

**MINUTES**  
**Of the 125th MEETING**  
**Of the SOUTHEASTERN PENNSYLVANIA SYNOD COUNCIL**  
**Of the EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN AMERICA**  
**April 11, 2013**  
**Calvary Lutheran Church, West Chester, PA**

The Reverend Daniel Krewson, Pastor, Calvary, West Chester, welcomed Synod Council members and led devotions, using excerpts from the sermons, speeches, and writings of the Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King.

Vice President Patricia Robinson called to order the One Hundred Twenty-fifth Meeting of the Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod Council at 4:30 p.m.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

The Synod Council approved the minutes of the 124th meeting as presented.

**SETTING OF THE AGENDA**

Vice President Robinson presented the agenda for the 125th meeting.

**MALARIA CAMPAIGN LEARNING MOMENT**

Ms. Molly Beck Dean, Assistant to the Bishop – Youth Ministry Specialist, reported that planning for the Malaria Campaign in this synod began at a Lutheran Youth Organization (LYO) board meeting in the fall of 2012.

Stating that the Malaria Campaign is an ELCA initiative, Mr. Malcolm Davis added that the LYO board began the planning process by learning about what malaria is, why it is deadly, how to stop it, and why others should care.

Ms. Dean indicated that teams have been trained to do temple talks at worship services and presentations in Sunday school and at other forums in congregations which invite them. Since February 1, 2013, the teams have visited 18 or 19 congregations. The board set a fund raising goal of \$100,000, of which \$60,000 was raised by March 1. She expressed a hope that the goal would be reached by 2013 Synod Assembly.

The Reverend Matthew Staniz, Pastor for Youth and Family Service, St. Luke, Devon, reported on how the Malaria Campaign was implemented in his congregation. He said that “people were amazed at the progress of the initiative” and recognized that “it was really possible to eradicate malaria.”

**BISHOP’S REPORT**

The Reverend Claire Burkat, Bishop, Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod, asked Synod Council members to pray for the Reverend Carol Ficken, who has been hospitalized; the congregation of St. Michael,

Philadelphia (Kensington), and the Goodwin family on the tragic death of Philadelphia Fire Captain Michael R. Goodwin, Sr., St. Michael's president; and the South-Central Synod of Wisconsin on the arrest of its bishop, the Reverend Bruce Burnside, who has been charged with "vehicular homicide while intoxicated," and the family of the victim on the untimely death of their loved one, Maureen Mengelt.

In a lengthy discussion, various Synod Council members expressed a desire for the opportunity at Synod Council meetings to engage in deeper discussion on matters which have a personal impact on people's lives.

The Synod Council approved the following resolution:

**S. C. 13.04. 01 RESOLVED THAT the Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod Council directs the Secretary of this synod to send a letter to the Synod Council of the South-Central Synod of Wisconsin, expressing its support during this tragic and sorrowful time.**

#### **Vice President Patricia Robinson**

Bishop Burkat expressed gratitude to Ms. Patricia Robinson, who has served as Vice President of this synod since May 2001 and is stepping down as Vice President at the conclusion of this year's synod assembly. Bishop Burkat described Ms. Robinson as "a woman of deep faith, positive energy, insightful decisions, good humor, and most of all a contagious love for Jesus Christ, his Church and the people of God here and everywhere." She invited Synod Council members to attend a dinner in Ms. Robinson's on May 10, 2013, at the Lutheran Theological Seminary at Philadelphia.

#### **Synod Council Elections**

Bishop Burkat expressed thanks to Synod Council members who are completing terms and are ineligible for re-election: the Reverends Paul Beck and Carol Ficken, Sister Sally Kerr, Mr. Lawrence House, AIM, and Mr. Malcolm Davis. She also expressed thanks to Synod Council members who are completing terms and are eligible for re-election: the Reverends William Rex and Karl Richard, Mr. Henry Boyd, Ms. Joyce Brown Adams, Ms. Doreen Kinzler, Mr. John Ungerman, and Ms. Adrienne Nash Melendez.

#### **Conference of Bishops**

Bishop Burkat reported on the activities of the Conference of Bishops at its meeting in March 2013:

- Said farewell to ten bishops who will be leaving office this year due to retirement or term limits.
- Discussed a proposal on the *Future of Theological Education* to be considered by the Church Council at its meeting in April 2013.
- Drafted a *Pastoral Letter in Regard to Violence*.

- Discussed a proposal to merge the three lay rosters (Deaconesses, Diaconal Ministers, and Associates in Ministry) into one roster (Word and Service).
- Discussed the proposed social statement on criminal justice.
- Received a report on the finances of the churchwide organization and discussed plans for a possible Capital Campaign and a possible ELCA Day of Service.
- Received a report from Portico Benefit Services on changes to the health care plan provided to rostered leaders and others.
- Received information on plans for the 2103 Churchwide Assembly.

### **Congregational Council Officers Gathering**

Bishop Burkat reported that, on March 9, 2013, she met with 83 congregation presidents, vice presidents, and others officers, representing 48 congregations in our synod. The presentation and conversation focused on “the implications for congregational ministry in the rapidly changing context of American life.”

### **Funding Streams for Continuing Ministry in This Synod**

Bishop Burkat stated her intention “to increase the *Fund for Mission* and other money available for missional initiatives to \$5 million in the next five years by increased attention to the six funding streams available to” this synod:

- Congregational Partnership Support
- *Fund for Mission*
- *For All the Saints* Annual Appeal
- Interest from Investments
- Grants
- Sale of Church Buildings

### **Equipping the Saints and Congregations for the Work of Ministry**

Bishop Burkat reported that, with the help of the deans and staff, she has made “a list of the teams and networks currently and actively working in our synod today,” the total of which, by her best guess, is 41. She added, “I believe this is a testimony to our synodical commitment to share ministry, to raise up leaders, to maximize what we can do together, and to multiply the work of the synod to build up the body of Christ in our five county region.”

### **Christian Churches Together (CCT)**

Bishop Burkat reported that she plans to be in Birmingham, AL, on April 15, 2013, for the public release of the *Response to Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. 's Letter from Birmingham Jail* by the Christian Churches Together. She serves on the board of that organization.

### **50<sup>th</sup> Jubilee of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Tanzania**

Bishop Burkat reported that she will be traveling to Tanzania June 20-23, 2013, to participate in the celebration of the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the forming of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Tanzania, of which this synod's companion synod, the North East Diocese, is a member.

### **Death of Dr. Louise Shoemaker**

Bishop Burkat noted the death of Dr. Louise Shoemaker on March 19, 2013. Dr. Shoemaker served on the LCA Executive Committee and many of this synod's committees and ministries, and as this synod's Vice President. A memorial service is planned for June 15, 2013, 2:00 p.m., at University, Philadelphia, of which Dr. Shoemaker was an active member.

### **Approval of a New Mission Field**

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

**S. C. 13.04.02 RESOLVED THAT the Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod Council approves a one-year appointment for Ms. Leila Ortiz to serve as the Mission Developer at Learning/Knowing Christ Latino/a Ministry, located at St. Paul Lutheran Church, Philadelphia (Olney), beginning February 15, 2013, and continuing through February 14, 2014.**

### **Renewal of Specialized Calls**

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

**S. C. 13.04.03 RESOLVED THAT the Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod Council approves, in accord with bylaw 7.41.15. of the Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, a call to serve in Unusual Circumstance to the Reverend Leslie M. Richard for a period of one year effective June 1, 2013, and ending May 31, 2014, renewable on an annual basis.**

To avoid the appearance of any possible conflict of interest, Pastor Karl Richard abstained.

**S. C. 13.04.04 RESOLVED THAT the Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod Council approves a one-year non-stipendiary term call to Ms. Kathleen Afflerbach to serve the Lutheran Theological Seminary at Philadelphia as Coordinator for Non-Credit Education, effective June 7, 2013.**

### **Calls to Interim Ministry**

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

**S. C. 13.04.05 RESOLVED THAT, upon the recommendation of Bishop Claire Burkat, the Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod Council calls the Reverend Dr. Kristine A. Peterson to interim ministry at Holy Trinity Lutheran Church, Narberth, PA, starting March 1, 2013, and extending until a pastor is called by the congregation or until Pastor Peterson resigns this call, whichever comes first.**

**S. C. 13.04.06 RESOLVED THAT, upon the recommendation of Bishop Claire Burkat, the Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod Council calls the Reverend James H. Wolford as pastor of Emmanuel Lutheran Church, Pottstown, PA, for a two-year term, effective January 14, 2013, to January 13, 2015.**

#### **Action on the Roster**

##### ***Retirement***

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

**S. C. 13.04.07 RESOLVED THAT the Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod Council grants *retirement* status to the Reverend Russell Burns, effective May 1, 2013, and the Reverend John Hougen, effective June 1, 2013.**

##### ***On Leave from Call Requests***

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

**S. C. 13.04.08 RESOLVED THAT the Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod Council grants *on leave from call* status to Ms. Patsy Polilli, AIM, 2<sup>nd</sup> year, effective September 15, 2012; the Reverend Annette Freese, 1st year, effective February 5, 2013; the Reverend Timothy Taylor, for medical disability, effective January 31, 2013; and the Reverend Sandra Brown, 1<sup>st</sup> year, effective February 25, 2013.**

To avoid the appearance of any possible conflict of interest, Pastor Sandra Brown abstained.

#### **EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE AND VICE PRESIDENT'S REPORT**

Vice President Robinson reported that the Sabbatical Team would not have a report for the 2013 Synod Assembly as requested by the 2012 Synod Assembly, noting that the team had not met.

In a moment of personal privilege, Vice President Robinson thanked Synod Council members for their willingness to serve. Making reference to the 12 years in which she has served the synod as Vice President, she said, "It's been a wonderful experience. I love this synod." Noting that this synod's strengths are its people and their vitality, she encouraged Synod Council members to "lift up [those] strengths."

*Synod Council members recessed for dinner. Bishop Burkat offered prayer.*

#### **SECRETARY'S REPORT**

The Reverend Raymond Miller, Secretary, highlighted the actions of the Church Council of the ELCA at its meeting on April 5-7, 2013, in Chicago.

## **FINANCIAL REPORTS**

Ms. Carol Ann Murray, Assistant to the Bishop for Mission Support and Development, reported that partnership support for February and March 2013 is in the black by a small amount. She thanked the synod staff for holding the line on expenses.

Mr. Rodman Rothermel, Chair, Audit Committee, reported that the audit report for fiscal year 2012 has been delayed due to software issues.

## **SYNOD COUNCIL COMMITTEES**

Pastor Sandra Brown, Chair, Nominating Committee, reported that the Nominating Report for the 2013 Synod Assembly has been completed, adding that, despite attempts to obtain additional Vice Presidential nominees, the report contains the name of only one.

Synod Council members noted that criminal background checks are required for all Vice Presidential nominees.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

Mr. Rothermel requested prayers for his congregation, St. Luke, Devon, on the death of its president, Mr. Dave Herbster.

Ms. Joanne Carlson, Assistant to the Bishop for Global Mission and Events, requested that the Synod Council approve a one-year extension of the deployment of Ms. Susan McPherson and Mr. Tom McPherson as missionaries, sponsored by this synod, in Tanzania. She added that the ELCA Global Mission unit has approved this extension. Synod Council members requested additional information on the funding of this extension. Due to the lack of a quorum, the Synod Council took no action, deferring further action to a possible email vote.

The Synod Council adjourned at 7:45 p.m. Vice President Robinson offered prayer.

The 126th meeting of the Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod Council is scheduled for Thursday, June 6, 2013, 4:00 p.m., at a location to be determined.

The Reverend Raymond A. Miller  
Secretary  
Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod