

MINUTES
Of the 122nd MEETING
Of the SOUTHEASTERN PENNSYLVANIA SYNOD COUNCIL
Of the EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN AMERICA
September 13, 2012
Lutheran Theological Seminary at Philadelphia (LTSP), Brossman Center,
Philadelphia, PA

Vice President Patricia Robinson called to order the One Hundred Twenty-second Meeting of the Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod Council at 4:05 p.m.

Mr. Lawrence House, AIM, Senior Philanthropic Advisor, LTSP, welcomed Synod Council members and the Reverend Lamont Wells, Dean, Northwest Philadelphia/Olney Conference, led devotions.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The Synod Council approved the minutes of the 121st meeting as presented.

SETTING OF THE AGENDA

Vice President Robinson presented the agenda for the 122nd meeting.

LTSP PRESENTATION

The Reverend Dr. Philip Krey, President, LTSP, highlighted some of the changes that are taking place at the seminary. In this academic year's incoming class, he noted that:

- There are more persons of color enrolled than Caucasians;
- There are ore part-time students enrolled than full-time; and
- The number of students from Region 7 has declined.

He added that the seminary in is the process of developing a new strategic plan, which includes the re-working of the curriculum, where the focus will be on the training of entrepreneurial and missional leaders. The seminary's aim is to make its academic program more flexible and more affordable. In order to become financially sustainable, LTSP will re-create itself as "a seminary village around [its] core mission."

The Reverend John Puotinen, Vice President for Philanthropy, LTSP, expressed a concern about student debt, noting that the cost of a seminary education has shifted to the students. He said that the seminary is developing plans to raise \$10,000,000 for endowed scholarships benefiting students attending LTSP. He concluded by saying, "I would love to speak to your congregation."

BEAR CREEK CAMP RESOLUTIONS

The Reverend Don Hayn, Interim Executive Director, Bear Creek Camp, reported that the new Executive Director, Mr. Dan Scharnhorst, would begin service at the end of September this year. He noted that the Bear Creek Camp Board of Directors has examined the camp's governance and proposed revisions, subject to the approval of the Northeastern Pennsylvania and Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod Councils.

Mr. John Greenleaf, Chair, Bear Creek Camp Board of Directors, added that the camp has put its "financial house" in order and that the camp's leadership has developed a new level of responsibility and accountability. He presented for approval a series of revisions of the camp's bylaws, noting that these revisions have already been approved by the camp's Board of Directors and the Northeastern Pennsylvania Synod Council.

The Synod Council approved the following two resolutions:

S. C. 12.09.01 RESOLVED THAT the Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod Council adopts the Eastern Pennsylvania Lutheran Camp Corporation's by-laws as presented.

S. C. 12.09.02 RESOLVED THAT the Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod Council approves the following timeline and approach as presented by the Bear Creek Camp Board of Directors:

- a. The current Board terms are extended until the initial meeting of the reformed Board in 2013.**
- b. That the initial meeting of the reformed board will be Jan 3, 2013 (snow date of January 12, 2013).**
- c. The current board members whose terms have not been completed will be eligible to complete them under revised bylaws.**
- d. The Board term implementation schedule:**

1) Three Year Terms 01/01/2013 – 12/31/2015

- a) Two from NEPS**
- b) Two from SEPS**
- c) One at large Board nominated**

2) Two Year Terms 01/01/2013 – 12/31/2014

- a) Two from NEPS**
- b) Two from SEPS**
- c) One at large Board nominated**

3) One Year Term 01/01/2013 – 12/31/2014

- a) Two from NEPS**
- b) Two from SEPA**
- c) One at large Board nominated**

First Note: One year terms would be eligible for two full terms after completing their one term.

Second Note: Current Board Members would be able to serve up to six years including time served through 12/31/2012.

e. That the Board Chair directs the Committee on Directors (appointing new members as necessary) to make recommendations on individuals to be named to the Board for implementing the formation of the new Board as per the revised bylaws.

Ms. Molly Beck Dean, Assistant to the Bishop/Youth Ministry Specialist, expressed thanks to Pastor Hayn for his leadership during the camp's time of transition. Synod Council members added their applause.

BISHOP'S REPORT

ELCA Youth Gathering

The Reverend Claire Burkat, Bishop, Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod, described the ELCA Youth Gathering, July 18-22, 2012, New Orleans, as "astonishing." She noted that 550 youth and adults from the Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod joined a total of 34,000 Lutherans from all 65 synods. She thanked Ms. Dean not only for her strong leadership with this synod's youth but for her assistance with planning by other synods.

She said that what she liked best was that each day had a service project, in which 12,000 Lutherans formed groups and were mobilized to serve every day for three days. She also liked the fact that this synod's people stayed in same hotel and were on same schedule.

New Teams

"Now that I/we are over the shock of downsizing the synod staff and synod budget," Bishop Burkat reported, "it is time to reconstruct the way we do together the important work of the synod. To that end, over the summer eight new teams were created. I believe we are entering an era where the congregations as well as the synods need to equip the people for the work of ministry." She listed the following teams: Fund for Mission, Congregational Mission Planning, Fall Gathering, Stewardship, Synod Council Congregations, African Descent Strategy, Sabbatical, and 500th Anniversary of the Reformation.

In regard to the Fund for Mission Team, Bishop Burkat presented the following resolution, which the Synod Council approved:

S. C. 12.09.03 RESOLVED THAT the Synod Council approves the appointment of the Reverend Patricia Davenport to serve as a member of Fund for Mission Team, co-terminus with Bishop Burkat and as long as Pastor Davenport serves as this synod's Director of Evangelical Mission.

Since the Synod Assembly established the requirement that the Sabbatical Team include at least one representative from each conference, clergy or lay, Bishop Burkat asked the Synod Council for suggestions of those who may wish to serve. Sister Mary Julia McKenzie volunteered to seek volunteers from each conference.

Criminal Justice Social Statement Hearing

Bishop Burkat reported that the Southeastern Pennsylvania and the New Jersey Synods, and the Lutheran Theological Seminary at Philadelphia, hosted a hearing on the proposed ELCA social statement on Criminal Justice on September 9, 2012, at the seminary.

Financial Administration Workshop

Ms. Janet Neff, Treasurer, reported that she and Ms. Carol Ann Murray, Assistant to the Bishop for Mission Support and Development, would lead a workshop, “Financial Management: A Spiritual Gift,” on September 30, 2012, at the seminary.

Courage to Connect

Bishop Burkat reported that Pastor Davenport and the Welcome Church are hosting “Courage to Connect,” a churchwide summit for leadership and evangelical justice for those living without homes, on September 17-19, 2012, in Philadelphia.

2012 Fall Gatherings

Bishop Burkat encouraged Synod Council members to attend at least one of this fall’s Evenings with the Bishop: October 21, Trinity, Lansdale, and November 18, LTSP, both gatherings are from 3:00 to 5:00 p.m.

Conference Meetings

Bishop Burkat reported that she has planned informal conversations with three conferences: September 18, Upper Bucks; September 19, Lower Montgomery; and October 17, Upper Montgomery. She has already met with the Lower Bucks Conference.

Bishop’s Convocation

Bishop Burkat reported that the Bishop’s Convocation is planned for November 7-9, 2012, at the Hotel Bethlehem. The topic is “The Parish and the Public Square.”

Action on the Roster

Retirement

Bishop Burkat presented the following resolution, which the Synod Council approved:

S. C. 12.09.04 RESOLVED THAT the Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod Council grants *retirement* status to the Reverends Eric Oxley, effective May 27, 2012; Larry Smoose, effective July 1, 2012; and David Shaheen, effective November 1, 2012.

On Leave from Call Requests

Bishop Burkat presented the following resolution, which the Synod Council approved:

S. C. 12.09.05 RESOLVED THAT the Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod Council grants *on leave from call* status to the Reverends Mathewos Shibo, 1st year, effective May 1, 2012; Anita London, 1st year, effective June 1, 2012; Kristine Peterson, 1st year, effective July 1, 2012; Janet Peterman, 1st year, July 3, 2012; Daryl Nelson, 1st year, effective July 3, 2012; and Shirley Guider, 5th year for graduate study, effective August 22, 2012.

Extension Requests

Bishop Burkat presented the following resolutions, which the Synod Council approved:

S. C. 12.09.06 RESOLVED THAT the Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod Council recommends that the Reverend Priscilla Curet be granted an extension of *on leave from call* status for a period of one year, effective October 1, 2012, from the ELCA Conference of Bishops, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT the Synod Council requests an approval of this extension from the ELCA Conference of Bishops.

S. C. 12.09.07 RESOLVED THAT the Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod Council recommends that the Reverend Gwendolyn King be granted a two-year extension of *on leave from call* status from the ELCA Conference of Bishops, effective October 1, 2012, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT the Synod Council requests an approval of this extension from the ELCA Conference of Bishops.

FINANCIAL REPORTS

Report of the Treasurer

Ms. Neff reviewed the Income and Expense Statement as of July 31, 2012, noting that this report includes activity through the second quarter. She reported that actual congregational partnership support for the past six months was \$1,014,346, compared to a six-month budget expectation of \$1,125,000. Total six-month income was \$1,034,054. Expenses for the same period were \$1,082,888.22. She added that so far in this fiscal year nothing has been taken from the *Fund for Mission* to pay operating expenses.

Report of the Finance Committee

On behalf of the Finance Committee, Ms. Neff reported that the committee is continuing to review trust fund distributions and to explore ways to consolidate funds and/or to redistribute principal to beneficiary organizations for them to manage independently. In this regard, the committee may need to consult with legal counsel.

She added that the synod office has fully converted to *Financial Edge* software.

Report of the Audit Committee

Mr. Rodman Rothermel, Chair, reported that, even though now is not a good time for the synod to change auditing firms, the committee is seeking quotes from other firms.

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE AND VICE PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Vice President Robinson asked Synod Council members to take note of their committee assignments. She invited committees to meet over dinner.

The Synod Council recessed for dinner. Secretary Raymond Miller offered prayer.

SYNOD YOUTH MINISTRY REPORT

Ms. Dean offered a power-point presentation, describing what her responsibilities as the Assistant to the Bishop/Youth Ministry Specialist. After sharing pictures of her family, she noted that she is originally from North Dakota and has served in the Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod since May 2002. Her portfolio includes youth ministry, outdoor ministry, LGTBQ ministry, and campus ministry. She then listed the categories of what she does:

- *Communication:* www.sepayouth.org website, Enews, Facebook page, email, youth worker roster
- *Networking:* creating networks of people, connecting neighbors and those with similar passions
- *Event Planning:* several annual events for youth ministry and LGTBQ ministry, ranging from 6 to 300 people, lasting from two hours to eleven days; focus on faith formation and service
- *Consulting:* re-energizing youth ministry, visioning for youth ministry, being a welcoming congregation, safety policies
- *Advocacy:* for fuller inclusion of young people in the church, for those who are marginalized, create awareness of issues through ministries and events
- *Management:* ministries and events happen because of teams of volunteers, most yearly cycles involve at least seven planning teams and more than 100 youth and adult volunteers
- *Leadership:* local preacher, speaker at other synod's events, national involvement, including Gathering teams, SYMBOL steering committee, LC/NA committee, ELCA Network Board chair
- *Mentoring:* to youth as they navigate life, to youth workers who are starting out in ministry, to awesome volunteers who lead and participate in our synod's ministry

As homework she invited Synod Council members to find out how their congregations are engaged in these ministries.

SYNOD COUNCIL COMMITTEES

Congregations

Mr. Lawrence House, Chair, reported that the committee has added Mr. Malcolm Davis as a member.

Constitution

The Reverend Paul Beck, Chair, presented the following resolution, which the Synod Council approved:

SC 12.09.08 RESOLVED THAT the Synod Council grants full approval to constitution of St. Luke, Gilbertsville.

Nominating

After consulting with committee chair and the nominee, Secretary Miller presented the following resolution, which the Synod Council approved:

SC 12.09.09 RESOLVED THAT the Synod Council elects Ms. Doreen Kinzler to serve as the Northeast Philadelphia Conference Representative for a term ending 2013.

The Synod Council adjourned at 7:40 p.m. Bishop Burkat offered prayer.

The 123rd meeting of the Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod Council is scheduled for Thursday, December 6, 2012, 4:00 p.m., at a location to be announced.

The Reverend Raymond A. Miller
Secretary
Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod