

LOWER SUSQUEHANNA SYNOD, ELCA
SYNOD COUNCIL
Minutes
September 26, 2009

The Lower Susquehanna Synod Council met for a regular meeting on Saturday, September 26, 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. Mary Anne Kingsborough, AiM, provided the devotions, reading from John 21:15-19. Using as an example her family's collie that likes to herd her family to bed at night, she reminded us that we are to serve as sheep dogs of the Good Shepherd, offering ourselves to work for him in a steady and faithful way. For us to do this, we need to remain intimate with the Good Shepherd, modeling his love in our lives. Mary Anne led the members of Synod Council in prayer.

Pastor Sadie Pounder, associate pastor of the Lutheran Church of the Holy Trinity, Lancaster, presented the Mission Moment about the work of the Criminal Justice System Ministry Task Force. Nineteen persons responded to the invitation to join this task force; twelve attend regularly. Pastor Pounder developed for the council the theological basis for this ministry. She lamented the fact that LAMPa cannot deal with criminal justice issues until a social statement on criminal justice is adopted in 2013. The two biggest challenges for those being released from prisons are housing and jobs. Our congregations and members can be influential in helping to meet these needs.

ROLL CALL

Members present:	Bishop B. Penrose Hoover Thomas E. McKee	Ronald R. Price
	Thomas C. Benner Lucinda L. Bringman Holly Freas-Webster Elizabeth D. George Mary Anne Kingsborough	Timothy W. Sadler Patricia A. Snyder April E. Trout Alexis Witt Kim Y. Wittel
Liaisons present:	Fred W. Bohls Marisa Hunt	Kathy Hefner Kirsten Youse
Staff present:	Melvin E. Dick Pamela B. Drenner Clifton D. Eshbach	David R. Fisher Joanne Wilhelm
Guest Present:	Sadie Pounder	
Members excused:	Bruce E. Seagrist -	
	Judy K. Collins Sara A Gausmann David L. Hefner	Paula L. Murray Marcus W. Thomsen
Staff excused:	Barbara Myers	Charlie Roberts

MINUTES

The minutes of the June 6, 2009, and the June 13, 2009, meetings 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 to the 2009-2010 Assembly Planning Committee the Rev. David Hefner, chair, SC; Ronald R. Price, vice president; the Rev. Thomas E. McKee, secretary; the Rev. Patricia A. Snyder, SC; the Rev. Elizabeth D. George, SC; the Rev. Gwenn L. Trout; Janet Fitch; Joyce Frigm; Sharon Beard; Stephen Strauss; the Rev. Clifton D. Eshbach, assistant to the bishop; Charles R. Roberts III, staff; the Rev. Mark S. Kopp; the Rev. Pamela J. Carnes; and Pamela B. Drenner, staff, assembly manager;**

That the Synod Council appoint to the 2009-2010 Constitution Committee Holly Freas-Webster, chair, SC; Kim Wittel, SC; Jered Hock, parliamentarian; the Rev. Jeffrey C. Compton; the Rev. Thomas E. McKee, secretary; and Joanne Wilhelm, staff;

That the Synod Council appoint to the 2009-2010 Finance and Budget Committee Jon Adams, chair, SC; Thomas C. Benner, SC; the Rev. Patricia A. Snyder, SC; the Rev. James S. Dunlop; Linda M. Kahler; Ronald K. Good; Joseph Stepansky; Kenneth G. Mertz, consultant; and Bruce E. Seagrism, treasurer;

That the Synod Council appoint to the 2009-2010 Gifts Discernment Committee the Rev. Sara S. Gausmann, chair, SC; the Rev. B. Penrose Hoover, bishop; The Rev. Thomas E. McKee, secretary; Ronald R. Price, vice president; April E. Trout, SC; Judy K. Collins, SC; the Rev. Tara Magoon; and Michael Youse;

That the Synod Council appoint to the 2009-2010 Mission Committee Lucinda L. Bringman, chair, SC; Marcus Thomsen, SC; Holly Freas-Webster, SC; the Rev. Kathleen J. Baker; the Rev. William C. Snyder; the Rev. David R. Fisher, staff; and the Rev. B. Penrose Hoover, bishop; and

That the Synod Council appoint to the 2009-2010 Personnel Committee Mary Anne Kingsborough, chair, SC; the Rev. Thomas E. McKee, secretary; Ronald R. Price, vice president; the Rev. Timothy W. Sadler, SC; Gary Laabs; Dawn O. Frees; the Rev. Daniel M. Yeiser; the Rev. Elizabeth D. George, SC; Judith Garber; Eric Crump; and Joanne Wilhelm, staff.

ADOPTED: **That the Synod Council appoint Bruce E. Seagrism, treasurer, to the Bishop's SC09.09.41. Congregational Mission Fund Committee for a first three-year term, expiring in 2012;**

That the Synod Council appoint the Rev. Jacquelyn H. Roderick and reappoint

the Rev. David J. Schreffler to the Committee for Ministry with People with Special Needs, for a three-year term, expiring in 2012;

That the Synod Council reappoint Dottie Almoney and Janice M. Davis, AiM, to the Christian Education Committee for a second three-year term, expiring in 2012;

That the Synod Council reappoint the Rev. Ann E. Dentry and the Rev. David A. Rike to the Catechumenate Committee for a second three-year term, expiring in 2012;

That the Synod Council appoint the Rev. Lisa Hair to the Committee on Higher Education for a first three-year term, expiring in 2012;

That the Synod Council appoint the Rev. Rodney W. Lilley to the Evangelism and Outreach Committee for a first three-year term, expiring in 2012;

That the Synod Council reappoint the Rev. Carol J. Bowman to the Candidacy Committee for a second five-year term expiring in 2014; and

That the Synod Council appoint Holly Freas-Webster, SC, to the Ministry for Wholistic Health Committee for a first three-year term, expiring in 2012.

ADOPTED: SC09.09.42. That the Synod Council elect the Rev. Stanley W. Combs and the Rev. Joanne P. Stenman and reelect Judith Garber and Joseph Wagman to the board of directors of Lutheran Social Services of South Central Pennsylvania for a three-year term, beginning January 1, 2010, through December 31, 2012.

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

ADOPTED: SC09.09.43. That the Synod Council retain “on-leave-from-call” status the Rev. Robert P. Knight until October 1, 2010.

That the Synod Council grant “on-leave-from-call” status to the Rev. Carla Hope Knobler for a period of one year from July 27, 2009, until July 27, 2010; to the Rev. Chad Rimmer (on leave from call - graduate study) for a period of one year from August 8, 2009, until August 8, 2010; to the Rev. Amy Schifrin for a period of one year from September 13, 2009, until September 13, 2010; and to the Rev. Timothy J. Kielley (on leave from call, not available for call) for a period of one year from October 1, 2009, until October 1, 2010.

Bishop Hoover moved the following motion about retirements:

ADOPTED: SC09.09.44. That the Synod Council approve the retirement of the Rev. D. Evan Houck, effective October 1, 2009; and of the Rev. J. Stewart Hardy, effective February 1, 2010.

Bishop Hoover reported that he felt good about the Bishop’s Convocation. It provided a wonderful opportunity for the voting members of the Churchwide Assembly to share their experiences with others. The major complaint that the bishop heard was that there was not adequate time for those attending to ask

questions and receive answers. The bishop reported that he is planning another gathering, a half-day event, sometime after the Conference of Bishops and the meeting of Church Council.

The bishop reported on his visit to Southern Seminary and the upcoming meeting of the Conference of Bishops.

TREASURER'S REPORT

In the absence of our treasurer, Linda Lubold, administrative assistant in the treasurer's office, provided a Merrill Lynch Report for June, July, and August 2009; Mission Support Statements for the eight months ended August 31, 2009, and August 31, 2008; a budget summary from February 1, 2009, through July 31, 2009; and an unaudited statement of activities for January through July 31, 2009. Receipts from congregation continue to lag behind last year at a rate of -9.2%.

Pastor David Fisher stated that the Stewardship Committee is concerned about this decrease in mission support. He explained that this is part of his new portfolio, to work with congregations to promote mission support giving. Just as in a congregation, the treasurer's main responsibilities lie in the payment of bills while the financial secretary is responsible for incoming offerings; so now within this synod, the treasurer is responsible for the payment of bills and the assistant to the bishop for evangelical mission is responsible for interpreting and encouraging mission support.

VICE PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Vice President Price announced that we are close to reaching a settlement with Traveler's Insurance Company on a claim filed on our losses by the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. We will probably receive a payment in the area of \$691,000. After we have reached a settlement, this synod will offer a follow-up report, telling how much was embezzled, how much were our costs in relationship to this offense, how much we have received in restitution, and how much we have received in insurance claims.

The vice president distributed lists of Synod Council liaisons to conferences and committees for 2009-2010. He urged the members to fulfill faithfully their obligation as conference and committee liaisons.

SECRETARY'S REPORT

Pastor McKee announced that the 2009 Minute Book is about ready to go to the printer. He urged all members of the Synod Council to review the preliminary minutes and to report any needed corrections to him as soon as possible so an accurate record of the assembly is printed in the Minute Book. He also reported that some of the synodical committees do not have the constitutionally mandated numbers of members. He urged the members of Synod Council to suggest qualified persons for committee membership. The Called to Service form is on the Web site; it may be downloaded, completed, and returned. He announced that he has received from the secretary of the ELCA a list of amendments to the model constitution for synods; the Constitution Committee must meet to consider these amendments. Some of these amendments will affect the Nominating Committee and its slate of nominees. He soon will be sending copies of the amendments to the model constitution for congregations to all synodical congregations.

Pastor McKee gave to all newly-elected members of Synod Council the personnel policies of this synod. The whistle-blower policy adopted by the Synod Council is included in the personnel policies. He distributed to all members of the Synod Council a copy of this whistle-blower policy, requested that they all read the policy, and return it to him after signing the acknowledgement of receipt.

REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Vice President Price reviewed the September 3, 2009, minutes of the Executive Committee. He informed the Synod Council that the Executive Committee acted to include the name of the treasurer, Bruce E. Seagrist, as a signatory along with the names of the other three officers on all accounts of the Lower Susquehanna Synod, Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

REPORTS OF THE COMMITTEES OF SYNOD COUNCIL

GIFTS DISCERNMENT COMMITTEE presented minutes of its June 23, 2009, meeting.

MISSION COMMITTEE provided minutes of its September 2, 2009, meeting.

REPORTS OF THE LIAISONS

LUTHERAN MEN IN MISSION liaison, Fred Bohls, reported that LMM is working with the Camping Corporation to plan a fathers' and sons' retreat. Twenty men from around the ELCA (none from Region 8) will attend a LLM retreat with the theme, One Year to Live, October 16-18, 2009, at Camp Lutheridge in North Carolina; Fred will be one of the leaders. There will be a training session in Chicago in December for men's ministry specialists; Bill Schirmer will attend from this synod.

LUTHERAN YOUTH ORGANIZATION liaisons, Marissa Hunt and Kirsten Youse, shared the concerns of the youth about the unity of the ELCA following the Churchwide Assembly. They presented the statement adopted by the youth to address Synod Council with their concerns for unity. The youth hope that this church will turn again to the mission of the Church, to spread the faith and to share the love of Christ. This summer was a great summer for the LYO with the ELCA Youth Gathering, the ELCA LYO Assembly, Leadership Training Camp, and the first meeting of the new synodical LYO board. Recipients of the proceeds of Change for Change will be Peter's Closet, a ministry of Zion Lutheran Church, Akron; the Lutheran Camping Corporation; Project Play that sponsors collections of new and used sports equipment, and Mission Support to the Lower Susquehanna Synod and the ELCA.

WOMEN OF THE EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN AMERICA liaison, Kathy Hefner, stated that the Women of the ELCA is struggling with the loss of many congregational units. The goal for this year is for the leadership to get into as many congregations as possible and to talk with the women about participating in the Women of the ELCA.

REPORTS OF THE EXECUTIVE STAFF

Pamela B. Drenner announced that the Resource Center has been busier than usual. She believes that this is due to the economy and the closing of the Augsburg Fortress Store. She reported that the new adult Bible study, part of the Book of Faith Initiative, has been well received. The Ministry for Wholistic Health Committee will hold a seminar on January 16, 2010, dealing with the stresses of living in these trying financial times. CTIM will center around the Book of Faith Initiative. Professors from Trinity, Chicago, Philadelphia, and Gettysburg Seminaries will lead groups at CTIM. The Resource Center's e-newsletter will be unveiled soon. The Bishop's Bible Study entitled Where Cross the Crowded Ways of Live, a study on Paul's letters to the Corinthians, continues monthly through May, with the exception of December.

Pastor Melvin E. Dick reported that Candidate Jeffrey Goodman, approved for ordination, has received a call to Salem Lutheran Church, Ephrata. He will be ordained on Friday, October 16, 2009, at Zion Lutheran Church, Marietta. About 150 approved candidates are involved in the First Call Assignment Process; we hope to have two candidates for ordination and one diaconal minister candidate assigned to

this synod. Pastor Dick reported that the tumor on his knee is benign and that he will be able to continue performing the responsibilities of his office.

Pastor David R. Fisher announced that he continues to resource the synod Stewardship Committee. He introduced "Make It Simple," a Web-based body of resources relating to stewardship. October 31, 2009, is the deadline to apply for a congregational mission grant. Each congregation applying for a grant must have an articulated or written documented plan for mission. He invited the members of Synod Council to attend the Bishop's Service of Evening Prayer at 5:00 P.M. on Sunday, October 27, 2009, for Word of Life Deaf Lutheran Church, meeting at St. Peter Lutheran Church, Lancaster. Pastor Fisher also told the members of Synod Council about Memorial Lutheran Church, Harrisburg, gifting the Little Cathedral to St. Mark's Coptic Orthodox Church. Memorial congregation will continue to worship in the Christian Education Building. It continues to offer a Friday church school and worship to the students attending classes in the building and their parents.

Pastor Clifton D. Eshbach distributed to Synod Council members the registration for the Racial Justice Training, which will be held on October 19-20 at Trinity Lutheran Church, Camp Hill. Registrations should be returned to Pastor Eshbach. Pastor Kimbuka Mwasanguti, a pastor from the Konde Diocese, is studying pastoral care and counseling at Gettysburg Seminary. He is doing great although he has faced several cultural challenges to his education. The Konde Diocese Committee is planning a trip to the Konde Diocese in the summer of 2010. Part of the itinerary will be an opportunity to work at Manow completing the construction of a classroom. Karen Poe and Fred Hait, members of St. Paul Lutheran Church, Carlisle, are volunteering through November at Mbeya Teachers' College. A delegation composed of Judith Garber, former synod vice president, Pastor Judith McKee, chair of the Konde Committee; Pastor Thomas McKee, and Pastor Clifton Eshbach will attend the assembly of the Konde Diocese November 11-15; at this assembly there will be a bishop's election. Rachel Lauber, Judith Garber's niece, will accompany them; she will volunteer as a registered nurse at Itete Hospital through December.

REPORTS OF THE COMMITTEES FOR THE MINISTERIUM

Committee of Deans provided minutes of its May 11, 2009, meeting.

Compensation and Benefits Committee liaison, Lucinda Bringman, provided a Synod Council report from its August 12, 2009, meeting. She said that the committee has heard two concerns about the minimum guidelines: that the guidelines place a burden on a congregation and that it hinders a rostered leader's mobility. On the other hand, if there were no guidelines in place, there is a fear that it would lead to inadequate salaries for rostered leaders. She discussed with Synod Council whether or not it would be beneficial for the committee to conduct the survey as requested. There are so many other questions that need to be answered to provide helpful information. The committee was asking Synod Council for direction on how to proceed. The consensus of the Synod Council seemed to be for the committee to use the bishop's confidential reports to get as much information as possible.

REPORTS OF THE SYNODICAL MINISTRIES FOR CONGREGATIONAL LIFE

REPORTS OF THE COMMITTEES FOR MISSION

AUDIT COMMITTEE provided copies of the 2007 Audit for the members of the Synod Council. The members of Synod Council requested that they receive only a hard copy of the opinion letter from the auditor.

BISHOP'S CONGREGATIONAL MISSION FUND COMMITTEE offered minutes of its June 22, 2009, meeting. The committee awarded a \$25,000 grant to Big Spring Lutheran Church. Pastor Dick corrected the minutes to read that Big Spring Lutheran Church was created through a consolidation and not through a merger.

STEWARDSHIP COMMITTEE was asked if Thrivent's "Simply Giving" was ending at the end of the year. Fred Bohls reported that their Giving Plus was ending at the end of the year when all of the allotted money had been disbursed.

REPORTS OF AGENCIES AND INSTITUTIONS RELATING TO THE LOWER SUSQUEHANNA SYNOD

THE UNITED CAMPUS MINISTRY AT MILLERSVILLE UNIVERSITY: Holly Freas Webster reported that the United Campus Ministry was grateful for our continued financial support.

THE LUTHERAN CAMPING CORPORATION: Holly Freas Webster said that the capital funds campaign is doing well in spite of difficult economic times.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

NEW BUSINESS

Bishop Hoover announced Lutheran Core was meeting at Fishers, Indiana, and asked the members of Synod Council to pray for our brothers and sisters who are meeting out of their deep concern for the future of this church.

There was no further new business.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 11:15 a.m. with the praying of the Lord's Prayer.

Thomas E. McKee
synod secretary