

**LOWER SUSQUEHANNA SYNOD, ELCA
SYNOD COUNCIL**

**Minutes
May 19, 2016**

The Lower Susquehanna Synod Council met for its regular meeting on Thursday, May 19, 2016, at 6:30 p.m. in the Board Room of the United Church Center, 900 S. Arlington Avenue, Harrisburg, PA. Vice President Lucinda L. Bringman called the meeting to order.

ROLL CALL

Members present: Bishop James S. Dunlop Lucinda L. Bringman
Thomas E. McKee Bruce E. Seagrist

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| Zoe L. Clark | Christine C. Lowe |
| J. Richard Eckert | Susan L. McDonald |
| Joel S. B. Folkemer | Jillian E. Riddle |
| Joyce E. Frigm | Beth A. Schlegel |
| Virgil L. Gibson | Kurt S. Strause |
| Brenda D. Hartzell | Stephanie M. Strauss |
| Jered L. Hock | M. Jane Wigand |
| Colleen Hoffman | |

Staff present: Robert C. Blezard Charlie R. Roberts III
Sharron R. Blezard Marsha L. Roscoe
Debbie M. Clark

Liaison present: Stephen R. Herr

Consultant present: Donna Nicholson

Member excused: Dana J. Blouch-Hanson William K. Kirkpatrick

Staff excused: Richard E. T. Jorgensen, Jr. Linda L. Lubold

Liaison excused: Fred C. Bohls

Brenda Hartzell led the members of the Synod Council in devotions based on the assembly theme, “Hungry for Justice and Mercy.” She read the definition of justice from the book, Crazy Talk: A Not So Stuffy Dictionary of Theological Terms, Rolf A. Jacobson, editor. One thought offered about justice is that “justice is a much bigger concept than fairness.” She led the members of the council in prayer.

MINISTRY HIGHLIGHT: COMMUNITIES OF HOPE

Jennifer Crist, approved candidate for ordination and seminary intern at Communities of Hope, a synodically authorized worshiping community, presented the ministry highlight on Communities of Hope. Jennifer gathers those unfamiliar with the church along with those who have been hurt by the church or who are done with the church into a safe setting where they can explore faith together. She invited first Tree4Hope volunteers who had no church connection. Many of these persons had stories of pain associated with the church. Therefore Jennifer offers first an apology on behalf of the church. They gather for worship and fellowship with God, with one another, and with the community. Each gathering may have a scripture, art, cooking, or service component. Those who gather show by their interaction that they are people of faith. They meet in coffee shops, parking lots, and public spaces on any day. A

typical service may include a welcome, apology, confession, Bible study, short talk, discussion, dinner, prayer stations, the Eucharist, and then a service project of some sort. They encourage advocacy, including video advocacy. They have planned mission trips to Guatemala and Haiti. Jennifer helps participants develop leadership skills, helping to identify gifts and providing encouragement. On September 11, they plan to join with LAMPa in planting trees in different neighborhoods in Harrisburg. On Father's Day, they plan to do a bicycle repair. The members of the council asked questions of Jennifer. They expressed their appreciation to Jennifer with applause.

CONSENT AGENDA

Virgil Gibson moved:

ADOPTED: That the Consent Agenda be adopted:
SC16.05.19.

That the Synod Council approve the minutes of the April 9, 2016, meeting.

That the Synod Council reappoint to the Compensation and Benefits Committee Robert Getz, Jr., and the Rev. Joseph Veres to a second three-year term, expiring in 2019, and appoint the Rev. Thomas Bruner and June Wolf to a first three-year term, expiring in 2019.

That the Synod Council reappoint to the Candidacy Committee the Rev. Mark Kopp, for a second five-year term, expiring in 2021.

That the Synod Council appoint to the Synod Administration Review Team for St. James Lutheran Church, Brogue, and St. Paul Lutheran Church (Lebanon), Felton, the Rev. Edward Robbins.

That the Synod Council grant the Rev. Martine Joseph "on-leave-from-call-family leave" status from June 19, 2016, until June 19, 2017.

That the Synod Council continue on "on-leave-from-call" status Sister Joy Hovis for one additional year until July 23, 2017; Emily Myallis, diaconal minister, for one additional year until July 24, 2017; and the Rev. Sandra Mackie for one additional year until August 1, 2017.

That the Synod Council continue on "on-leave-from-call-graduate study" status the Rev. Jacquelyn H. Roderick for one additional year until June 29, 2017.

That the Synod Council designate the assembly offering for Hunger J.A.M.

That the Synod Council recommend the amended proposed agenda for the 2016 Synod Assembly to the assembly for adoption.

OTHER ACTIONS

Bishop Dunlop moved the following Synod Council calls:

ADOPTED: That the Synod Council call Jennifer Crist, approved candidate for ordination to serve as pastor-developer of Communities of Hope, Harrisburg, a synodically authorized worshiping community, effective June 5, 2016.
SC16.05.20.

ADOPTED: That the Synod Council extend a call to Pamela Illick, approved candidate for ordination, to serve as pastor of Trinity Lutheran Church, Rouzerville, under the terms of synod administration for redevelopment, for a three-year term, effective June 5, 2016, through June 4, 2019
SC16.05.21.

Pastor Beth Schlegel moved the following recommendation (**EC16.05.08.**) on behalf of the Executive Committee:

That the Synod Council adopt the following welcome statement for the Lower Susquehanna Synod:

“In the Lower Susquehanna Synod of the ELCA we feed the hungry as we have been fed by Christ. We welcome all who are seeking God’s love and grace. We welcome all because God welcomes all, regardless of race or culture, sexual orientation, gender identity, or relationship status. We welcome all without regard to addictions, physical or mental health, imprisonment, socio-economic circumstances or anything that too often divides us. Our unity is in Jesus Christ.”

Colleen Hoffman asked, “If we welcome all, do we need to enumerate all those we welcome. What if we have missed someone who feels that he or she should be specifically welcomed?” Pastor Joel Folkemer said that it is important that we specifically welcome those who have felt unwelcome and those who are unsure that they will be welcome. Someone asked, “Is it true in practice in all of our congregations that we welcome all, regardless of race or culture, sexual orientation, gender identity or relationship status?” Virgil Gibson asked, “How will we use this welcome statement? Will it only be used on our website?” Bishop Dunlop indicated that it will be used in all our communications and in all general information about our synod. Pastor Herr asked, “What about including that we welcome sinners?” Someone responded that it may lead some people to misinterpret our meaning to be “that we aren’t (sinners), but they are.”

The motion was before the Synod Council.

ADOPTED: That the Synod Council adopt the following welcome statement for the Lower Susquehanna Synod:
SC16.05.22.

“In the Lower Susquehanna Synod of the ELCA we feed the hungry as we have been fed by Christ. We welcome all who are seeking God’s love and grace. We welcome all because God welcomes all, regardless of race or culture, sexual orientation, gender identity, or relationship status. We welcome all without regard to addictions, physical or mental health, imprisonment, socio-economic circumstances or anything that too often divides us. Our unity is in Jesus Christ.”

Pastor Beth Schlegel moved the following recommendation (**EC16.05.09.**) on behalf of the Executive Committee:

That the Synod Council recommend the Resolution in Support of the Unification of Pennsylvania Seminaries to the 2016 Synod Assembly for adoption.

Bishop Dunlop informed the members of Synod Council that this resolution had its origin with representatives of both seminaries and was distributed to all the synods in Regions 7 and 8 with the hope that the resolutions would be presented at each synod's assembly and adopted to express support for the unification of LTSG and LTSP in a formal way.

Bruce Seagrist asked if the leadership of the seminaries is adequate to do what is necessary. The bishop assured the council that it was indeed. The bishop is part of that leadership.

Pastor Beth Schlegel asked about the free tuition for all full-time students. She understood that it to be "all full time residential students." The bishop said that this is a bit open-ended. If there are not enough residential students, others may receive full scholarships. The council concurred that "residential" be added as a friendly amendment so that the resolution agreed with what was announced previously.

It was moved by Pastor Schlegel and seconded by Jered Hock:

ADOPTED: That the wording of this clause be contingent upon official documentation.

Marsha Roscoe provided the following wording from the seminary website: "all new full-time ELCA rostered leader candidates studying in residence."

Pastor Kurt Strause moved:

ADOPTED: That the following amendments be made to the resolution:

The title will be amended to read: Resolution in Support of the Unification of Lutheran Seminaries in Pennsylvania;

In line 33 change the word "redouble" to "increase;"

In line 35 replace "that" with "for" after the word "order" and add "to" after the word "seminary;"

In line 39 change "pledges" to "pledge" and "encourages" to "encourage."

Bishop Dunlop spoke to the resolution. Gettysburg and Philadelphia Seminaries recognize that it is best for each of them and for the church as a whole to become one seminary. They have responded positively to the call of the church to do something new in theological education. All seminaries have been invited to be part of this process, but only Philadelphia and Gettysburg Seminaries have agreed to be part of this process. Expressions of support are helpful not only for those who are working on this unification plan and the present seminary communities, but also for the Pennsylvania Department of Education, which must give approval to the plans.

Pastor Strause asked, "Why do we not address this resolution to the Pennsylvania Department of Education?" The bishop responded that it is the opinion of the leadership that it is best politically for us to provide these expressions of support indirectly.

Joyce Frigm raised concerns about the third “whereas clause.” The members of the council suggested other possible wordings that could be used to amend that “whereas clause.”

It was moved by Jered Hock:

ADOPTED: That the third “whereas clause” be deleted.

Bishop Dunlop requested that his “no” vote be recorded.

Pastor Joel Folkemer stated that the story is not over. We are being called to speak about that which we do not know, to support a process about which we have not been given much information, and to affirm decisions which seems to be constantly changing. How can we support an unknown process and affirm unknown and frequently changing decisions?

The motion to recommend the resolution was before the Synod Council.

ADOPTED: That the Synod Council recommend the Resolution in Support of the Unification of SC16.05.23. Lutheran Seminaries in Pennsylvania to the 2016 Synod Assembly for adoption.

Bruce Seagrist and Pastor Joel Folkemer requested that their “no” votes be recorded. Pastor Thomas McKee, Jered Hock, and Colleen Hoffman asked that it be recorded that they abstained from voting on this motion.

RESOLUTION IN SUPPORT OF THE UNIFICATION OF LUTHERAN SEMINARIES IN PENNSYLVANIA

WHEREAS, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America’s Theological Education Advisory Council (TEAC) has called upon the seminaries to discern pathways toward robust and sustainable theological education to serve the leadership needs of the church; and

WHEREAS, the ELCA Conference of Bishops in October 2015 described the current era as a “*kairos* moment” in which seminaries can engage the whole church in prayerful and creative thinking about the best ways of preparing and equipping future and current leaders; and

WHEREAS, there is a current and growing shortage of rostered leaders, forecast to worsen even more in the coming years as ordained and lay ministers’ retirements will be at record numbers; and

WHEREAS, to meet this crisis in leadership seminaries must discover ways to offer quality education and formation in more affordable and accessible ways; and

WHEREAS, the Lutheran Theological Seminary at Philadelphia (LTSP) and the Lutheran Theological Seminary at Gettysburg (LTSG) have expanded collaboration in recent years, to the point where both boards have now declared their intent to form a united school of theological education and leadership formation; and

WHEREAS, the two schools have signaled their commitment to a “students first” stance in offering full tuition scholarships to all new full-time ELCA rostered leader candidates studying in residence; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Lower Susquehanna Synod express affirmation and encouragement to LTSG and LTSP as they continue in the process of unification; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Lower Susquehanna Synod encourage all our congregations and other ministries to increase efforts to identify, nurture, and support those who sense a call to public rostered ministries; and be it further

RESOLVED, that in order for the unified Lutheran seminary to be able to continue in the tradition of LTSP and LTSG, offering the highest caliber of theological education and leadership formation, the Lower Susquehanna Synod pledges its strongest possible continuing financial support and encourages all congregations and individuals to likewise continue and expand their generous support.

Jered Hock, chair of the Constitution Committee, moved the following on behalf of the Constitution Committee:

ADOPTED: **That the Synod Council amend the title of Chapter 11 to read**
SC16.05.24. “COMMITTEES, COMMISSIONS AND OTHER ORGANIZATIONAL UNITS;
and

That the Synod Council amend the text of Continuing Resolution S11.01.r.B.13.

~~S11.01.r.B.13.~~

S11.01.r.C.16. *Consonant with the provisions of ~~S11.01.14~~ S11.01.15 these ministries may include:*

- 1) ABX (Alpha Beta Christos), which shall be a ministry of the bishop’s office of this synod in collaboration with the Region 8 Office of the ELCA to gather newly rostered leaders during the initial three years of their first call for the purpose of support, collegiality, and disciplined reflection on ministry in accord with ELCA First Call Theological Education requirements. The bishop shall designate an assistant to the bishop to provide this ministry.*
- 2) The Learning Ministries Team shall be composed of no more than 10 persons who are experienced Christian educators who currently serve or who have served in congregational, institutional or middle judicatory settings of the ELCA or that of an ecumenical partner. The team shall be responsible for providing continuing education and resourcing of congregational leaders in keeping with standard and emerging faith-formative practices. This shall include but not be limited to workshops and events in addition to electronic resources and social networking. The Learning Ministries Team shall work cooperatively with established ELCA partners such as the ELCA Youth Ministry Network and the Lutheran Theological Seminary at Gettysburg’s Youth Ministry Certification School.*

- ~~3) Congregations Together in Mission (CTIM), the Steering Committee of which shall be composed of no more than 9 persons, appointed for two-year terms. No member shall serve more than 2 consecutive terms. This committee shall be responsible for developing a menu of workshops and workshop leaders, planning worship and overseeing on-site logistics for Congregations Together in Mission, a biennial synodwide leadership event, whose purpose is to inspire all partners in leadership and to equip them for better service in their congregations.~~
- ~~4) Leadership Program for Musicians, the Advisory Board of which shall be composed of no more than 6 persons. This board shall recruit faculty, oversee its budget, and plan schedules, courses, and continuing education events for the Leadership Program for Musicians, a two-year program of the ELCA and The Episcopal Church, leading to the Presiding Bishop's Certificate in Church Music. Participants shall worship together, receive instruction, enjoy social time, build collegial relationships, and return to congregations with increased vocational awareness and musical skill, heightened commitment to music ministry, and a deepened sense of self-worth as lay ministers. This program shall be funded by tuition fees and subsidized by grants.~~
- ~~5) Ministry for Wholistic Health, the committee for which shall be composed of 4 registered or licensed practical nurses, 4 laypersons from helping professions, 1 seminary representative, and, if not included in the foregoing categories, 2 ordained ministers. Each social ministry organization of this synod shall provide a liaison to serve as a consultant. This committee shall support congregational health ministries through workshops, events, training, and consultations on health education, health counseling, grief, stress management, lifestyle change, and eldercare.~~
- 63) The Office for Children, Youth, and Family Ministry (CYFM) shall have a director who shall work cooperatively with this synod's team of youth leaders to help train and equip young leaders for service in Christ's name. In addition, the Office for CYFM will assist in providing programming and event management for synod-wide events that foster faith formation for children, youth, young adults, their families, and the youth workers of this synod. The work of this office shall be considered a ministry of service to the congregational leaders of this synod who provide faith formation to the young people and families they serve. This ministry shall include but not be limited to consultations, electronic resourcing and social networking, and event planning and management. The Office for CYFM shall also partner and network with other ELCA ministries that support congregational leaders as they strive to raise faithful young people for a life of service and discipleship in Jesus' name.
- 74) The Congregational Leadership Resource Team (CLRT), which shall be composed of 8 to 12 persons, both ordained and lay. A chairperson/convenor shall be appointed by the bishop. This team shall work with congregations and leaders of the Lower Susquehanna Synod to achieve positive responses to change, anxiety, and conflict. Members of this team shall possess skills and willingness to assist congregations in healthy communication and leadership patterns, as well as addressing conflict management, mediation, and resolution.

Jered Hock, chair of the Constitution Committee moved the following on behalf of the committee:

ADOPTED: That the Synod Council recommend the proposed amendments to the texts of SC16.05.25. S11.01.01. and S11.01.15. to the 2016 Synod Assembly for adoption.

S11.01.01. General Provisions

a. The work of the committees and other organizational units shall be in areas beyond the scope and/or competence of congregations.

b. Operational committees and ~~commissions~~ other organizational units shall define their offices and determine procedures for filling such offices.

c. Each committee or other organizational unit shall be responsible to this synod for the specific functions assigned to it and for performing these functions in accordance with the policies, plans, and budgets approved by this synod. Each committee or other organizational unit shall report at each annual assembly of this synod on the actions it has taken, the results achieved, and its proposed plans for the future, and shall submit to the assembly recommendations pertaining to its assigned functions. Between assemblies each committee shall operate under the general supervision of the bishop and shall report regularly to the Synod Council as the council may direct.

d. With the exception of the Consultation Committee and the Committee on Discipline, ~~committee~~ members of committees or other organizational units shall be appointed by the Synod Council upon the recommendation of the bishop of this synod.

e. All appointments to committees and ~~ministries~~ other organizational units shall be for three-year terms arranged so that one-third of the terms expire each year unless otherwise herein specified. Appointments shall be made by May 1, to become effective following the assembly of this synod. No member shall serve more than two consecutive terms unless otherwise herein specified.

f. Each committee or other organizational unit shall relate to the appropriate churchwide agency(ies).

g. Each committee or other organizational unit shall, as it deems appropriate for its work and the work of this synod,

1) Initiate action through recommendation to the Synod Council or to the Synod Assembly;

2) Structure itself;

3) Establish rules of procedure not in conflict with this constitution and bylaws.

S11.01.15. This synod shall from time to time establish ~~task forces, commissions, and~~ additional committees and other organizational units to carry out ministries relating to congregational life. Appointments shall be made by the bishop pursuant to bylaw S11.01.01 and other provisions of the constitution, bylaws, and continuing resolutions of this synod.

REPORT OF THE BISHOP

Bishop Dunlop provided a written report to Synod Council.

REPORT OF THE TREASURER

Treasurer Seagrist provided a one-page supplemental report. Our operating fund obligations are being paid in a timely manner. The audit has been completed, and the Audit Committee will soon meet with the independent auditors to receive their opinion. Regular mission support through April 30, 2016 decreased by \$58,977 or 7.9%; and ELCA World Hunger decreased by \$2,466 or 2.9%. Expenses have exceeded revenue by \$33,640. Our synod has received \$38,000 to date toward our Hunger J.A.M. obligations of \$100,000. The operating fund as of January 31, 2016 was \$212,427. As of March 31, 2016, it stands at \$105,252. A major part of this decrease (\$73,535) was due to the restatement for 2014-2015 of the campaign expenses for the Always Being Made New Campaign.

REPORT OF THE VICE PRESIDENT

Synod Vice President Lucinda L. Bringman submitted a written report. She recognized and thanked the members of Synod Council whose terms end with the 2016 Synod Assembly: the Rev. Dana J. Blouch-Hanson, Brenda D. Hartzell, Colleen Hoffman, William H. Kirkpatrick, the Rev. Kurt S. Strause, and Stephanie M. Strauss. The other members of the Synod Council expressed their appreciation to these members with their applause.

The vice president thanked Colleen Hoffman for tending the door and Brenda Hartzell, Susan McDonald, Debbie Clark, Pastor Rob Blezard, and Pastor Sharron Blezard for providing refreshments.

REPORT OF THE SYNOD SECRETARY

Secretary McKee referred to his written report.

REPORT OF THE ALWAYS BEING MADE KNEW CAMPAIGN

Donna Nicholson, our fundraising consultant for the Always Being Made New Twenty-fifth Anniversary Campaign, provided a report of her activities and a report of the campaign to date. The Always Being Made New Campaign was adopted at the 2013 Churchwide Assembly and at our 2014 Synod Assembly. The campaign for our synod is truly resource development. We started with nothing, including no data base of donors. It is a process of building relationships and trust. Donna informed the council that she has visited 140 pastors and congregations, some several times. She and Denise have been building a data base. They have secured pew envelopes to use at assembly and in our congregations. Slowly the attitude that our synod is always wanting money is changing and people are realizing that we are asking for their contributions to sustain and increase important ministries. The campaign is on target. Such a campaign calls for patience; we plant seeds, and wait, and wait, and wait. The campaign has received good support from the leadership of our synod, but we need to increase our support as we move forward. Donna stated that she has begun her planning for next year; she will be developing a volunteer corps. She will be asking members of Synod Council to volunteer to be visitors, especially to congregations who have already made commitments, to see how they are doing with the campaign. Donna asserted that when we give our members an opportunity to be generous, they will be generous. We need to continue to invite our members to give to the campaign to the ministries they desire to support.

Pastor McKee expressed his opinion that it is unfair to Donna to think that she can visit all 235 congregations in our synod to introduce them to the campaign and to follow up on their progress. He believes that we as the leaders of this synod need to support her and the campaign by agreeing to visit the pastors and congregations that Donna requests us to visit.

DISCUSSION OF MOVING THE SYNOD OFFICE

Bishop Dunlop requested that there be time on the agenda to discuss the moving of the synod office. He desired to hear the opinions of the members of the Synod Council about the concept of moving, not the specifics of the move. He began with some background information. It has been his desire that our synod

office be located not in an office complex but in one of our congregation's buildings. To be located in a congregational setting is a good visual reminder that we are the church. We as a synod have been talking a lot about cooperation; one of our goals is to encourage cooperation. What a wonderful image and example it would be to cooperate in a very intimate way with one of our congregations. However, the costs of remodeling the existing space to meet the needs of our staff are much higher than had been anticipated.

To finance the cost of the renovations and to be able to reduce our costs, we will need to finance for about a twenty-year period. We do not know what our synod will look like in twenty years. However, there are other unknowns even if we continue to reside in the United Church Center, such as how much will rental costs inflate over that twenty-year period if we continue to rent. St. Mark's Lutheran Church, Mechanicsburg, is the best option we currently have, limiting our search to a fifteen-mile radius around Harrisburg. It is far more costly to build a new structure or to relocate in an office complex. Colleen Hoffman commented on the cost of renovations and the twenty-year indebtedness, saying that sometime we must spend money to save money.

Pastor Beth Schlegel shared that she experiences the church when she comes to the United Church Center. The chapel is very visible and right in the center of our office space. She asked if the chapel at St. Mark's, Mechanicsburg, is handicapped accessible. The bishop said that it is not handicapped accessible from the floor on which our office will be located unless one would go outside and enter another entrance. However, the chapel is totally handicapped accessible from that other entrance.

Jane Wigand says that she likes the plan in theory, but in reality she is unsure. What about the cost of insurance and the cost of any contents that we must buy? The bishop stated that we purchase insurance coverage now, and we would need to continue to do that. He added that the architect on the committee who provided the estimate did include soft costs for things that may need to be purchased.

Asked about the space, the bishop replied that we will have 6,000 square feet of space, a little more than we have presently.

Pastor Joel Folkemer said that he believes the idea is a good one. He likes the idea of moving to a building of one of our congregations. He believes that it is pitiful that we as a synod must go into debt to do this. He asked if we are willing to expand our horizon. Over time the synod staff will change; perhaps we could look to other areas. The bishop stated that Mechanicsburg is in very close proximity to the geographic center of our synod, Dillsburg.

Sue McDonald stated that she believes that this is a good idea. There are risks in everything we do. Costs can rise with any plan we adopt. We could use the \$10,000 to \$15,000 that we will save each year to reduce the principle of the loan.

Pastor Richard Eckert said that he believes that this would be the best for the Gospel.

Jered Hock asked if the congregation would be willing to extend our covenant with them after the twenty-year period. If our synod can arrange to stay at St. Mark after the loan is paid off, it would seem we could save considerable money. The bishop said that that would be our intent to stay at St. Mark's longer than twenty years.

Pastor Beth Schlegel reaffirmed that this building is just as much the church as a congregation's building. Everyone in this building is engaged in some ministry. The bishop responded that that is the theory

behind the United Church Center, but it has not been his experience of the building.

Pastor Kurt Strause said that we will be investing lots of money for a lease-holder. We will acquire no equity. Will we be obligated to maintain the outside of the building? Bishop Dunlop responded that we will enter into a covenant with the congregation that will detail the responsibilities of the congregation and our synod. Part of the agreement will be that we will maintain our part of the building, and the congregation will be responsible for maintaining the rest of the building. We plan to replace all the mechanical items in our part of the building to reduce future costs. We hope that part of the agreement will be that, if the church should dissolve, the building will reside with our synod.

Sue McDonald added that we have no guarantee that the United Church Center will always exist.

After all had opportunity to express their opinions, the bishop declared that his sense of the discussion was that the Synod Council is in favor of continuing our exploration of moving the synod office. The members of the Synod Council concurred with his sense of the discussion.

REPORT OF THE SYNOD COUNCIL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

The Executive Committee submitted draft minutes of its May 4, 2016, meeting.

REPORTS OF THE COMMITTEES OF SYNOD COUNCIL

The Assembly Planning Committee presented draft minutes of its April 28, 2016, meeting.

The Constitution Committee provided minutes of its April 27, 2016, meeting.

The Mission Committee submitted minutes of its March 31, 2016, meeting.

REPORTS OF THE LIAISONS

Lutheran Youth Organization liaison, Zoe Clark, presented a written report.

Lower Susquehanna Synod Women's Organization of the Women of the ELCA liaison, Linda Lubold, provided a written report.

REPORTS OF THE EXECUTIVE STAFF

Marsha Roscoe, Director of Resource Ministries, provided a written report.

Charlie Roberts, Director of Children, Youth, and Family Ministry, presented a written report.

Pastor Robert Blezard, assistant to the bishop, submitted a written report.

Pastor Sharron Blezard, assistant to the bishop, offered a written report.

REPORTS OF COMMITTEES AND OTHER ORGANIZATIONAL UNITS

Committee of Deans provided minutes of its May 9, 2016, meeting.

Compensation and Benefits Committee submitted draft minutes of its April 11, 2016, meeting.

The Learning Ministries Team liaison, Brenda Hartzell, provided a Synod Council report of its April 5, 2016, meeting.

Synod Worship Committee liaison, Pastor Richard Eckert, submitted a Synod Council report of its May

2, 2016, meeting at Messiah College.

Criminal Justice System Ministry staff liaison, Pastor Sharron Blezard, provided an update on this ministry, including information about its April 21, 2016, meeting.

The Bishop's Congregational Mission Fund Committee liaison, Lucinda Bringman, presented a report of its May 11, 2016, meeting.

Committee of Reference and Counsel provided minutes of its May 11, 2016, meeting and shared its recommendations about the four resolutions that will be presented at Synod Assembly.

Pastor Beth Schlegel addressed concerns about the "Resolution Seeking Reconciling in Christ (RIC) Recognition." She warned about expressing our unity in relationship with any human institution. Our unity is in Jesus Christ. To accept this label and to believe that all of our synod's congregations agree with this label is problematic.

Committee on Memorials provided minutes of its May 18, 2016, meeting and shared information about the memorial that will be presented at Synod Assembly.

Vice President Bringman urged the members of the Synod Council to be proactive on the floor of the assembly. If discussion seems to be going on too long and the same arguments are being reiterated, do not hesitate to go to a microphone and move the previous question or move to refer.

REPORTS OF TASK FORCES

There were no reports from task forces.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

The following motion and the proposed amendment to that motion, which were tabled at the last meeting returned to the floor.

That the Synod Council recommend to the 2016 Synod Assembly for adoption the beginning salary of \$35,305 for 2017 for deaconesses, diaconal ministers, and associates in ministry who serve full time at the time of their consecration and commissioning.

To amend the beginning salary to \$40,000.

Pastor Kurt Strause, moved:

ADOPTED: To remove these motions from the table.

The Compensation and Benefits Committee had met as requested by the Synod Council and had adopted the recommendation that the beginning salary for 2017 for deaconesses, diaconal ministers, and associates in ministry who serve full time at the time of their consecration and commission be \$41,000.

Pastor McKee provided the following information about the Ministers of Word and Service rostered in our synod: There are 21 Ministers of Word and Service who are on leave from call or retired. There are eight Ministers of Word and Service who are below the recommended minimum of \$41,000, of which five are below the current minimum of \$34,782 and three of whom are at or above the current minimum salary of \$34,782; and there are six Ministers of Word and Service who are at or above the proposed

minimum of \$41,000.

Because the Compensation and Benefits Committee was asked to submit a new recommendation, the new recommendation will take the place of the tabled amendment and motion.

The motion before the Synod Council was:

ADOPTED: That the Synod Council recommend to the 2016 Synod Assembly for adoption the SC16.05.26. beginning salary of \$41,000 for 2017 for deaconesses, diaconal ministers, and associates in ministry who serve full time at the time of their consecration and commissioning.

NEW BUSINESS

There were no items of new business to come before the Synod Council.

ADJOURNMENT

The members of the Synod Council joined together in the praying of the Lord's Prayer. The meeting was adjourned at 9:30 p.m.

Thomas E. McKee
synod secretary
5/26/16

Approved: September 24, 2016