia Domines, AiM, to the Christian Education Committee for a first three-year term, expiring in 2011;

That the Synod Council appoint Sharyn Farner to the Ministry for Wholistic Health Committee for a first three-year term, expiring in 2011;

That the Synod Council appoint Lynn S. Fry to the Committee for the Ministry of People with Special Needs for a first three-year term, expiring in 2011;

That the Synod Council reappoint the Rev. Randolph W. Barr to the Bishop's Congregational Mission Fund Committee for a second three-year term, expiring in 2011; and

That the Synod Council reappoint Carol A. Heintzelman, the Rev. Mark W. Jeske, and Parker A. Lee to the Ecumenical and Inter-religious Affairs Committee for a second three-year term, expiring in 2011.

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

ADOPTED: That the Synod Council retain the following rostered persons on "on-leave-from-call" status for one additional year: the Rev. Norbert G. Mamet, until June 15, 2009; Tammy L. Rade, diaconal minister, until June 15, 2009; and the Rev. Sharon F. Hoover, until July 17, 2009; and

That the Synod Council grant "on-leave-from-call" status to the Rev. Richard D. Schoenly for a period of one year, beginning August 16, 2008, until August 16, 2009.

Bishop Hoover moved the approval of the following requests for retirement:

ADOPTED: That the Synod Council approve the request of the Rev. James R. Bramer to retire on September 1, 2008, and the request of the Rev. Larry G. Hummer to retire September 1, 2008.

Bishop Hoover also provided an oral report updating his ministry. Since the last meeting of Synod Council, he has spent "Bishop's Day" in seven conferences. His last two conference visits are planned for September. He has preached and presided in synod congregations almost every Sunday, mostly for anniversaries, dedications, and other celebrations. He would like to spend more time in synod congregations, not necessarily for celebrations, but as a matter of course. He encourages congregations to call and schedule a visit from the bishop even if it is not for a special occasion. He attended the Region 8 consultation and participated in a Web cast to finish the business that was not completed at the consultation. The bishop will be leading monthly Bible studies on the Book of Romans at the Wittel Farm. Held between 10 a.m. and 2:00 p.m. eight times during the year, these Bible studies are for both lay and clergy. He and his wife, Pastor Sharon F. Hoover, will be traveling to the Konde Diocese for eight days during July. He anticipates that he will be learning more about its AIDs ministries as well as possibly taking a mission trip to Uganda.

TREASURER'S REPORT

Linda Lubold, assistant to the treasurer, provided reports of mission support for the three months ended March 31, 2007 and 2008, and for the four months ended April 30, 2007 and 2008, and also a statement of activities through April 30, 2008. Melissa Hoffman, chair of the Finance and Budget Committee, interpreted these reports for the council. Receipts from congregations show a 1.1% increase over the same period last year, and special mission support has increased 17%, giving an increase in total mission support of 4.1%. For the year until April 30, 2008, revenue in excess of disbursements was \$15,172. Ms. Hoffman stated that she believes that we are doing fairly well in spite of the general state of the economy.

VICE PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Vice President Price officially thanked those members of Synod Council whose terms come to an end at the Synod Assembly: Dr. Eric Crump, Melissa Hoffman, Dee Lockman, Pastor David Ritterpusch, and Pastor Paula Murray. He also thanked Carrie Gross, who will be resigning after Synod Assembly and will be married in July. The members of the Synod Council expressed their appreciation with applause. The vice president noted that Pastor Murray has been nominated for another term on Synod Council.

SECRETARY'S REPORT

Secretary McKee reported that he continues to seek the 2007 congregational reports that have not been submitted. He noted that assembly registration has gone well. Some voting members and guests have registered after the deadline; there is a definite possibility that they will not be able to purchase meal tickets on site because only a limited number of meal tickets will be provided. The staff has been somewhat anxious about going to a new site, worrying that something may go wrong, but a visit to Messiah College yesterday during the United Methodist Conference helped to allay some of those fears. The secretary said that the facilities are wonderful, and he believes this new site and the new opportunities it provides will be well received by assembly participants. He reported that the Executive Staff members have updated their job descriptions to reflect what their current responsibilities are. Joanne Wilhelm, Director for Administration, has developed a diagram, as requested by the Personnel Committee, indicating lines of authority and responsibility. Some new policies recommended by Parente Randolph, like a whistleblower's policy and a policy on nepotism, are being developed for approval by the Personnel Committee.

REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

The Executive Committee provided minutes of its May 28, 2008, meeting. Vice President Ronald Price led the members of the Synod Council through the minutes.

Vice President Ronald R. Price informed the members of the Synod Council about the discussion that he had with rostered leaders from the Lebanon Conference who urged him to have Synod Council, and not the Synod Assembly, authorize repayment to former and current ordained members of the synod staff for the loss they incurred due to the miscalculation of Social Security benefits. They urged Synod Council action because they believe that the staff members are owed this payment, and they asked what would happen if the Synod Assembly would not approve this repayment. They also urged this action because they believe it would be very difficult for the members of the Synod Assembly to understand fully this complex issue in such a short period of time and with the limited information that could be shared on the floor of the assembly. This Synod Council action could be reported to the Synod Assembly, and, if anyone had questions or concerns, he or she could address these questions or concerns during the Report of the Synod Council.

The members of the Synod Council stated that they understood the rationale of the Lebanon Conference and appreciated their thoughtful concern. However, because of the large sum of money that is involved and because it would be therapeutic and supportive for the entire Synod Assembly to adopt a recommendation to repay affected rostered staff members, the members of Synod Council concurred that the Synod Council should take a recommendation to the Synod Assembly for adoption. Even if a Synod Council action concerning repayment just would be announced, there still could be questions and discussion on the floor of the assembly. It is important that assembly voting members understand this issue so that they can return home to report this action to the members of their congregations and to answer questions that congregation members might have about this issue. The members of the Synod Council again concurred that it would be better if the voting members of the Synod Assembly act on this important matter after knowing that the Synod Council has recommended the assembly adopt this recommendation. It was suggested that perhaps a written summary of the history and rationale could be distributed to the voting members so that the voting members have the basic information before them to help them understand this complex issue.

Pastor David Ritterpusch moved:

ADOPTED: That the Synod Council present the following recommendation to Synod SC08.06.37. Assembly for adoption: That the Lower Susquehanna Synod compensate affected ordained staff underpaid by a miscalculation of social security allowances and corresponding pension contributions, using unrestricted funds presently held by Merrill Lynch, up to the balance in the account.

The vice president brought a request from the Assembly Planning Committee that Synod Council review the policy on displays at the Synod Assembly. Of special concern was the provision of the policy that allows only Augsburg Fortress to sell items at its display. The Konde Diocese Committee would like to sell shirts at its display. There has also been a request to allow Ten Thousand Villages have a display and the privilege of selling items at the assembly. There was concern registered that if the Synod Council permits the Konde Diocese Committee to sell items that the Synod Council would be opening the door to other possibilities. There was also some concern that this request did not come from the Konde Diocese Committee. There were questions about the number of shirts, where they came from, who made them, how the sales would be handled, if we made a profit. Bishop Hoover stated that the Lower Susquehanna Synod has a special companionship with the Konde Diocese, and if this synod could support and encourage

the members of the Konde Diocese in any way through the sale of these items, that he would be in favor of it. He views this issue entirely differently than requests from other vendors to sell items at the assembly.

Pastor Sally Gausmann moved:

ADOPTED: That the Synod Council approve the sale of items from the Konde Diocese at synod assemblies.
SC 08.06.38.

Mr. Price moved EC 08.05.06. , EC 08.05.07., EC 08.05.08., and EC 08.05.09. on behalf of the Executive Committee:

ADOPTED: That Synod Council recommend the following to the Synod Assembly for adoption: That this synod, in assembly, affirm the election of the Rev. David L. Hefner, Cheryl C. Reinecker, Sharon M. Mack, the Rev. J. Richard Eckert, Kim Y. Wittel, the Rev. Henry E. Herbener, Marilyn G. Reed, Thomas C. Benner, the Rev. Mark W. Jeske, Hope S. Ridge, William E. Schirmer, the Rev. Gwenn L. Trout, and Angela D. Kann as voting members of the 2009 Churchwide Assembly.
SC 08.06.39.

ADOPTED: That Synod Council recommend the following to the Synod Assembly for adoption: That this synod, in assembly, affirm the election of the Rev. Herbert C. Spomer, Linda R. Hess, the Rev. Winfield J. Devonshire Jr., Judy L. Brady, the Rev. Timothy L. Craven, Maureen A. Starner, Sidney W. Witmer, the Rev. Steven E. Thomas, Helen Henninger, the Rev. Eric N. Anderson, and Heidi L. Eshenour as alternate voting members of the 2009 Churchwide Assembly.
SC 08.06.40.

ADOPTED: That the Synod Council, through the bishop and the secretary, certify the minutes of the 2007 Synod Assembly as the official protocol of said assembly, to be deposited in the archives.
EC 08.06.41.

ADOPTED: That the Synod Council recommend to the Synod Assembly that the proposed agenda be amended so that the Report of the Committee of Reference and Counsel be received on Friday afternoon and the Report of the Committee on Memorials be received on Saturday morning.
EC 08.06.42.

REPORTS OF THE COMMITTEES OF SYNOD COUNCIL

ASSEMBLY PLANNING COMMITTEE provided minutes of its May 6, 2008, meeting. Pamela B. Drenner noted that Dee Lockman should be listed under those in attendance at this meeting. Thomas Benner asked about the cost of the Scantron equipment and whether this would be a factor in setting the costs of future assemblies. Secretary McKee responded by saying that Messiah College recommended the Higher Information Group, which provides services to the United Methodist Conference. However, its costs were prohibitive. Joel Ruth has worked with Stacey Teitman and Linda Lubold to train them to scan the ballots using our equipment and a software program we purchased. Members of our own synod staff are now able to provide this service to our assemblies. The same program also can be used to process assembly evaluations. Pastor McKee reported that he was disappointed by the number of requests for child care (1) and assembly day camp (2).

After discussion with parents, both child care and the assembly day camp were cancelled. Pastor McKee expressed appreciation to Marianne Brock and the Camping Corporation for all the advance work that went into the assembly day camp. Bishop Hoover expressed his appreciation to this hard working committee for all the planning that has gone into this year's assembly.

AUDIT COMMITTEE provided minutes of its June 4, 2008, meeting. At this meeting the committee met with the two firms that submitted bids to conduct our 2007 audit: McKonly and Asbury LLP and Boles Metzger Brosius and Ritter PC, Certified Public Accountants.

Pastor David Ritterpusch moved the following on behalf of the committee:

ADOPTED: That the Synod Council engage the firm of Boles Metzger Brosius and Ritter SC08.06.43. PC to serve as this synod's independent auditor for a three-year period.

GIFTS DISCERNMENT COMMITTEE will meet on Monday, June 23, 2008, at 10:00 at Camp Kirchenwald. Pastor Sally Gausmann has shared an agenda for this meeting with committee members.

REPORTS OF THE LIAISONS

WOMEN OF THE ELCA's synod convention will be held June 27 and 28 at St. Paul (York Street), Hanover.

LUTHERAN MEN IN MISSION president, Fred Bohls, announced the creation of its new Web site, www.lsslmm.org. He hopes to have a link to every congregation that has a men's group and to publish stories about successful men's programming. The men are getting ready for this summer's national gathering in Omaha, August 1-3, 2008. Mr. Bohls reported on the "Building for the Future Campaign." The men hope to raise \$1.5 million by July. He is hopeful that this synod might give a \$1,000 pacesetter's gift to this campaign. The men are planning the 2009 synod gathering and are seeking suggestions for the program. Mr. Bohls said that he continues to make progress with congregational organizations.

LUTHERAN YOUTH ORGANIZATION's new officers will be installed during the Friday banquet at Synod Assembly.

REPORTS OF THE EXECUTIVE STAFF

RESOURCE NETWORK DIRECTOR, Pamela Drenner, distributed a brochure announcing four replacement events for the 2008 CTIM event that was cancelled due to inclement weather. Pastor Peter Rudowski will offer two workshops at St. Paul, Spring Grove, on September 20, 2008, from 9:00 a.m. to noon. "I've Never Heard That Before" Telling Scriptures as Story, featuring two workshops and a performance by Dennis Dewey will be held on Saturday, November 1, 2008, from 9:00 a.m. until 4:00 p.m. Mission Morning: Communication in the Church will be held Saturday, March 14, 2009, from 9:00 a.m. until noon, at Zion, York. Finally, Mission Morning: What Are Young People Looking for in a Community of Faith? will be held on Saturday, March 28, 2009, from 9:00 a.m. until noon.

REPORTS OF THE SYNODICAL MINISTRIES FOR CONGREGATIONAL LIFE

RESOURCE NETWORK provided a monthly report for April 2008.

CATECHUMENATE liaison, Pastor David Hefner, provided a Synod Council report from its May 7, 2008, meeting. The committee also provided minutes of its March 3, 2008, meeting.

MINISTRY FOR WHOLISTIC HEALTH COMMITTEE provided minutes of its March 10, 2008, meeting.

REPORTS OF THE COMMITTEES FOR MISSION

CHURCH IN SOCIETY COMMITTEE liaison, Pastor David Hefner, provided a Synod Council report from its May 13, 2008, meeting.

KONDE DIOCESE COMMITTEE liaison, Pastor Sally Gausmann, provided a Synod Council report dated June 3, 2008. She highlighted the upcoming visit June 10-30 of Ms. Cecilia Justo Nsombo, Administrator of the Itete Hospital, and Ms. Rozaria Mwandenga Mwakalukwa, HIV/AIDS worker. They are available to speak in congregations; Pastor Judy McKee is the contact person. She also spoke about the visit of Joshua Mwalukosy, who is working at Camp Kirchenwald this summer as part of the ELCA International Counselor Program. He also is available to speak in congregations Saturday afternoons or evenings and Sunday mornings. Arrangements may be made through Camp Kirchenwald or through Pastor Judy McKee. Pastor Imani Chibona continues to work on his master of sacred theology degree during the summer. He is available to preach at LSS congregations. Transportation to and from the seminary must be provided, and supply rates should be paid to the Konde fund. Arrangements should be made with Pastor John Wenzke. The Tour de Synod, which was held on May 31, raised \$2500 for Manow Lutheran Secondary School.

REPORTS OF COMMITTEES FOR THE SYNOD ASSEMBLY

COMMITTEE OF REFERENCE AND COUNSEL staff liaison, Pastor David Fisher, reported that this committee has considered two resolutions. The recommendation of the committee concerning Resolution #1 regarding racism and ethnicity from the Committee on Church in Society is to refer this resolution to the Committee on Church in Society. Pastor Hefner asked Pastor Fisher why the committee made this recommendation. Pastor Fisher indicated that the committee felt that what the resolution was requesting is part of Church in Society's responsibilities as specified in this synod's bylaws. The Committee of Reference and Counsel recommended that Resolution #2 concerning Executive Salary Packages for Diakon Lutheran Social Ministries be adopted. Secretary McKee and Vice President Price related to the members of Synod Council how Pastor Daun McKee explained the salary packages were set and what these salary packages included. Secretary McKee also shared a letter he received in response to this resolution from Ms. Susan T. Schellenberg, Chair of the Board of Directors, and Peter L. Kern, Chair of the Compensation Committee of Diakon Lutheran Social Ministries, stating that if this resolution is adopted, Diakon would comply with the requests made in the resolution.

There was no unfinished business to discuss at this time.

NEW BUSINESS

The Synod Council will meet for its reorganizational meeting at 1:00 p.m. on Saturday, June 14, 2008, in the Private Dining Room of Messiah College.

Synod Council members are expected to attend the Synod Council forum to support Vice President Price, who is coordinating this forum. During the plenary sessions, members of Synod Council are also requested to sit together at the tables reserved for Synod Council in the front of Hitchcock Arena. Council members who chair committees are asked to appear on stage with Vice President Price whenever the recommendations relating to their committees are presented to the assembly and to be prepared to speak to these recommendations.

Pastor Murray requested that Synod Council members attend and encourage others to attend the World Hunger Committee's "H2O Show," which will be held on the lawn outside the Eisenhower Campus Center on Friday, June 13, from 1:30 until 2:00 p.m. This will be water play with a purpose. During these activities information about the importance of safe, potable water will be given. Major efforts funded by world hunger contributions provide wells and water filtration systems for many underdeveloped parts of the world.

ADJOURNMENT

It was moved:

ADOPTED: That this Synod Council meeting be adjourned.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:20 a.m. with the praying of the Lord's Prayer.

Thomas E. McKee
synod secretary
6/7/08