



Still Reforming...

**Bulletin of Reports for the
Twenty-Ninth Annual Assembly**

**Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod
of the
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America**

MAY 6-7, 2016

**Franconia Mennonite Church
613 Harleysville Pike
Telford, PA 18969**

Welcome to the Synod Assembly

***** IMPORTANT INFORMATION *****

For Those Staying Overnight:

Directions to Homewood Suites by Hilton Lansdale, 1200 Pennbrook Parkway, Lansdale, PA 19446.

Turn left out of Franconia parking lot onto Harleysville Pike/PA-113. Go 0.4 of a mile to first traffic light. Turn right onto Allentown Road. Go 7.4 miles on Allentown Road, which will end at an intersection. Turn left onto Sumneytown Pike (Route 63 West). Get into left lane. Go only 0.3 mile on Sumneytown Pike. Turn left onto Church Road. Go 1 mile on Church Road (Traffic Light /Shopping Center/ Clock Tower on right). Turn left onto Pennbrook Parkway and keep toward right as drive will take you directly into hotel parking lot.

Hotel check-in will not be available until after 4:00 p.m. and since we will be in Assembly session then and throughout the evening, you should plan to check into the hotel following the recess of the Assembly at about 9:00 p.m., Friday.

You must check out of the hotel before the beginning of the Assembly session on Saturday.

PLEASE NOTE:

The Assembly begins with registration from 8:30-9:30 a.m. on Friday, May 6th. The program begins at 9:30 a.m. Friday morning. We will conclude by approximately 3:45 p.m., Saturday, May 7th.

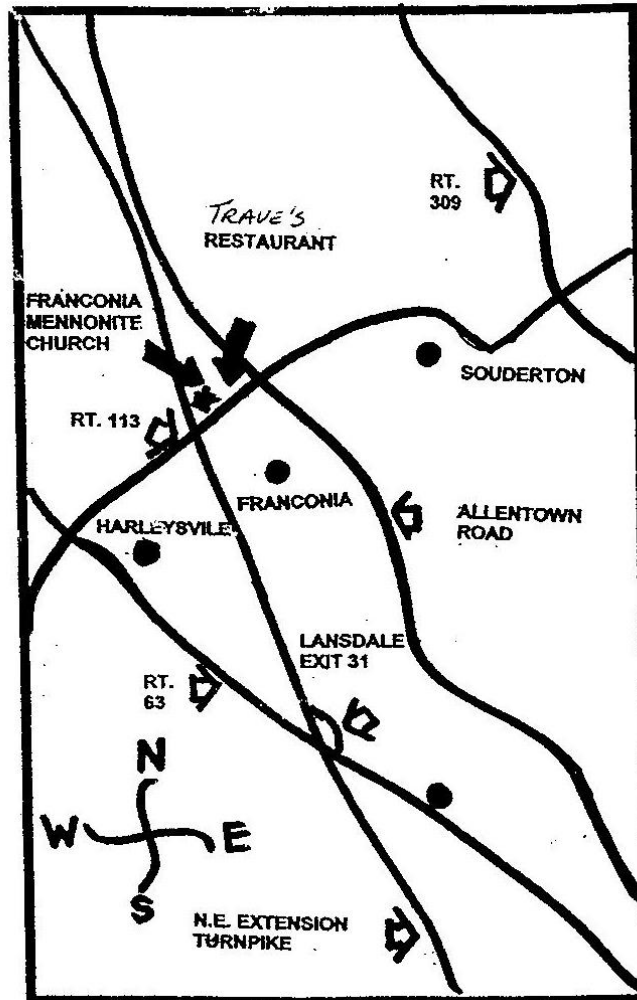
Note first time attendees are invited to a pre-assembly orientation beginning at 8:30 a.m.

If you have any questions prior to the Assembly:

Registration questions: Cynta Outterbridge, *Registrar* 267-323-3742 or coutterbridge@sepa.org

All other questions: The Rev. Susan Lang, *Events Planner* 267.323.3756 or slang@sepa.org.

FRANCONIA MEETING HOUSE
WE LOOK FORWARD TO WELCOMING YOU AT THE ASSEMBLY
613 Harleysville Pike (Route 113)
Telford, PA
(215) 723-3220



Conveniently located 30 miles South of Allentown and 30 miles North of Philadelphia ...

From Allentown – South on Route 309, exit at Souderton Route 113, turn right. Follow Route 113 approximately 3 ½ miles through the town of Souderton and Franconia. The church is on the right side of the road.

From Philadelphia – Take the Northeast Extension of the Pennsylvania Turnpike, Route 476 North to Exit 31. After exit at traffic light turn right onto Route 63 Sumneytown Pike, follow Route 63 approximately 3 miles through the town of Harleysville and turn right onto Route 113. Follow Route 113 approximately 1 ½ miles, the church is on the left.

Note: directions to the Homewood Suites Lansdale are located on the prior page.

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SOUTHEASTERN PENNSYLVANIA SYNOD



Still Reforming...

PROPOSED PROGRAM FOR THE TWENTY-NINTH ANNUAL MEETING OF THE ASSEMBLY

MAY 6-7, 2016

FRANCONIA MENNONITE CHURCH
613 HARLEYSVILLE PIKE
TELFORD, PENNSYLVANIA 18969

FRIDAY, MAY 6, 2016

- 8:30 a.m. Registration
Refreshments in Upper Fellowship Hall
- 8:45 a.m. Orientation (optional) to Assembly Proceedings
The Rev. Dr. Larry V. Smoose, Parliamentarian
- 9:30 a.m. Service of Holy Communion
Commemoration of the Faithful Departed
Installation of Rostered Leaders called to Specialized Ministries
Order for the Opening of Assembly
- 10:50 a.m. Welcome and Introductions
- 11:05 a.m. Report of the Registrar – Ms. Cynta Outterbridge
- 11:10 a.m. Report of the Secretary – The Rev. Karl Richard
Presentation of the Program
Rules of Procedure
Reception of Reports
Proposed Amendment to the Bylaws
- 11:20 a.m. Report of the Nominating Committee
Ms. Joyce Brown Adams, Chairperson Nominating Committee

- 11:35 a.m. Forward Together in Faith Campaign Report
- 11:55 a.m. Keynote – The Rev. Dr. Kirsi Stjerna
 First Lutheran Los Angeles,
 Southwest Synod Professor of Lutheran History and Theology, Chair
 Pacific Lutheran Theological Seminary of California Lutheran University
 Graduate Theological Union, Berkeley, California
 Docent, Theological Faculty, Helsinki University
- 12:25 p.m. Prayer
- 12:30 p.m. Lunch and Mission Center
- 1:25 p.m. Prayer
- 1:30 p.m. Balloting
 The Rev. Rebecca Eisenhart, Chairperson
 Committee on Elections
- 1:50 p.m. The Rev. Dr. David Lose
 President, The Lutheran Theological Seminary at Philadelphia
- 2:10 p.m. Reformation 500 Committee
 The Rev. Stephen Godsall-Myers, Chairperson
- 2:15 p.m. Report of the Treasurer – Ms. Janet Huber Neff
 Report of the Finance Committee – Ms. Sue Massey, Chairperson
- 2:35 p.m. Recognition of Anniversary Celebrants
 Recognition of Congregational Anniversaries
- 2:50 p.m. Keynote: The Rev. Dr. Kirsi Stjerna
 First Lutheran Los Angeles,
 Southwest Synod Professor of Lutheran History and Theology, Chair
 Pacific Lutheran Theological Seminary of California Lutheran University
 Graduate Theological Union, Berkeley, California
 Docent, Theological Faculty, Helsinki University
- 3:20 p.m. Address by The Rev. Claire S. Burkat, Bishop
- 3:50 p.m. Portico Benefit Services – Ms. Barbara Debski, Regional Representative
- 3:55 p.m. Prayer
- 4:00 p.m. – 7:00 p.m. Forums Mission Center Dinner
- 7:00 p.m. Prayer

- 7:05 p.m. ELCA Church Council Greeting – Mr. Clarence Smith,
Liaison Churchwide Church Council Member
- 7:10 p.m. Report of the Committee on Elections and Balloting
The Rev. Rebecca Eisenhart, Chairperson
- 7:25 p.m. First Report of the Committee on Reference and Counsel
The Rev. Raymond Miller, Chairperson
- 7:45 p.m. Introduction of Candidates
The Rev. Nancy Brown, Director of Candidacy
Mr. Fred Renigar, Chairperson of Candidacy Committee
- 8:00 p.m. Evening Prayer
Adjournment of Friday Session

SATURDAY, MAY 7, 2016

- 9:00 a.m. Refreshments in Upper Fellowship Hall
- 9:30 a.m. Worship
- 10:15 a.m. Report of the Committee on Elections and Balloting
The Rev. Rebecca Eisenhart, Chairperson
- 10:30 a.m. Report of the Vice President of SEPA Synod
Ms. Tracey A. Beasley
- 10:45 a.m. The Rev. Albert Starr
Director, Ethnic Specific and Multicultural Ministries, CSM
Program Director, African Descent Ministries
- 11:15 a.m. Still Reforming Resources –The Rev. Martin Seltz
Publisher, Worship, Music, Congregational Life
Augsburg Fortress
- 11:45 a.m. Tanzania Companionship Team
- 11:50 a.m. Moving Forward Young Adults – The Rev. Bradley Burke
- 11:55 a.m. Second Report of the Committee on Reference and Counsel
The Rev. Raymond Miller, Chairperson
- 12:10 p.m. Recognition of 50th Anniversary Celebrant

- 12:15 p.m. Forward Together in Faith Campaign Update and Prayer
- 12:30 p.m. Lunch
- 1:40 p.m. Prayer
- 1:45 p.m. Report of the Committee on Elections and Balloting
The Rev. Rebecca Eisenhart, Chairperson
- 2:00 p.m. Third Report of the Committee on Reference and Counsel
The Rev. Raymond Miller, Chairperson
- 2:20 p.m. Report of the Committee on Elections and Further Balloting if necessary
The Rev. Rebecca Eisenhart, Chairperson
- 2:30 p.m. Forward Together in Faith Campaign Update
- 2: 45 p.m. Final Report of the Registrar -- Ms. Cynta Outterbridge
Announcement of 2017 Assembly Dates
- 2:50 p.m. Recognition of Outgoing Synod Council Members
Installation of Synod Council Members
Blessing and Sending of Churchwide Assembly Voting Members
- 3:30 p.m. Order for Closing of Assembly
Adjournment

**RULES OF PROCEDURE FOR THE SYNOD ASSEMBLY
OF THE SOUTHEASTERN PENNSYLVANIA SYNOD**

Chapter 7

SYNOD ASSEMBLY

- +S7.01.** This synod shall have Synod Assembly, which shall be its highest legislative authority. The powers of the Synod Assembly are limited only by the provisions in the Articles of Incorporation, this constitution and bylaws, the assembly's own resolutions, and the constitution and bylaws of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.
- +S7.11.** A regular meeting of the Synod Assembly shall be held at least biennially.
- S7.11.10.** A regular meeting of the Synod Assembly shall be held annually.
- S7.12.** Special meetings of the Synod Assembly may be called by the bishop with the consent of the Synod Council, and shall be called by the bishop at the request of one-fifth of the voting members of the Synod Assembly.
- a.** The notice of each special meeting shall define the purpose for which it is to be held. The scope of actions to be taken at such a special meeting shall be limited to the subject matter(s) described in the notice.
- b.** If the special meeting of the Synod Assembly is required for the purpose of electing a successor bishop because of death, resignation, or inability to serve, the special meeting shall be called by the Synod Council after consultation with the presiding bishop of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.
- S7.13.** Notice of the time and place of all meetings of the Synod Assembly shall be given by the secretary of this synod.
- S7.13.10.** Notice of the time and place of the regular meeting or of an adjourned meeting of the Synod Assembly shall be sent by the secretary not less than four weeks preceding the meeting. Notice of the time and place of a special meeting shall be sent by the secretary not less than two weeks preceding the meeting.
- S7.14** One-half of members of the Synod Assembly shall constitute a quorum.
- +S7.21.** The membership of the Synod Assembly, of which at least 60% of the voting membership shall be composed of lay persons, shall be constituted as follows:
- a.** All ordained ministers under call on the roster of this synod in attendance at the Synod Assembly shall be voting members.
- b.** All associates in ministry, deaconesses of the Evangelical Lutheran

Church in America, and diaconal ministers, under call, on the official lay rosters of this synod shall have both voice and vote as lay voting members in the Synod Assembly, in addition to the voting membership of lay members of congregations provided in item =S7.21.c.

c. A minimum of one lay member elected by each congregation with fewer than 175 baptized members and a minimum of two lay members elected by each congregation with 175 or more baptized members related to this synod, normally one of whom shall be male and one of whom shall be female, shall be voting members. The Synod Council shall establish a formula to provide additional lay representation from congregations on the basis of the number of baptized members in the congregation. The Synod Council shall seek to ensure that, as nearly as possible, 50 percent of the lay members of the assembly shall be female and 50 percent shall be male. Additional members from each congregation normally shall be equally divided between male and female.

d. Voting membership shall include the officers of this synod.

+S7.21.01. Voting members shall begin serving with the opening of a regular Synod Assembly and shall continue serving until voting members are seated at the next regular Synod Assembly.

S7.21.11 In addition to the congregation's election of voting member(s) of the Synod Assembly as established by S7.21.c, each congregation may elect one additional voting member of the Synod Assembly who shall be a voting member of the congregation up to the age of 25.

S7.22. **Retired ordained ministers on the roster of the synod in attendance at the synod Assembly may serve as voting members of this synod consistent with 7.21 above, and as specified in the bylaws.**

S7.22.10. Retired ordained ministers, retired associates in ministry, retired deaconesses, and retired diaconal ministers who have indicated to the bishop their willingness and availability to serve in the synod and whose intent meets with the concurrence of the bishop shall be permitted to vote at meetings of the Synod Assembly.

S7.22.11 In establishing a formula pursuant to Chapter 7.21.c of the Constitution, the number of retired ordained ministers permitted to vote at meetings of the Synod Assembly shall be a factor in determining the number of additional lay representatives necessary to comprise at least 60% of the membership of the Synod Assembly.

S7.23. **The presiding bishop of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and such other official representatives of this church as may be designated from time to time by the Church Council shall also have voice but not vote in the**

meetings of the Synod Assembly. Like privileges shall be accorded to those additional persons whom the Synod Assembly or Synod Council shall from time to time designate.

- S7.24.** Ordained ministers under call, or on leave from call but available for call, as determined by the Office of the Bishop, on the roster of this synod shall remain as members of the Synod Assembly so long as they remain under call, or on leave from call but available for call, as determined by the Office of the Bishop, and so long as their names appear on the roster of ordained ministers of this synod. Associates in ministry, deaconesses of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, and diaconal ministers of this church serving under call, or on leave from but available for call, as determined by the Office of the Bishop, on the roster of this synod shall remain as members of the Synod Assembly so long as they remain under call, or on leave from call but available for call, as determined by the Office of the Bishop, and so long as their names appear on the official lay roster of this synod. Lay members of this Synod Assembly representing congregations shall continue as such until replaced by the election of new members or until they have been disqualified by termination of membership. Normally, congregations will hold elections prior to each regular meeting of the Synod Assembly.
- +S7.25.** Except as otherwise provided in this constitution or in the *Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America*, each voting member of the Synod Assembly shall be a voting member of a congregation of this synod.
- S7.26.** This synod may establish processes through the Synod Council that permit representatives of mission settings formed with the intent of becoming chartered congregations and authorized worshiping communities of the synod, which have been authorized under ELCA bylaw 10.02.03., to serve as voting members of the Synod Assembly, consistent with +S7.21. Authorized worshiping communities, acknowledged under criteria, policies, and procedures approved by the Church Council of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, shall accept and adhere to the Confession of Faith and Statement of Purpose of this church, shall be served by leadership under the criteria of this church, and shall be subject to the discipline of this church.
- S7.27.** This synod may establish processes through the Synod Council to grant an ordained minister from a church body with which a relationship of full communion has been declared and established by the Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America the privilege of both voice and vote in the Synod Assembly during the period of that ordained minister's service in a congregation of this church.

- S7.28** Duly elected voting members of the Synod Council who are not otherwise voting members of the Synod Assembly under +S7.21. shall be granted the privilege of both voice and vote as members of the Synod Assembly.
- S7.29** All ordained ministers, on leave from call but available for call, as determined by the Office of the Bishop, on the roster of this synod in attendance at the Synod Assembly shall be voting members. All associates in ministry, deaconesses of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, and diaconal ministers, on leave from call but available for call, as determined by the Office of the Bishop, on the official lay rosters of this synod shall have both voice and vote as lay voting members in the Synod Assembly, in addition to the voting membership of lay members of congregations as provided in item S7.21.c.
- +S7.31.** Proxy and absentee voting shall not be permitted in the transaction of any business of this synod.
- S7.32.** Robert’s Rules of Order, latest edition, shall govern parliamentary procedure of the Synod Assembly, unless otherwise ordered by the assembly.
- S7.32.10.** At any time during a meeting, the Synod Assembly may resolve to go into executive session, in which case only the voting body shall be present.
- S7.32.A01** *The Synod Assembly shall be governed by the following Rules of Procedure:*
- 1. Rule Regarding Distribution*

The distribution of any materials that do not come to the Assembly through regular reports, synod committees, agencies, institutions, or Synod Council must be approved by the Committee on Reference and Counsel. Therefore, no materials may be distributed to the Assembly without the prior approval of Reference and Counsel.
 - 2. Rule Regarding Resolutions Not Meeting the Deadline for Reference and Counsel*

The assembly, by a two-thirds vote, may grant permission for consideration of a resolution that a voting member wishes to bring to the floor, but which has not met the imposed deadline of the Reference and Counsel Committee.
 - 3. Rules Regarding Floor Nominations*
 - a. For all positions to be elected at this assembly, nominations from the floor shall be made at the time of the first report of the Nominating Committee during the first business session of the Synod Assembly. After the nominations have been closed no further nominations shall be accepted.*

- b. *As nominations are made from the floor, the nominator must present a typed or printed biography to the synod secretary on the special form provided immediately after the report of the Nominating Committee.*
- c. *In accordance with +S6.04 of the Synod Constitution, at least 10% of the representation on the Synod Council, ELCA Assembly voting membership, and other elected boards is required to be persons of color and/or persons whose primary language is other than English. In the event such representation is not accomplished through normal voting procedures, the nominated person of color or whose primary language is other than English and who has the next highest number of votes shall supersede the elected individual with the least number of votes.*

4. *Rules for Dealing with Memorials and/or Resolutions Submitted to the Committee on Reference and Counsel*

- (1) *The deadline for submitting memorials and/or resolutions to the Committee on Reference and Counsel shall be one month before the opening of the Synod Assembly.*
- (2) *The Committee on Reference and Counsel shall publish all memorials and/or resolutions, submitted by the deadline, at the synod website no later than two weeks before the opening of the Synod Assembly.*
- (3) *The Committee on Reference and Counsel shall make available to Synod Assembly voting members when they register at the Synod Assembly hard copies of all memorials and/or resolutions, submitted to the committee by the deadline, and the committee's recommendations.*

S7.33. **“Ex-officio” as used herein means membership with full rights of voice and vote unless otherwise expressly limited.**

**Chapter 8
OFFICERS**

+S.8.41 **The treasurer may be elected by the Synod Assembly or may be appointed by the Synod Council. The treasurer shall be a voting member of a congregation of this synod. The treasurer may be either a layperson or an ordained minister.**

S8.41.01. The Synod Council shall appoint the treasurer.

Chapter 9

NOMINATIONS AND ELECTIONS

- +S9.01.** The Synod Assembly shall elect such officers of this synod and such other persons as the constitution and bylaws may require, according to procedures set forth in the bylaws.
- S9.02.** In all elections by the Synod Assembly, other than for the bishop, a majority of the legal votes cast shall be necessary for election.
- S9.02.01.** All elections shall be by ballot, except in those categories where no contest exists, in which case the bishop shall direct the secretary to declare the nominees to be elected.
- S9.02.02.** No ballot for an ineligible person shall be counted as a vote cast in any election.
- S9.03.** There shall be a Nominating Committee which shall be appointed by the Synod Council to serve for each regular meeting of the Synod Assembly in accordance with the bylaws. Additional nominations may be made from the floor for all elections for which nominations are made by the Nominating Committee.
- S9.03.01.** Nominating Committee.
- a. The Synod Council shall appoint a Nominating Committee. The committee shall be composed of members of the Synod Council and others with the goal of having representation from each conference.
 - b. For positions to be filled by election, the committee shall present nominations to the Synod Assembly and to the Synod Council, except in such instances as are specifically distinguished herein or in the Constitution and Bylaws of the ELCA. The term of office for committee members shall be no more than one year, beginning with the meeting of the Synod Council at which they are appointed. The committee shall be appointed not later than the second regular meeting of the Synod Council following the Synod Assembly.
- S9.04.** The bishop shall be elected by the Synod Assembly by ecclesiastical ballot. Three-fourths of the legal votes cast shall be necessary for election on the first ballot. If no one is elected, the first ballot shall be considered the nominating ballot. Three-fourths of the legal votes cast on the second ballot shall be necessary for election. The third ballot shall be limited to the seven persons (plus ties) who received the greatest number of legal votes on the second ballot, and who are willing to serve if elected. Two-thirds of the legal votes cast shall be necessary for election. The fourth ballot shall be limited to the three persons (plus ties) who receive the greatest number of legal votes on the third ballot, and 60% of the legal votes cast shall be necessary for election. On subsequent ballots a majority of the legal votes cast shall be

necessary for election. These ballots shall be limited to the two persons (plus ties) who receive the greatest number of legal votes on the previous ballot.

- S9.04A94** *1) Following the first ballot, reasonable efforts shall be made to contact nominees in order to determine their willingness to serve. The assembly shall be informed of those efforts as well as the responses of the nominees.*
- 2) For the purpose of S9.04 of the Synod Constitution, a nominee shall be presumed willing to serve unless he or she has expressed an unwillingness to do so.*
- 3) When reasonable efforts have been made to contact a nominee, but have been unsuccessful, it shall be assumed that the nominee is willing to serve.*
- 4) No nominee willing to serve shall be a member of the contacting group.*
- 5) Biographical information about the nominees included on the third ballot shall be distributed to voting members of the assembly prior to that ballot.*
- 6) At a plenary session prior to the fourth ballot, the agenda shall include a forum at which nominees shall be permitted to respond to written questions posed by voting members to the Committee on Elections.*
- 7) Prior to the fifth ballot, the agenda shall include time for nominees to address the assembly for up to five minutes each.*
- 8) Implementation of these rules of procedure shall be the responsibility of the Committee on Elections unless otherwise delegated by the Synod Council.*
- S9.05. The Nominating Committee shall nominate at least one person for Vice President only if there is an incumbent; otherwise the Nominating Committee shall nominate at least two persons for Vice President. Additional nominations may be made from the floor.**
- S9.06. The Synod Council shall nominate at least one person for Secretary only if there is an incumbent; otherwise the Synod Council shall nominate at least two persons for Secretary. Additional nominations may be made from the floor.**
- S9.07. If the treasurer is elected, the Synod Council shall nominate at least one person for treasurer only if there is an incumbent; otherwise the Synod Council shall nominate at least two persons for Treasurer. Additional nominations may be made from the floor.**
- S9.08. In all elections except those by ecclesiastical ballot, the names of the persons receiving the highest number of legal votes, but not elected by a majority of**

legal votes cast on the first ballot, shall be entered on each subsequent ballot up to the number of two for every vacancy unfilled. On any ballot when only two names appear, a majority of the legal votes cast shall be necessary for election.

S9.08.01. Synod Council

a. The nominating and election process for the 24 persons, not including the four officers of this Synod and the two youth and the two young adult representatives, elected as members of Synod Council shall proceed in a manner that will assure that at least three members so elected will be persons of color and/or persons whose primary language is other than English, nine of the 24 elected members shall be ordained ministers and 15 shall be lay persons. Terms for members other than the youth member shall be for three years and shall be arranged so that the terms of three ordained ministers, three conferences and two at-large lay members expire each year. None of the 24 elected members shall be eligible to serve for more than two terms consecutively. Terms of office for the youth members shall be two years, and for the young adult members three years, subject to a two-term limitation.

b. Representatives of congregations in each conference shall meet prior to the annual meeting of the Synod Assembly and shall nominate at least one lay person from their conference for the Synod Council, one nominee per conference to be elected by the assembly at the annual meeting. These lay seats assigned to conferences shall alternate every six years (or two terms) between male and female Council members. The Nominating Committee shall receive these nominations from the conferences to include in its reports. Voting members at the annual meeting of the assembly may nominate from the floor persons from the assigned conferences for election to the Synod Council.

c. The Nominating Committee shall nominate at least one person for each clergy seat and lay at-large seat. Geographic consideration shall be given in proposing nominees, as well as the need to assure an adequate number of persons of color and/or persons whose primary language is other than English. Balloting for the conference lay positions shall be completed before balloting for at-large positions begins. Nominees not elected to represent conferences shall be added to the at-large ballots. Balloting for at-large lay members shall be by male and female panels; each year a male and female at-large lay representative shall be elected.

d. No nomination for Synod Council shall be made if that nominee's congregation already has a member on the Synod Council or if a member of a congregation has already been nominated, provided, however, that no nominee shall be ineligible if the Synod Council member from that congregation is an officer of this Synod and/or one of them is a Synod Council youth or young adult member. The Synod Council may make exceptions to this requirement in order to promote greater diversity and/or inclusivity.

- S9.08.02.** Nominations and elections for voting members of the Churchwide Assembly, for members of the Committee on Consultation, and the Committee on Discipline shall be by panels of laymen, laywomen and clergy. The number of persons elected by the synod to those positions and their terms shall be as specified in the bylaws of the ELCA.
- S9.08.03.** Each Board of an agency or institution related to the synod, whose membership is elected in whole or in part by the Synod Assembly or the Synod Council, may nominate one or more persons for each vacancy on its Board. Such nominations shall be submitted to the Synod Assembly or Synod Council, as appropriate, by the Nominating Committee, together with other nominees, as the Synod Institution Agreement permits.
- S9.08.04** The Synod Council shall elect members to the boards of the Gettysburg Seminary, the Philadelphia Seminary, Gettysburg College and Muhlenberg College according to procedures established with each of the institutions.
- S9.08.05.** Members of the boards of Social Ministry Organizations shall be elected according to the requirements of those organizations governing documents.
- S9.09.** **The result of each ballot in every election shall be announced in detail to the assembly.**
- S9.09.01.** The report of the Nominating Committee shall be printed in the bulletin of reports for the meeting of the Synod Assembly at which its nominees are to be submitted. Its report shall indicate the congregation of membership for each nominee and the source of the nomination. In addition, those nominees who are persons of color and/or persons whose primary language is other than English shall be specifically designated.
- S9.09.02** The ballot preparation for use in synod elections shall list the nominees for each position in chance order.
- +S9.12.** **Background checks and screening shall be required and completed for persons nominated as synodical officers prior to their election, if possible, or as soon as practical after their election. The specific procedures and timing of background checks and screening shall be determined by the Synod Council.**
- S.10.01.01** Membership. The Synod Council shall consist of 32 members: four officers (as set forth in 8.01. of the Synod Constitution), two youth (a youth is defined as a voting member of a congregation who has not reached the age of 18 at the time of election or appointment to service), two young adults (voting members of a congregation between the ages of 18 and 30 at the time of election or appointment

for service), and 24 other members (nine clergy and 15 lay members). The Synod Council shall consist of no more than one member of the same congregation at the same time, provided, however, that two or three members of the same congregation may serve on the Synod Council concurrently if one of them is either an officer of this synod and/or one of them is a Synod Council youth or young adult member.

S14.21. All ordained ministers under a call shall attend meetings of the Synod Assembly, and the pastors of congregations shall also attend the meetings of the conference, cluster, coalition, or other area subdivision to which the congregations belong.

Revised March 2014

Report of the Bishop

2016 SYNOD ASSEMBLY REPORT OF THE BISHOP
Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod, ELCA

Written April 20, 2016

The Reverend Claire Schenot Burkat, Bishop

At the center of our shared partnership in the Gospel, the Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod exists to “*equip the saints and congregations for the work of ministry, for building up the Body of Christ.*” This report will highlight some of the significant ways in which I have been privileged to serve as bishop throughout the year since our last Assembly in May of 2015. The many other responsibilities: leading worship, preaching, teaching, visiting, meetings with SEPA leaders, global partners, social ministry agencies, ELCA institutions, regional and national gatherings, as well as ecumenical and interfaith meetings are noted in my report to the Synod Council on a regular basis. As we gather together in Assembly to worship, learn, deliberate, decide and discern, we will celebrate our life together in Christ, and explore the opportunities and challenges of our Lutheran witness today.

2016 Synod Assembly Theme: *Forward Together in Faith: “Still Reforming”*

So if anyone is in Christ, there is a new creation: everything old has passed away; see, everything has become new! 2 Corinthians 15:17

In 2008 Dr. Phyllis Tickle wrote a provocative book about the nature and timing of change in society and the church called *The Great Emergence: How Christianity Is Changing and Why*. We asked her to speak at our Bishop’s Convocation that very year, and I am quite astonished at how many of her predications are right on target today. One of the most interesting is the premise that significant Church changes tend to come every five hundred or so years, including the coming of Christ in the first century, the era of the consolidation of the church under Gregory in the fifth century, the Great Schism of the 11th century, and the Reformation of the 16th century. She called this a kind of rummage sale where every 500 years, the Church goes through, and cleans out the old forms of spirituality and replaces it with new ones. New creations! This does *not* mean that previous forms become obsolete or invalid. It simply means they change from what was once the dominant culture of Christianity. From this historical trend, Tickle deduced that, we are ready for another such seismic change as we turn the corner 500 years after the Reformation.

I think we can see for ourselves that the once-prominent Mainline Protestant Church of the 20th century has significantly lost power, prestige and its central place in American life and influence. As we think about the commemoration of the 500th anniversary of the Reformation, it is an opportunity for us to reflect on the theological principles that changed the Church of the 16th Century, discern God’s activity in today’s world, and participate in the ways Christ continues to make things new.

At our annual Synod Assembly May 6-7, the theme: *Still Reforming* will begin to inform and excite us about ways we as congregations and as Synod together can commemorate the 500th Anniversary of the Reformation in the year 2017 and continue reforming as the Spirit leads us.

Our keynote speaker, **The Rev. Dr. Kirsi Stjerna**, Professor of Lutheran History and Theology at Pacific Lutheran Theological Seminary, will show us how the major reforms of the 16th Century affect our lives and mission as Lutherans in the 21st Century.

We will also hear from **The Rev. Martin Seltz**, Publisher for Worship, Music and Congregational Life at Augsburg Fortress Publishers, who will share with us the many resources to help our congregations and conferences observe the 500th anniversary of the Reformation.

Our ELCA representative will be the **Rev. Albert Starr Jr**, Director, Ethnic Specific and Multicultural Ministries and Program Director, African Descent Ministries, ELCA. **Mr. Clarence Smith**, a member of the ELCA Church Council from the New England Synod, will be our special guest and will bring greetings to support and accompany our ministry as one of the 65 synods of the ELCA. He and Pastor Starr will also lead a forum Friday afternoon.

Lutheran Theological Seminary at Philadelphia (LTSP) – **The Rev. Dr. David Lose, President** will give an update on the collaborative and united initiative with the Lutheran Theological Seminary at Gettysburg (LTSG).

New Secretary -The Reverend Karl Richard

This year we welcome the leadership of **Pastor Karl Richard** as secretary of the Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod. Pastor Richard was elected following the 16 year term of **Pastor Raymond Miller** who stepped down after the 2015 Assembly.

New Synod Events Coordinator- Pastor Susan Lang

Following the retirement of **Ms. Joanne Carlson** after serving as Synod Events Coordinator for 25 years, Pastor Lang was appointed as Synod Events Planner. This will be her first Assembly in this new role. Let's give her our support and assistance as she needs it.

New Assistant to the Bishop for Youth, Young Adult Ministry and Spiritual Formation -- Pastor Bradley Burke

After a review and revision of the Youth Ministry job description position held by Ms. Molly Beck Dean for 10 years, we posted the new position and interviewed candidates last summer. We are pleased that Pastor Bradley Burke has joined our Synod staff.

Those Leaving Synod Council

Let me take this opportunity to thank and bless those leaders who have faithfully served on Synod Council and have decide to not allow their names to go forward for re-election. We know the leadership they have given and the experience of working in ministries on the synodical level, has strengthen their faith, as they continue to serve their congregations, our Synod, their communities and the Churchwide and global expressions of the Church as other opportunities to serve come along.

Ms. Emily Fowler

Ms. Adrienne Nash Melendez

Sister Jane Roper

Here are highlights of my activities during the year since our last Synod Assembly:

Spring 2015

2015 Synod Assembly - Theme: Forward Together in Faith

More than a year's work preparing for the new Synod Campaign culminated in an excellent Synod Assembly as we experienced great enthusiasm and commitment for the *Forward Together in Faith* campaign. The Chairperson of the *Forward Together in Faith* campaign, **Ms. Ellen Daneke** launched the theme with a rousing introduction to the components of the campaign and an 8-minute video. Instead of a keynote speaker, as we have engaged in previous years, the highlights of the Assembly were the presentations by Synod campaign leaders using examples and videos on the four components of the campaign:

- Forward Together in Faith: *Equipping*
- Forward Together in Faith: *Innovating*
- Forward Together in Faith: *Communicating*
- Forward Together in Faith: *Networking*

Newly Elected Synod Secretary

Pastor Karl Richard who ably served as Finance Committee Chair was elected as our new Synod Secretary. We are so grateful Pastor Richard agreed to serve in this important capacity as an officer of the SEPA Synod.

Newly Elected Synod Council Members

The following new members were elected to Synod Council at our May 2015 Assembly:

Ms. Joyce Maloney, Trinity Philadelphia

Mr. Henry Strobel, Trinity Lansdale

Those Re-elected to Synod Council

The following Synod leaders were re-elected at the 2015 Assembly:

Pastor Tyler Rasmussen

Pastor William Rex

Mr. Robert Hensil

Ms. Susan Pursch

We were blessed to have as our ELCA Churchwide Representative in 2015, **The Reverend Dr. Stephen Bouman, Executive Director of the ELCA Congregational and Synodical Mission Unit**. He thanked the synod for its "robust mission support" and for our generous support of various Churchwide ministries, including World Hunger, Disaster Response, the Malaria Campaign, and the Fund for Leaders, and new congregation starts.

The opening Eucharist was well planned and I thank the members of the Synod Worship Team for their excellent planning. I received many appreciative comments regarding the service. I think the tiny "keys" distributed during Communion was a big hit, and brought the theme of unlocking the Gospel and Keys to the Kingdom to the attention of the Assembly right off the bat.

After the Secretary's Report, which was **Pastor Raymond Miller's** last report, I was pleased to thank Ray publically for 16 years as Synod Secretary. He also served for 6 years on the ELCA Church Council, which greatly enhanced his knowledge and skill for the secretary's work, and blessed our Synod with his acumen. A banquet in his honor was held the week after Assembly.

Treasurer **Ms. Janet Neff** and **Pastor Karl Richard**, Chair of the Synod Finance Committee presented the 2016 budget with clarity and enthusiasm for the ministries the budget represents.

Friday evening **Pastor Nancy Brown**, Director of Candidacy, and **Mr. Fred Renigar**, Chair of the Candidacy Committee, introduced the Candidacy Committee members and presented the candidates approved for ordination, both those originating in this Synod, and those assigned to SEPA Synod through the Region 7 assignment process.

Saturday morning Assembly worship included the leadership of **Pastor Esther Rajashekar**; the Eddie Mann Band; the Children's Choir from St. James, Pottstown, under the direction of **Mr. Bruce Tonkin**; and **Ms. Cassie Singh-Hueter** led worship. **Pastor Stephen Bouman** preached an outstanding sermon.

Recognition of Ms. Joanne Carlson

Ms. Joanne Carlson, Assistant to the Bishop for Global Vision and Events, retired from the Synod staff after 25 years was recognized and congratulated by the Assembly. During her time of service, Joanne has coordinated 25 synod assemblies, the recruitment of volunteers for the 1999 Churchwide Assembly at Philadelphia, and numerous trips to Tanzania and the Czech Republic. A banquet to honor Joanne's years of service was held June 19 at St Luke in Devon.

The Reverend Dr. David Lose, President, Lutheran Theological Seminary at Philadelphia, addressed the Assembly saying he felt privileged to bring greetings and to serve as the new president of LTSP, and proceeded to share some wisdom and insights on the challenges of congregations, synods, and seminaries for this day and age. He then gave us examples of some of the hard realities of budget deficits, property management, and enrollment the seminary has been struggling with in the last decade. *"God is working through you and in you. It is not easy work but it is good work. Thank you and I thank God for you!"*

Welcome Home – Missionaries Susan and Tom MacPherson

Ms. Nancy Shaw, Chair, Tanzania Companionship Team, introduced a video on the Irente Children's Home, a mission of the North Eastern Diocese of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Tanzania (ELCT), where **Ms. Susan MacPherson** and **Mr. Tom MacPherson**, ELCA missionaries and members of St. John, Philadelphia (Mayfair), served for three years. The Assembly was immensely pleased to welcome the MacPhersons home. Tom expressed "extensive thanks" to all of those who played a role in their time of service.

"You never know how God is going to use you," Sue said. "Your gifts have had an impact on so many people, spreading out like concentric circles... Thank you for letting us represent you in Tanzania."

Nancy Shaw and I presented a gift to the MacPhersons.

Celebrating Sebastian Kolowa Memorial University (SEKOMU)

I invited **Ms. Susan Pursch** to come forward, noting that Ms. Pursch played an instrumental role in coordinating the Synod's partnership with the North Eastern Diocese-ELCT in "building a college on the territory of the diocese to offer degrees in special education and other professions that would serve people with special needs in Tanzania," a college that later took the name of Sebastian Kolowa Memorial University (SEKOMU). I shared how Susan provided leadership in raising funds and sharing educational resources, including personnel and curriculum for use in developing the college. My remarks concluded with "A grateful Synod and Diocese thanks you and the [SEKOMU Coordinating] committee for helping to build a university from the ground up." I also presented a decorative "BRICK" to Susan to remember that SEKOMU was indeed built, "brick by brick."

"God gets all the glory and honor," responded Ms. Pursch.

Vice President **Ms. Tracey Beasley** gave her report to the Assembly, which was well received.

With Gratitude

Many thanks from a grateful Synod go to our officers: **Vice President Tracey Beasley, Former Secretary Pastor Ray Miller, Treasurer Janet Neff, and Finance Chair Pastor Karl Richard**. To our Parliamentarian, **Pastor Larry Smoose; Pastor Regina Goodrich**, chair of the Nominating Committee and **Ms. Joyce Adams; Ms. Jill Meuser**, chair of the Committee on Reference and Counsel; **Pastor Rebecca Eisenhart**, chair of the Committee on Elections; **Pastor Sandra Brown**, distribution of lunches to food banks; **Ms. Doreen Kinzler**, coordination of Pages and all Synod Council members who assisted with registration. **Pastor Jennifer Ollikainen, Pastor Janet Peterman**, and a team of more than 60 people who led the worship services over the two-day Assembly—we are most appreciative.

Ms. Joanne Carlson ably coordinated all the many details, made the arrangements, and navigated all the issues in putting together an Assembly once again.

Thanks to **Ms. Cynta Outterbridge** our Synod Registrar and Statistician for her dedication to this important work. **Mr. Bob Fisher**, the communications team and **CCI Communications** for the excellent coverage. And to our entire Synod staff who together made this Assembly run well and seamlessly: **Ms. Kimberley Berry, Ms. Yvonne Curtis, Pastor Pat Davenport, Mr. Bill Harp, Mr. Martin Schwab and Ms. Eileen Zuber**.

Summer 2015

North Eastern Diocese-ELCT 125th Jubilee

From June 30-July 9 **Joanne Carlson** and I traveled to our companion diocese, to attend the 125th Jubilee, which was the Anniversary of the North Eastern Diocese being founded by German Missionaries.

July 3rd, Day in Lushoto to visit with Vice Chancellor of SEKOMU Anneth Munga, visited the new Diocesan radio station, and met with Diocesan staff.

July 4th, Traveled to Tanga on the Indian Ocean - worshipped at an outdoor service.

July 5th, Almost 3,000 people attended the Sunday worship service for the 125th Jubilee. Joanne Carlson took away my iPhone so I couldn't take any photos DURING the service but I got some good ones afterward. Particularly fun is my photo with Tanzania President Jakaya Kikwete. The

service from start to finish was 5 hours. Lots of singing, praying, preaching and congratulatory speeches.

July 6th, Worship Service at Kana Church in Tanga. Bishop Munga honored Joanne Carlson for her long and special relationship serving as Synod liaison to the NED. There were 125 young adults representing 125 years at the service preparing to begin a trek of 125 miles from Tanga to Lushoto doing service projects, raising awareness of the ELCT and proclaiming Christ along the way. I was honored to be the preacher at this service, which was only 3 hours long (not because of my sermon, although it was translated from English to Kiswahili). Then we left on July 7th to return to SEPA Synod. Less than 3 days later I traveled to Detroit for the MYLE and ELCA National Youth Gathering.

My gratitude and that of the Synod Council is extended to **Pastor Patricia Davenport** who served as acting bishop in my absence.

ELCA National Youth Gathering

The 2015 ELCA National Youth Gathering, ***RISE Up Together***, held in Detroit, Michigan July 15-19, 2015 was an awesome, inspiring, and energizing event. There were 497 youth and adults from SEPA Synod (not counting those recruited to serve as Gathering Staff, like **Pastor Regina Goodrich** and **Mr. Emanuel Alves**) who travelled to the event by plane, bus, van and car to join the 38,000 Lutherans from all 65 synods. Those who attended left filled with a deepened faith, joy in serving, challenging insights, gratitude for Christian purpose, and new found friends. I went three days earlier to attend the Multicultural Youth Leadership Event (**MYLE**), attended by approximately 22 participants from SEPA Synod. We could have sent 20 more to MYLE from SEPA, however Wayne State University which was hosting the event, capped participation at 500.

Using Mark 1:15 as the core theme (Jesus is Good News!) Each evening of the total Gathering Community we experienced musicians, poets, dancers and outstanding speakers inviting us to participate in God's work by *building bridges, bearing burdens, breaking chains and bringing hope*.

The 65 synods were sent 1/3 each day to one of three venues - Proclaim Justice (service day), Proclaim Story (worship day) and Proclaim Community (experiential day at the convention center); I had the honor of preaching and presiding at our Synod Story Day.

During my time in Detroit, I made a point of speaking with several local people: hotel workers, waiters, police officers, who were thankful and impressed with the joyful and respectful way the people of the Youth Gathering conducted themselves and gave of themselves to make a difference in Detroit.

Just looking at the impact by Lutherans in Detroit in numbers is impressive: 1,847 mural boards painted, 600 neighborhoods affected, 319 vacant homes boarded up, 1 million diapers collected, 1,425 backpacks distributed, 3,200 vacant lots cleared of debris (and more). The countless ways lives were changed, hearts were warmed, spirits were lifted, friendships were made, minds were enlighten and faith and courage was strengthened was incalculable.

Special thanks goes to **Ms. Robin Alderfer** who started working on the coordination of the ELCA National Youth Gathering last year and who recruited and trained volunteers from our Synod. Appreciation goes to **Pastor Bryan Penman, Ms. Hannah Knauss, Pastor Matt Staniz, Ms. Carrie Johnston, Mr. Doug Parry, Ms. Emily Fowler, Mr. Christian Hicks, Mr. Daniel Mambu, and Pastor Rebecca Eisenhart** for their leadership in making the Proclaim Story Day a success. Gratitude to **Pastor Patricia Davenport** for participating and representing SEPA Synod at the MYLE event as well as the Gathering. There were a few **Molly Beck Dean** sightings, which of course thrilled our youth and adults.

I tried my best to keep our Synod supporters informed by posting on Facebook everyday. Lots of photos and much joy and love!

Thanks to the many youth who fully engaged in this amazing experience. Thanks to the adult leaders and pastors who gave up time, money and sleep to accompany our young people so that they might grow in faith, service and love. Thanks to the congregations that provided support for their youth so that they could attend this event. Thanks to the many volunteers from this Synod who worked incredibly hard, and did so with great joy.

And finally, I want to thank Presiding Bishop Elizabeth Eaton, retiring ELCA National Youth Gathering Director Heidi Hagstrom, new ELCA National Youth Gathering Director Molly Beck Dean and the many amazing ELCA Churchwide staff and event planners from throughout the ELCA without whose prayers, work and diligence this event could not happen.

My hope is that the 500 SEPA participants from the Detroit Youth Gathering will sow mission seeds of hope and vitality among us in our life together in this Synod. The joy they experienced was infectious as they returned to their families, their congregations, and to our Synod. I believe that what was learned about Justice, Faith Story Telling, and Community will continue to infuse our lives together as a Synod with contagious enthusiasm for proclaiming the Good News of Jesus in word, witness and service.

The next ELCA National Youth Gathering will be in **Houston Texas June 27- July 1, 2018.**

Forward Together in Faith (FTiF)

The Forward Together in Faith Teams were busy all summer long.

Lead Team – Oversight of all teams

Donor Team – Organizing donor events-Dinner and Receptions

CAT Team – Analyzed results of CAT survey from 23 congregations

Prepared process and invitation for next group for the fall of 2015.

Worked with Resource Team to schedule equipping events.

Connectors Team – (This one got a slow start.) We are looking for more connectors.

Connectors will be a vital part of the campaign going forward, acting as conduits from campaign to congregations. The Communication Team has put together a toolkit for connectors to help facilitate enthusiasm for the FTiF Campaign and information sharing in local congregations.

Communication Team - The Communication Team put together the toolkit for connectors, and is busy recruiting communication specialists to assist congregations with media skills, tools and best practices.

Ms. Dionne Jackson joined Synod staff August 17th as the Coordinator for Evangelical Outreach and Youth, Young Adult Ministry and Spiritual Formation. Dionne provides support to Pastor Davenport in her work as Mission Director and Assistant to the Bishop as well as to Pastor Brad Burke the Assistant to the Bishop for Youth, Young Adult Ministry and Spiritual Formation. Dionne comes to us with a background in church administration and banking. She received her undergraduate education from Weidner University. We are delighted to have Dionne with us.

Assistant to the Bishop for Youth, Young Adult Ministry and Spiritual Formation

In June we posted the Synod Staff position of Assistant to the Bishop for Youth, Young Adult Ministry and Spiritual Formation and received twenty-five applications from all over the country. At the ELCA National Youth Gathering I had some conversations with YM leaders curious about the position and our Synod. I was pleased with the quality and experience of most of the applicants. In August, five were invited for face-to-face interviews. **The Reverend Bradley Burke** was our chosen candidate and called by the Synod Council in September.

Fall 2015

Papal Visit

Since the beginning of the year, many of us in the five county Synod territory had been following the news of Pope Francis' visit to Philadelphia. I was pleased to be invited to participate in the Opening Ceremony and Opening Mass for the World Meeting of Families on Tuesday, September 22nd. In addition, I wrote a letter of prayer and blessing to Archbishop Chaput on behalf of the SEPA Synod and ELCA that was presented along with other congratulatory missives from ecumenical and interfaith partners. The Lutheran Church of the Holy Communion, and Trinity Lutheran in South Philadelphia hosted 200 pilgrims for five days. I stayed the entire weekend downtown in order volunteered to assist in the welcoming, feeding and attending to these visitors from around the country and the world.

New Synod Council Members elected by Synod Council in June

The Rev. Lyzette Rios Sanchez, New Creation, Philadelphia – term expiring 2018, Clergy
The Rev. Dwight Mason, Good Shepherd, Philadelphia – term expiring 2016, Clergy
Mr. Philip Tackett, St. Peter, Hilltown – term expiring 2018, Upper Bucks Lay Male
Mr. Amos Garsaynee, St. John, Folcroft – term expiring 2016, Lay Male at Large

Bishop's Convocation 2015: Thinking Outside the Walls

This year the Bishop's Convocation met for the first time at Bear Creek Mountain Resort and Conference Center in Macungie, PA. The theme was "Thinking Outside the Walls: Surprising Places to be the Church" with **Pastor Barbara Lundblad**, professor emerita of preaching and **Pastor Bryan Berghoef**, a pub theologian from the Reformed Church. We also offered leaders experiential ways to be the church through their participation in Dinner Church and Pub Theology opportunities. In the latter groups discussed two articles on racism. The event was well-received by those who valued Barbara's Spirit-led preaching and Bryan's sharing of practical ideas and experience. Leaders appreciated the time away and the opportunity to connect with colleagues. There were 112 participants registered this year. The evaluations have also given us a list of suggested speakers and topics for 2016.

Conference of Bishops and ELCA Church Council Matters

I attend the Conference of Bishops (COB) meetings, and also serve on the ELCA Church Council. Here are some highlights from the COB in October that were also discussed at the Church Council meeting in November:

- We received and expressed gratitude for “**Declaration on the Way: Church, Ministry and Eucharist**”– a document that explores the consensus achieved between Lutherans and Catholics over the past 50 years of dialogues, both international and regional on the topics of church, ministry and Eucharist. The conference also affirmed the Declaration's 32 Statements of Agreement on these topics, and it requested that the ELCA Church Council accept the statements of agreement and forward the entire document to the 2016 ELCA Churchwide Assembly.
- We discussed and offered perspectives about the formation of a single ELCA roster. The ELCA's Word and Service Task Force continues to oversee this process. A discernment team was also appointed to give particular attention to the “entrance rite” for the roster and to offer a recommendation about this rite for consideration by the 2019 ELCA Churchwide Assembly. The task force is recommending consecration as the entrance rite for the Word and Service leaders and ordination for the Word and Sacrament leaders.
- We received and discussed the new ELCA Candidacy Manual. Two years in the making, the manual is the result of a collaborative review process that included consultations and review of comments and recommendations from bishops, synod candidacy committees, seminary presidents and others.
- We received reports from the presiding bishop, vice president, secretary and treasurer. We engaged in conversations on race and racism, Eucharist presiding, and AMMPARO (Accompanying Migrant Minors with Protection, Advocacy, Representation and Opportunity).
- A major discussion for both the COB and the Church Council was on the report of **TEAC- Theological Education Advisory Committee**. Acknowledging that the denomination is at a “kairos” moment in regards to theological education, the bishops considered three draft recommendations outlined in a report from the ELCA Theological Education Advisory Council (TEAC) – authorized by the ELCA Church Council to address in a holistic way issues on theological education, leadership development, candidacy, call and rostered leaders.

The Conference of Bishops “strongly advocates the necessary reform that best serves the current and future mission of Christ’s church for the sake of the world.... In moving toward a more centralized model for the sake of better stewardship, we call for innovation, responsiveness, accessibility and flexibility. We pledge ourselves to this work with our partners at our seminaries.” The TEAC report is more than 100 pages. In it some very troubling and glaring statistics are identified that are problematic for the sustainability of Theological Education in the ELCA as it is presently constituted.

Winter 2106

LTSP – New Venture with The Lutheran Theological Seminary At Gettysburg

On Wednesday, January 13, 2016, the Boards of The Lutheran Theological Seminary at Philadelphia and the Lutheran Theological Seminary at Gettysburg passed identical resolutions of intent to form a new venture in seminary collaboration. This venture was precipitated by the TEAC report (see fall notes) and the serious financial and enrollment challenges at both schools. Included in the important and urgent opportunities are the issues of securing graduate school accreditation, attracting new students and retaining students during the transition, retaining and attracting faculty, developing more distance learning modules, and dealing with the expensive cost of property on the Philadelphia campus. Since I serve on the executive committee and board of trustees of LTSP, I have been following this new initiative very closely.

Implementation Steps and Timeline

1. At the January 2016 meetings, boards adopted resolutions of intent to create a new unified enterprise, and commit financial resources to conduct the feasibility analyses required for final decisions at subsequent board meetings.
2. January – March 2016: Task forces are organized to secure legal and other professional counsel to explore options for maintaining foundations and manage real estate, determine necessary steps in incorporating new school, prepare preliminary budget projections, etc. Focus groups of key constituents (bishops & synodical leaders, students, faculty and staff, alumni, major donors) are convened to interpret the vision, gain feedback and counsel, and cement ongoing supportive partnerships.
3. April 2016 board meetings: Resolutions are adopted empowering officers to take all necessary steps required to organize the new school, and a transition team is appointed.
4. 2016-17 academic year: Major transitional tasks are accomplished, including incorporation of school, election of governing board, appointment of administration, faculty and staff, and approval of new curricula as well as academic and administrative policies.
5. Summer 2017: New collaborative and unified seminary becomes operational.

President David Lose will be bringing updates at our 2016 Synod Assembly in May.

Forward Together in Faith

Since the unanimous approval of the *Forward Together in Faith* campaign at last year's Assembly, the various campaign teams have been hard at work designing and delivering resources and information. It is time for a more direct approach for asking congregations, rostered leaders, and synod supporters to make their pledge and first gift in 2016. I am calling this "*the year of the ask.*" Under the direction of our Forward Together in Faith chairperson Ellen Daneke, we have engaged the following working teams: **Lead Team** – oversight of all teams, **Donor Team** – donor events and dinners, **MAP Team** – analyze results of MAP surveys. There are 15 congregations taking the online assessment this spring. And 24 congregations took the assessment in 2015. **Navigators Team** – group of leaders trained in interpretation of the MAP to guide congregations in next steps after the assessment is completed. **Connectors Team** – We have discovered that if the pastors and councils are not on board, there is little the connectors can do to move involvement with the campaign along. So we are guiding and encouraging the connectors after the congregational leaders agree to support the Forward Together in Faith campaign in the local congregation. **Communication Team** – The Communication Team put together the tool kit for connectors, and is busy recruiting communication specialists to assist

congregations with media and social ministry skills, tools and best practices. Social media audits are available for congregations.

Spring 2016 Campaign Ask Events

Donor Dinners with the Bishop- Update: we are intentionally working on getting new lists of potential donors to invite. So far I have hosted 5 donor dinners for individuals and couples committed to supporting the campaign. We will need both individual gifts and congregational pledges.

Conference Meetings- Two conferences elected new deans. As I led these elections, I also gave updates on LTSP and LTSG and our Forward Together in Faith campaign. Lower Bucks Conference was held Jan. 26 at St John Hatboro. **Pastor Paul Sorcek** was elected. He will be stepping down from Synod Council in order to assume this new responsibility. Chester Conference was held Feb 14 at Calvary West Chester. **Pastor Ron Wesemann** was elected dean.

Pastors Lunches -- We invited 30 pastors of congregations to be early supporters of the campaign to have lunch meetings with me. These lunches were opportunities for conversation, questions, concerns and a time for me to stress the urgency of funding this campaign for the future of our synodical leaders and congregations, and to give each congregation a suggested gift range based on annual partnership support.

Flint Michigan Appeal

As we now know, 100,000 residents and 9,000 children have been exposed to dangerous levels of lead in their drinking water in Flint Michigan. Southeast Michigan is our companion synod. Salem Lutheran Church in Flint is distributing bottled water and filtration devices. The Synod and SEMI congregations are working with Salem to bring safe water to Flint.

Bob Fisher posted an appeal to help our sisters and brothers in Southeast Michigan respond to this crisis. The Synod Assembly offering this year will be directed to our sister synod for Water relief and reparations in Flint Michigan. Please be generous and bring congregational offerings as well to the Synod Assembly.

"Flint families need immediate relief and the community needs enormous assistance to provide safe water for everyone. We do not yet know the full scope of this crisis, and cannot see when it will be over. On behalf of all people of faith, and as members of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, I invite everyone who can get a safe drink of tap water today to help our sisters and brothers in every way they can." -- Bishop Donald Kreiss, Southeast Michigan Synod ELCA.

You can direct your generous donation to one of two specific causes:

Flint Filters – Help Salem purchase filtration units so families can have safe tap water. Filters cost approximately \$30 and have to be replaced regularly.

Flint Faucets – Help Salem Lutheran replace pipes and install filtration so that it can serve as a safe water filling station for neighbors.

<https://community.ministrylink.org/flint>

Lutheran/Muslim Relations

In December a pig's head was thrown at the door of the Al-Aqsa Islamic Society, which is both a community center and a mosque. Support, care and outrage surrounded not only the Al-Aqsa Mosque but also the whole Muslim community in Philadelphia. Our Greater Philadelphia Religious Leaders Council (RLC), along with the Interfaith Council of Philadelphia was particularly attentive to supporting our Muslim neighbors. On Saturday of the same week the mosque invited neighbors to a barbeque and celebration to thank everyone for their love and support. I wrote a letter to Imam Mohamed Shehata on behalf of the SEPA Synod and the ELCA. (Attached) In turn Imam Shehata wrote a letter to every faith community that stepped up to stand with the Muslim community against xenophobia and hatred. (Attached)

At our February 1, RLC meeting at the Brossman Center of LTSP, I was asked to bring reflections on the topic of *Fear, Security, Faith & Community: Responding to the World We Live In*. I offer this as an example of how our church is responding behind the scenes to promote civil discourse, and respect for faith traditions not our own.

Racial Justice

Given the ongoing racial injustices that are occurring domestically and globally, here in the SEPA Synod we are attempting to address the issues and concerns of racism by renewing our Anti-Racism Team, renaming it the Racial Justice Team and adding events, seminars, and trainings that are appropriate for today's issues and leaders. We found it necessary for more adequate education and ongoing safe conversations about racism in America and in our very own neighborhoods and congregations. Discussions and activities addressing White privilege, internalized oppression, and how White people can be "allies" in this fight for racial justice needs to be a priority for all leaders, all congregations and all generations in our Synod. Here are some of the ways we are hosting conversations and promoting change in attitudes and action.

On January 21st, we co-hosted a live webcast from Trinity Wall Street "*Listen for A Change-Sacred Conversations for Racial Justice*" with The Episcopal Diocese, Lutheran Theological Seminary at Philadelphia, The Anti-Racism Commission of the Dioceses of PA and The Church of St. Martin-in-the-Fields. We had 160 participants registered to explore structural racism and how we might deal with racism in our context.

Our Pastors of Color held a one-day retreat on April 23rd to discuss how racism in American society, the ELCA and in our congregations impacts how they live and lead in the Church today.

As we move forward with intentions and strategies to address racial injustices we encourage Lutheran leaders to become more aware of the cause, effect and cure for racism in our five-county area. We will also make anti-racism training available through our Racial Justice Team for every worshipping community and mission.

Spring 2016

Grace Gathering

Bishop Eaton has issued an invitation to all who would like to experience the energy and inspiration of the ELCA to attend the *Grace Gathering* to be held in partnership with the 2016 ELCA Churchwide Assembly in New Orleans Aug. 10-13. The Grace Gathering will bring people together from across the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. Participants will see

the church in action, worship with Churchwide Assembly voting members, engage in experiential learning, and attend a variety of workshops that will equip congregations and synods with tools to prepare for the 500th anniversary of the Reformation in 2017. Registration for the Grace Gathering is now open. Learn more and register at www.ELCA.org/GraceGathering.

Congregation Council Officers Brunch and Gathering

On March 12, 2016 more than 100 predominantly lay leaders, representing 41 SEPA congregations gathered at the Brossman Center. The main agenda included an update on the Seminary plans, opportunities to support the Forward Together in Faith Campaign and general conversation and networking across conferences and congregations. We had a very good mix of city and suburban congregations and lively interaction, questions and conversation.

Deans

The work of the **Committee of Deans** is critical to the effective functioning of our Synod, particularly as we are working with fewer Synod staff than in previous years. In addition to monthly meetings to discuss congregational transitions, mobility for rostered leaders, and current issues facing leaders and congregations, we meet annually in retreat for scripture, prayer, worship, and time reflecting on and discerning God's direction for our work. Their services to our Synod are invaluable assets to staffing our missional priorities. In the fall and winter of 2015 we said goodbye to: **The Reverend Jackson Haas, and The Reverend Paul Townsend** and thanked them for their time of service as dean.

This year **Pastor Ellen Meissgeier** stepped down as Director of Mobility, after serving as dean of Lower Montgomery conference for 6 years and Director of Mobility for 4 years. We thanked her for her wise, patient and faithful service, especially the many hours she devoted above and beyond the job description to assist in our important transitional ministry.

Deans who served in 2015 and 2016 since last year's assembly are:

The Rev. Ellen Meissgeier, Director of Mobility

(The Rev Marcia Bell newly appointed)

The Rev. Julie DeWerth, Lower Montgomery Conference

The Rev. Jackson Haas, Lower Bucks Conference

(The Rev. Paul Sorcek newly elected)

The Rev. Carlton Rodgers, Central Conference

The Rev. Paul Townsend, Chester Conference

(The Rev. Ron Wesemann newly elected)

The Rev. Leslie Richard, Delaware Conference

The Rev. Ben Krey, Northeast Philadelphia Conference

The Rev. Rev. Serena Sellers, Upper Bucks Conference

The Rev. Rebecca Eisenhardt, Upper Montgomery Conference

The Rev. Marcia Bell, Interim Ministry Dean

(The Rev Christian McMullen newly appointed)

The Rev. Marcia Bell now serves as Director of Mobility on a part time basis, to assist me and Bill Harp, with the administrative and confidential work of the Committee of Deans. **The Rev Donna Wright** has recently been appointed chair of the Transition Ministry Development Team.

In a similar way, **The Rev. Nancy Brown** serves as Director of Candidacy on a part time basis and **Mr. Fred Renigar** serves as Chair of the Candidacy Committee to oversee the many requirements and administration of the candidacy process.

Synod Staff

The Synod staff deserves kudos, congratulations and prayers for serving this Church with resilience, patience, tenacity, good humor and commitment to God's mission on our territory. Please join me in thanking the staff for their tireless efforts and love for Jesus Christ, His Church and the people of God in the ministry we share together.

Ms. Yvonne Curtis - Our Director of Operations brings much expertise in administrative leadership and up to date business protocols to our Synod office. She organizes my work and schedule, oversees the operation of the office and staff, and deftly handles the many demands that come our way every day. **Pastor Patricia Davenport** - continues to serve as our Director for Evangelical Mission and brings her contagious faith and vision to the many ways we are being challenged to attend to evangelical outreach and the proclamation of the Gospel in these new times. **Pastor Brad Burke** has made a strong and impressive start as our new Assistant to the Bishop for Youth, Young Adult Ministry and Faith Formation. Brad also serves as our liaison to the Tanzania Companion Team.

As Assistant to the Bishop for Mission Interpretation **Mr. Robert Fisher** expertly communicates the mission and vision of our Synod. Most recently **Bob won a communications award on behalf of his work at SEPA Synod.** He has been recognized by the Religion Communicators Council (RCC) for his work producing an informational video about Living Gospel Ministries. The DeRose-Hinkhouse Award reception was held in New York City on March 31, 2016 - Kudos and thanks Bob!

Our business office under the excellent leadership of **Mr. Martin Schwab our Senior Accountant** ably and effectively manages the finances and stewardship of our resources. **The Rev. Susan Lang** works well as part time our SEPA Synod Events Coordinator leading the coordination of major Synod events, most importantly, Synod Assembly and the Bishop's Convocation for rostered leaders.

Our Administrative Staff: **Mr. Bill Harp, Ms. Cynta Outterbridge, and Ms. Dionne Jackson** have demonstrated their willingness to adapt to the necessary changes in our office. They come together as a team with a strong faith commitment to our shared ministry, collaboration in all areas, and a sense of pride and competence in managing the many day-to-day challenges and opportunities that come our way. At the end of the summer in 2015 we said goodbye and thank you to Ms. Eileen Zuber who had been working part time to assist in the administration of the Forward Together in Faith Campaign. We welcomed **Ms. Rachel Anderson** to work part time as the campaign assistant. Thankfully Rachel will be ordained June 4 and will serve part time at St Johns Ambler while she also helps at the synod office.

Please take time to thank our Synod staff members as you greet them at Assembly for their excellent work as they serve our Synod graciously and willingly, motivated by their love for Jesus Christ and His Church.

With the collaboration and gifts of our program staff we are finding new ways to *equip the saints and congregations for the work of ministry, in order to build up the body of Christ.*

My appreciation for the support and guidance I have received in leading this Synod are extended to the **Synod Council**, and especially to the Executive Committee: **Ms. Tracey Beasley** (Vice President), **Pastor Karl Richard** (Secretary), **Ms. Janet Neff** (Treasurer), **Mr. Robert Hensil**, **Ms. Joyce Adams and Pastor Tyler Rasmussen**. These leaders and other volunteers bless our work and make it possible for us to share ministry broadly, deeply, and faithfully. Please thank them during the Assembly for their volunteer service to our Lord and this Synod. May Christ continue to bless them with enthusiasm and energy for continued witness to His Church.

With and in Christ,

Claire S. Burkat, Bishop



Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

God's work. Our hands.

Office of the Bishop

December 22, 2015

Imam Mohamed Shehata
Al-Aqsa Islamic Society
1501 Germantown Avenue
Philadelphia, PA 19122

Dear Imam Mohamed Shehata:

As-salamu alaykum

I want you to know I have been thinking of you and continually praying for your faith community Al-Aqsa Islamic Society since the desecration incident earlier this month. I felt inspired to write this letter to my Muslim friends in the Religious Leaders Council as Christians celebrate the birth of Jesus, whom we also call the *Prince of Peace*.

Please know, even as we are distraught by the recent surge in anti-Muslim speech and the corresponding spike in acts of hate and violence against Americans who are Muslim, Sikh, Arab, and South Asian, I hear from thousands of Christians that this hostility and antipathy is abhorred, and that everyday people are gaining courage to stand up to racist and xenophobic speech and behavior.

As people of faith, we are also citizens of our states and of our country. But we are first and foremost people of faith. And so as we frame our response to horrific acts of terrorism, we do so as people of faith. We must not allow fear to undermine the values that stand at the very core of who we are as faith leaders and Americans.

I enclose the letter our presiding bishop, The Rev. Elizabeth Eaton, wrote to the Muslim American Community and sent to the almost 5 million ELCA Lutherans in the United States.

We commit to building a circle of protection around you; we are standing with you. As God gives us strength we will become living Zones of Peace.

May we walk hand in hand into a future where racism, hate, and violence are relics of the past, where differences are celebrated, where peace reigns and our children inherit our joy.

Peace, hope and love be with you,

The Rev. Claire S. Burkat, Bishop



Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
God's work. Our hands.

An open letter to the Muslim American community

Dec. 11, 2015

Dear Muslim Sisters and Brothers,

Grace and peace to you. I am writing on behalf of many Christians in this country who wish to share a word of solidarity, love and hope with you in these difficult days.

In this season of Advent, we, your Christian neighbors, are preparing to celebrate the birth of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, who commanded that "you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart ... [and] you shall love your neighbor as yourself" (Mark 12:30-31, NRSV).

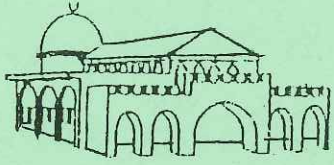
In our love for you, our Muslim neighbors, we are distressed by the ways in which you are being forced to bear the fears held by many in our nation. Therefore, we renew our commitment to find even more effective ways to protect and defend you from words and actions that assault your safety and well-being. We believe God calls us to resist what is divisive, discriminatory, xenophobic, racist or violent, and we want you to look to us as allies and friends.

The global refugee and migrant crisis and the acts of terror committed in this country and around the world are challenges that demand our collective efforts and our common prayers. Therefore, we will seek to stand shoulder to shoulder with you as agents of peace, justice, understanding, welcome and reconciliation for the sake of the world that God so loves.

In this holy season, when we anticipate the light that the darkness cannot overcome (John 1:5, NRSV), we are reminded of God's gift of life abundant for all. Together with you, we are committed to building a stronger society based on the dignity of each human being, the value of diversity, the holiness of creation and the common good. We pledge our partnership and invite our local communities into continued dialogue and engagement to this end.

In peace,

The Rev. Elizabeth A. Eaton
Presiding Bishop
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America



Al-Aqsa Islamic Society

Dear Fellow Supporters,

We really must express our gratitude to the love and support you gave us after the pigs head incident. The hateful crime at Al- Aqsa Islamic Center hurt us all, it was disrespectful and cruel. However, one irresponsible person doesn't count for all. Thanks to you all we were able to get all the motivation we needed to get back on our feet. As some of you know, according to the Quran Islam teaches love and compassion for every human being, no matter their religion.

In order to have an outstanding community we must all stand as one; we thank you for joining our community to make us all one. With the support you gave us at the cook out, Also with the gifts and messages we felt your sympathy towards all Muslims. According to the holly Quran "The true servants of the most Merciful are the ones who behave gently and with humility on earth, and whenever the foolish quarrel with them they reply with words of peace. [Al-Furkan 25:63].

Having said that we forgave that person who committed this shameful act because Allah commands us to forgive those who hurt us.

God explicitly states that the existence of people from different faiths and opinions is something that we have to acknowledge and welcome heartily, for this is how He created and predestined humankind in this world:

"We have appointed a law and a practice for every one of you. Had God willed, He would have made you a single community, but He wanted to test you regarding what has come to you. So

compete with each other in doing well. Every one of you will return to God and He will inform you regarding the things about which you differed." (Surat al-Maida, 48)

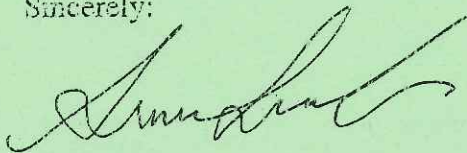
In acknowledgment of this fact, Muslims have an inner love and compassion for people of all faiths, races and nations, for they consider them as the manifestations of God in this world and treat them with a heartfelt respect and love. This is the very basis of communities administered by Islamic morality.

In Concluding, this note we would like to say that, "Some people have kindness in their minds, others have kindness in their hearts. Some people think about being kind, others talk about being kind. But very few people like you actually do kind deeds." – Anonymous

With Peace and love

May God (Allah) bless you all

Sincerely:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Amr al-Baloch', written in a cursive style.

Al Aqsa Islamic Society

Anniversary Celebrants



First marriage at which I officiated at Grace Church: Frances and Donald Smith

The Reverend Paul A. Hagedorn Ordained May 29, 1966

Fifty years of ministry! It hardly seems possible. They were truly blessed years. They needed to be since this empty clay vessel needed constant refilling. Almighty God provided the sustenance through Word and Sacrament, but also through the patience and love of so many sisters and brothers, lay and clergy, during these 50 years and the 30 which were preparatory to them.

I was raised in a parsonage. My father was Ivan H. Hagedorn, my mother Anna Dowling Hagedorn. Although I am very grateful for the preparation for ministry provided by the LTSP and its faculty “giants.” I must say even more equipping came from my parents in that parsonage. Sometimes I accompanied Dad as he made his calls to the members and prospective members of Bethel Lutheran Church, 5th and Sedgley, across from a scrap yard in North Philadelphia. Bethel was the largest congregation in communicants and baptized members in Philadelphia – over 2,000 at one point. In days before the ordination of women, Mom was still the “Co-pastor.” She daily called every member celebrating a birthday or wedding anniversary, taught one of the women’s Sunday School classes, led the Women’s Missionary Society, doubled as Church Secretary, and administrative assistant to the church’s Well Child Clinic, the Confirmation Classes, often numbering over 50 youngsters in each of two classes.

My first call was to Grace Church, West Philadelphia, after an internship at St. Matthew’s (Broad & Mt. Vernon). Both churches were part of Center City Lutheran Parish, whose Director, Robert Neumeyer, spent hours mentoring young pastors and instilling a passion for urban ministry. Grace was blessed by witnessing fivefold growth and with the aid of many, including Bishop Janson and future Bishop Hand, being able to build and move more deeply into the African-American Community of Mantua. I could name dozens of lay people at Grace, so committed to their Lord and Church, who enabled that move and growth to occur. During this pastorate, I also served as the first Chair for the World Hunger Appeal in the SEPA Synod.

There then came a period of four years working as staff for the LCA, first as Director of Designated Advance Gifts, later as Director for Mission in NJ for the Division for Mission in North America. More help from “giants” like Richard Lee Peterman, Kenneth Senft, and Bishop Herluf Jensen. But the urge for congregational ministry had indelibly been instilled, and when the opportunity came to pastor St. Matthew’s-Trinity in Hoboken, NJ, I welcomed it. Again there was so much lay leadership, as St. Matthew’s-Trinity also saw a fivefold increase in membership, particularly in the Latino community, which in this beautifully multi-ethnic church formed a plurality of membership when I left.

There followed a brief call to Trinity, Germantown, where the fragility of the clay vessel was very much revealed. My final pre-retirement call was as mission developer in Newark, NJ. Again, so much strengthening was received from lay persons as a storefront ministry in the Portuguese-speaking section of the “Ironbound” neighborhood bore fruit under my Brazilian successors Pastors Maristela Freiberg and Moacir Weinrich, in what is now a merged congregation, with and in a former UCC church at this neighborhood’s main crossroads.

One facet of my ministry that has been very meaningful to me was as the pastor-supervisor of interns. I think there were about 20 or more, among them Gordon Simmons, William Nelsen, James Echols, Charles Leonard, Richard Perry, Edward Saling, Cibele Kuss, and, as “Urban Resident,” Heidi Neumark. These interns/residents imparted probably more to me than ever I did to them.

Since “retirement,” I have served six congregations as interim pastor in NEPA and MNY synods. Each has gifted me with love and strength through their lay people. Most recently, it was my great joy to return from time-to-time to Grace, Mantua, as supply pastor, and to witness former confirmands and persons that I baptized taking such a strong role in leadership and maintaining the ministry of that wonderful congregation.

I would most certainly be remiss if I omitted the great human influence on my life and ministry – my wife, Fern Lee Hagedorn – whose love and vision constantly inspires, challenges, encourages, and stimulates my ongoing ministry.

I am not ready to quit this ministry to which I have been called. Through what and whom God has given me, I, in turn, feel I have something to share, as do others in my position in life. It is my hope, in returning home to this synod, that I be used within the Church I love.

Report of the Secretary

DEATHS OF ROSTERED LEADERS

The Reverend James Daniels

Pastor Daniels died June 5, 2015. He was born on January 27, 1932.

Pastor Daniels attended Germantown High School in Philadelphia, PA, served in the US Army in White Sands, NM and graduated from Drexel University with an Engineering degree prior to entering the Lutheran Theological Seminary at Philadelphia. He graduated with a Masters of Divinity degree in 1960 and served as a minister in the Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America for over 38 years in various churches. Upon retirement, he served as interim pastor in several churches in the Lebanon and Nashville area for 12 years. He is a member of Faith Lutheran Church in Lebanon, TN.

He is survived by his brother, Robert (Alta) Daniels of Queen Valley, AZ and his wife of 60 years, Nancy Joan Stephens Daniels. James and Nancy have three children; Susan (Paul) Casner, Lebanon, TN, Jim (Karin) Daniels of St. Peters, PA, and David (Elizabeth) Daniels of Lebanon, TN. He has 6 grandchildren; Amanda Daniels, Derek (Tiffany) Daniels, Jamie (Michael) Cooney, Brian Casner, Jesse and Nicholas Daniels. He also has 7 great grandchildren and 2 more due in August. He has many relatives including his nieces and nephews as well.

A memorial service was held June 10, 2015 at Faith Lutheran Church, Lebanon, TN.

The Reverend Ernst G. Schmidt, D.D.

Pastor Schmidt died January 15, 2016. He was born January February 19, 1931.

Pastor Schmidt graduated from Olney High School in 1949, attended Wittenburg College in Springfield, Ohio, and graduated from the Lutheran Theological Seminary in Philadelphia in 1956. He was the founding pastor of Gloria Dei Lutheran Church and founder and CEO of Gloria Dei Communities Corporation, a non-profit that manages Gloria Dei Towers, Gloria Dei Manor and Manor Court, Gloria Dei Estates, Gloria Dei Plaza, Gloria Dei Farms and Luther Park, an assisted living facility.

Reverend Schmidt is survived by daughters Lynn McLaughlin and Julie Kanto (William); son Mark (Maribeth); honorary son Steven Benson, and seven grandchildren, Carryn McLaughlin, Kyle McLaughlin, Erica Schmidt, Lindsey Schmidt, Jack Schmidt, Connor Kanto and Hailey Kanto.

The memorial service was private.

The Reverend Dr. Edward Treichel

Pastor Treichel died January 12, 2016. He was born June 3, 1930.

Pastor Treichel graduated from Muhlenberg College and the Lutheran Theological Seminary at Philadelphia. He served two congregations in Berks County, 19 years as Pastor of Immanuel Lutheran Church in Burhlome and then 20 years as Pastor of St. Paul's Lutheran Church in Ardmore.

Dr. Treichel is survived by his loving wife of 65 years, Gisela (nee Schiek); daughters Valerie Jeske (Michael and Mercella Curtiss); and son, Matthew (Noriko); and grandchildren, Melanie and Andrew.

A memorial service was held January 18, 2016 at Reformation Lutheran Church in Media, PA.

Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod of the ELCA Report of the Secretary – Changes to the Roster April 21, 2015 – April 21, 2016

Ordinations/Commissioning

Mitchell, Jay (06/16/15)
Fowler, Fritz (08/15/15)
Clark, Linnéa (12/12/15)
Ferris, Joshua (10/17/15)
Spigelmyer, Daniel (12/05/15)
Confers Martens, Ann (01/23/16)

Meier, Adrienne from Northwest Ohio
Synod as Assoc. Pastor at St.
Michael Unionville (10/01/15)
Shelor, Wayne from Metropolitan
Washington D.C. Synod to Pastor
Interim Pastor
St. Paul Lutheran Church in Red Hill
(08/02/15)
Stobie, Sarah C. from North/West Michigan
Synod to St. John Lutheran Church
In Centre Square ((08/16/15)
Whitener, Daniel from New Jersey Synod to
Pastor at The Lutheran Church of
God's Love (01/15/16)

Deaths

Daniels, James A. (06/05/15)
Schmidt, Ernst G. (01/15/16)
Treichel, Edward (01/12/16)

Transfers from Other Synods

Hagedorn, Paul (Retired) from Metropolitan
New York Synod (03/17/16)
Krey, Philip D. W. from New England
Synod to Pastor at St. Andrew's
Lutheran Church in Perkasio
(06/01/15)
Norbert, Hahn from Southeastern Synod
to Pastor at Immanuel Somerton
(04/01/15)

Transfers to Other Synods

Dawson, Deborah to Southwestern
Minnesota Synod (10/01/15)
Dougherty, Stacie to Rocky Mountain
Synod (06/14/15)
Hutchinson, Peter to New Jersey Synod
(09/29/15)

Matthias, Robert F. to Lower Susquehanna Synod (08/01/15)
Simmons, Gordon E. to Delaware-Maryland Synod (08/12/15)

Roster Changes

Anderson, Ellen from On Leave to Disability (02/15/15)
Bell, Marcia from Interim Pastor, St. John Centre Square to On Leave to Interim Pastor, Trinity Perkasia (01/03/16)
Brown, Sandra from On Leave to Pastor, (01/17/16)
Burke, Bradley from Executive Director At Lutheran Charities to Assistant to the Bishop (11/01/15)
Chandler, Kris from On Leave, to Pastor Trinity Fort Washington (01/01/16)
Confer Martens, Anne from seminary to Chaplain at The Hill School (01/23/16)
Clark, Linnéa from seminary to Pastor, St. John's Melrose Park (10/12/15)
David, Bruce from Pastor, Messiah Newtown Square to Retirement (06/01/15)
Emmert, Dee from Pastor, St. John Philadelphia (Mayfair) to Pastor, God's Grace Lutheran Community (11/1/15)
Ferris, Joshua from seminary to Pastor, Holy Trinity Narberth (10/17/15)
Fowler, Fritz from seminary to Pastor, University Lutheran of the Incarnation (08/15/15)
Freese, Annette from On Leave to Resignation from Roster (07/01/15)
Godsall-Myers, Stephen from Pastor, Advent Harleysville to Retirement (07/01/16)
Guider, Shirley from Interim Pastor,

Christ's in Oreland to Interim Pastor, Christ Kulpville (06/01/15)
Haas, Jackson from Pastor, Family of God Buckingham to On Leave (01/01/16)
Heiserer, Dana from Pastor, St. Petri-Hope Philadelphia to Pastor, God's Grace Lutheran Community (11/01/15)
Hilgendorf, Kevin from Pastor, St. David's Philadelphia to Retirement (12/01/15)
Hopkins, Robert from Pastor, Bethany (Roxborough) Philadelphia to Saints United (06/17/15)
Jones, Steven from On Leave to Retirement (09/01/15)
Knodel, Katherine from Interim Pastor, St. John Richlandtown to Interim Pastor, St. David's Philadelphia (02/01/16)
London, Anita from On Leave to Resignation from Roster (08/22/15)
Malloy, Dayle from Pastor, On Leave to Retirement (05/01/15)
McKenzie, Mary Julia from On Leave to Interim Director, ELCA Deaconess Community (01/01/16)
McMullan, Christian from Interim Pastor, St. James Limerick to Interim Pastor, St. Luke Gilbertsville (01/01/16)
Mitchell, Jay from seminary to Pastor, Christ Ascension Lutheran Philadelphia (06/16/15)
Mitman, Robert from Pastor, St. Matthew's Perkasia to Retirement (03/01/15)
Naschke, Peter from Pastor, The Lutheran Church of God's Love to On Leave to Retirement (03/01/16)
Neal, Marjorie from Pastor, St. Michael's Kensington to Retirement (05/01/16)
Neale, Patricia from Pastor, St. John Philadelphia (Mayfair) to Executive Director at Feast of Justice (10/1/15)
Neiderhiser, Edward from Chaplain, Gratersford Prison to Retirement (10/01/15)
Quincey, Elaine from Interim Pastor, St Paul Sassamansville to Interim Pastor,

St. Peter's Riegelsville (02/22/16)

Rajashekar, Esther from Pastor, Redeemer
Penndel to Retirement (07/01/15)
Rex, William from Pastor, St. Luke Ferndale
to Port Chaplain Seafarers
International House (05/01/16)
Rigg, Suzanne from St. James Pottstown
to On Leave from Call (06/1/15)
Spigelmyer, Daniel from seminary to Pastor,
Living Word in Roslyn (12/05/15)
Suloff, Jonathan from Pastor, Trinity
Perkasie, to Associate Pastor, St.
Peter, Lafayette Hill (12/01/15)

Vanderslice, William from Pastor, St. Paul
Red Hill to Pastor, Christ's Oreland
(06/01/15)
Weidner, Christopher from Pastor St. Luke's
Gilbertsville to On Leave (12/07/15)
Wiseman, Nancy from Pastor, Emmaus
Road Levittown to Retirement
(09/01/15)
Wright, Donna from Interim Pastor, St.
John's Melrose Park to Interim
Pastor, Holy Trinity Wallingford
(05/26/15)

**Report
of the
Synod Council**

Report of the Synod Council to the Twenty-ninth Annual Assembly of the Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, May 6-7, 2016

Included:

1. Minutes of the Proceedings of the Twenty-eighth Annual Assembly of the Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
“Forward Together in Faith” May 8-9, 2015
 - Approved by the Synod Council June 9, 2015
2. Minutes of the 135th Meeting of the Synod Council of the Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, June 9, 2015
 - Approved by the Synod Council September 15, 2015
3. Minutes of the 136th Meeting of the Synod Council of the Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, September 15, 2015
 - Approved by the Synod Council December 10, 2015
4. Minutes of the 137th Meeting of the Synod Council of the Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, December 10, 2015
 - Approved by the Synod Council February 18, 2016
5. Minutes of the 138th Meeting of the Synod Council of the Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, February 18, 2016
 - Approved by the Synod Council April 21, 2016
6. Summary of Actions by the Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod Council in response to the 2015 Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod Assembly
7. Proposal to amend the Constitution, By-Laws and Continuing Resolutions of the Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod of the ELCA

**MINUTES OF THE PROCEEDINGS
OF THE TWENTY-EIGHTH ANNUAL ASSEMBLY
OF THE SOUTHEASTERN PENNSYLVANIA SYNOD
OF THE EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN AMERICA**

Forward Together in Faith

May 8-9, 2015

**Franconia Mennonite Meetinghouse
Telford, Pennsylvania**

Friday Morning, May 8, 2015

Service of Holy Communion

The Service of Holy Communion began at 9:30 a.m. with Ms. Sheila D. Booker leading the assembly in singing the song, “Wade in the Water.” The Reverend Claire Burkat, Bishop, Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod, was the Presiding Minister and Preacher; Ms. Tracey Beasley, Vice President, the Assisting Minister; and the Reverend Tyler Rasmussen, Prayer Leader.

The Reverend Jennifer Ollikainen read Acts 10:44-48; Mr. Andrew Junttonen, Romans 12:1-8; and Bishop Burkat, Matthew 16:13-19.

Following the sermon, Bishop Burkat installed the following Rostered Leaders Called to Specialized Ministries: the Reverend Bradley Burke, Executive Director, Lutheran Charities; the Reverend Ghislaine Cotnoir, Director of Pastor Care, Lutheran Community at Telford; and the Reverend Paul Xander, Chaplain, Good Shepherd Rehabilitation Network.

At the time of the Prayers of Intercession, Pastor Rasmussen led the assembly in commemorating the synod’s Faithful Departed since the last assembly: the Reverend John D. Kinard, the Reverend Richard D. Stevens, the Reverend Richard E. Boye, and the Reverend Donald G. Doll.

Bishop Burkat’s Sermon

Recounting a conversation that she had recently heard between a receptionist at a car dealership and a customer who was unable to electronically unlock her car door, Bishop Burkat noted, “Sometimes the key we are looking for is right in our hands and we don’t even know it.” She related the receptionist’s experience to her experience as bishop in dealing with members who fear the decline of their congregations. “Have you tried putting the key into the keyhole on the door?” she asked. “Have you tried actually unlocking the door yourself and getting out of your church building and into the world? Have you tried taking your ministry out instead of relying on the cultural conventions to get people in?”

“I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven,” Bishop Burkat read as she quoted Jesus in Matthew 16:19. “Jesus has given us the keys to unlock our ministry on this earth,” she continued. “They are summed up in our theme for this assembly, for our campaign for the Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod: *Forward Together in Faith*. Over these next two days, and throughout the coming year, you are going to be hearing more about these keys: *equipping*,

innovating, communicating, and networking. You are going to hear stories about the ways in which people like you, through congregations like yours, are using these keys to unlock the kingdom of heaven right in their own communities and across the globe.

“Keep in mind – these are not new keys. We’ve had them all along. But sometimes we don’t even recognize the keys already in our hands. We’re so used to the remotes we’ve been using where you just press a button and expect everything to open for you. But those days of easy access are over, my friends. The battery has run out and the chip has gone bad. Twentieth century strategies no longer work in this 21st century world...

“What we’re doing is rediscovering the keys that Jesus gave us – the keys that he gave the apostles over 2,000 years ago. The keys that enabled them to unlock the power of the Holy Spirit and unleash their minds for innovating, their tongues for communicating, their feet for networking, and their time for equipping. We never lost those keys. We’ve had them in our hands all along. We just forgot what they were for and what we can do with them. Or worse, we’ve been using them to keep ourselves locked up in insular compartments, trying to keep the world at bay, or trying to preserve a time, a culture, and perhaps even a piety that has long passed...

“You want to grow your church? Give yourselves away for the sake of the Gospel... When we do that ... we will begin to see the blossoming of the Spirit’s power in ways we could never have managed on our own...

“When I think of all the places where Christians really are threatened, countries where being baptized means facing death, where the notion of taking up one’s cross could, in fact, lead to execution, I have to say that we as Christians in North America would do well to keep our own fears in perspective...

“No one is holding your faith hostage as often happens in places like Kenya, Syria, Somalia, Iraq, Iran, Pakistan, Palestine, Nigeria, and Libya. The only ones who are holding faith hostage in this country are our own people. Us, you and me.

“We hold the keys only because Christ has given them to us. So are we going to keep ourselves locked in? Or will we open up, think outside the church-box, and re-envision what it means to be the Church in the world today?”

During the distribution of communion, worship assistants distributed small keys to those who wanted them.

Order for the Opening of the Assembly

At 11:00 a.m. Bishop Burkat led the Order for the Opening of the 28th annual Assembly of the Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod, Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

Welcome and Introductions

Bishop Burkat welcomed voting members and visitors to the Synod Assembly. She thanked the members of the worship team: the Reverend Jennifer Ollikainen, Chair; Ms. Sheila D. Booker; the Reverend Sandra Brown; the Reverend John Carlson; the Reverend Dwight Mason; the

Reverend Bryan Penman; the Reverend Janet Peterman; and the Reverend Donna Wright. She also thanked the musicians and approximately 60 worship assistants who participated in the assembly's worship.

Bishop Burkat introduced the ELCA Churchwide Representative, the Reverend Dr. Stephen Bouman, Executive Director, Congregational and Syndical Mission, ELCA; the Parliamentarian, the Reverend Dr. Larry Smoose; the Regional Representative of Portico Benefit Services, Ms. Barbara Debski; the Mission Investment Fund Representative, Mr. Gerry Lauro; Synod Officers and Synod Council members; the Committee of Deans; and the Reverend Ellen Meissgeier, Director of Mobility.

She invited rostered leaders, new to the synod since the last assembly, to introduce themselves.

Report of the Registrar

Ms. Cynta Outterbridge, Registrar, reported that the total number of voting members was 476, the total number of voting members registered was 433, and the number of voting members needed for a quorum was 238. Bishop Burkat declared a quorum.

Report of the Secretary

The Reverend Raymond Miller, Secretary, presented, and the assembly approved, the proposed program as printed in *The Bulletin of Reports*. He then presented as information the Rules of Procedure as printed in *The Bulletin of Reports*. By common consent, the assembly approved the following rule: "The Synod Assembly shall limit each speaker from the floor to two minutes, alternating *for* and *against* whenever possible, and allowing someone who has not spoken on a particular issue from the floor to speak before someone speaks a second or additional time."

He reported that the Synod Council approved the minutes of the 27th annual assembly on June 5, 2014.

At the time of Unfinished Business, he stated, the assembly would consider a resolution from the Synod Council on the proposed sabbatical guidelines.

He presented as information the reports of the various committees, task forces, organizations, and institutions of the synod.

Because Secretary Miller had previously indicated that he would not seek re-election as Secretary of this synod, Bishop Burkat thanked him for his sixteen years of service in this position and for the "wise and patient" administrative leadership that he has given to the synod. She and Vice President Beasley then, catching Secretary Miller by surprise, presented a gift to him. In brief remarks, Secretary Miller thanked the assembly for the opportunity to serve the synod as Secretary and for the warm support that he has received over the years.

Forward Together in Faith

Calling this judicatory "a strong synod of people who let their voices be heard," Ms. Ellen Daneke, Chair, *Forward Together in Faith* Campaign, introduced the campaign by asking five questions:

- Is [this] synod ready to make changes for the sake of the gospel?
- Are we ready to network, collaborate, and share ideas?
- Are we ready to take risks and even fail for the sake of the gospel?
- Are we ready to change hearts and minds?
- Are we ready to equip and empower congregations?

She reported that, over the past year, 27 of the synod's congregations were assessed for their readiness for new ministry. They indicated that they were ready "to try new things, work together, and change some things [that] they do. Today they are poised to help re-shape the synod, moving forward together in faith."

The assembly saw the two-minute campaign video.

Report of the Nominating Committee

Ms. Joyce Brown Adams, Nominating Committee, presented the report.

Synod Council

TICKET 1, Secretary (One to be elected for a term ending 2019; nominated by the Synod Council; one nominee required if incumbent, otherwise at least two required)

The Synod Council nominated Mr. Ken Brown and Ms. Pam Castellanos, and the Reverends Karl Richard and William Vanderslice. There were no nominations from the floor. Bishop Burkat declared Ticket 1 closed.

TICKET 2, Synod Council – Clergy (Three to be elected for terms ending 2018)

The committee nominated the Reverends William Rex and Tyler Rasmussen. There were no nominations from the floor. Bishop Burkat declared Pastors Rex and Rasmussen elected.

TICKET 3, Synod Council – Central Philadelphia Conference Representative (Lay, Woman) (One to be elected for a term ending 2018)

The committee nominated Ms. Joyce Maloney. There were no nominations from the floor. Bishop Burkat declared Ms. Maloney elected.

TICKET 4, Synod Council – Upper Bucks Conference Representative (Lay, Man) (One to be elected for a term ending 2018)

The committee presented no nominations and there were no nominations from the floor.

TICKET 5, Synod Council – Youth Representative (Lay, Man) (One to be elected for a term ending 2017)

The committee nominated Mr. Henry Strobel. There were no nominations from the floor. Bishop Burkat declared Mr. Strobel elected.

TICKET 6, Synod Council – Lay Man at Large (One to be elected for a term ending 2018)

The committee nominated Mr. Henry Boyd and Mr. Robert Hensil. There were no nominations from the floor. Bishop Burkat declared Ticket 6 closed.

TICKET 7, Synod Council – Lay Woman at Large (One to be elected for a term ending 2018)

The committee nominated Ms. Susan Pursch and Ms. Sandra Zimmerman. There were no nominations from the floor. Bishop Burkat declared Ticket 7 closed.

TICKET 8, CHURCHWIDE ASSEMBLY, YOUNG ADULT, Age 18-30, LAY MAN (One lay man to be elected)

The committee nominated Mr. Douglas Parry. There were no nominations from the floor. Bishop Burkat declared Mr. Parry elected.

TICKET 9, CHURCHWIDE ASSEMBLY, YOUTH, Confirmed, not graduated from high school at the time of election, LAY WOMAN (One lay woman to be elected)

The committee nominated Ms. Emily Fowler. Nominated from the floor was Ms. Emily Thomas. Bishop Burkat declared Ticket 9 closed.

TICKET 10, CHURCHWIDE ASSEMBLY, CLERGY (Six ordained ministers to be elected)

The committee nominated the Reverends Regina Goodrich, Jennifer Ollikainen, and Karl Richard. Nominated from the floor were the Reverends Benjamin Krey, Carlton Rodgers, Serena Sellers, Brian Penman, Dana Heiserer, Laura Tancredi, Marissa Krey, Sandra Brown, Mukesh Cheedie, Thomas Lang, Karen Sease, Moses Dennis, and Christopher Weidner. Bishop Burkat declared Ticket 10 closed.

TICKET 11, CHURCHWIDE ASSEMBLY, LAY MEN (Four lay men to be elected)

The committee nominated Mr. Tom Salber. Nominated from the floor were Mr. Karl Segletes and Mr. Charles Horn. Bishop Burkat declared Mr. Salber, Mr. Segeletes, and Mr. Horn elected.

TICKET 12, CHURCHWIDE ASSEMBLY, LAY WOMEN (Four lay women to be elected)

The committee nominated Ms. Joyce Brown Adams, Ms. Doreen Kinzler, Ms. Jill Meuser, Ms. Susan Pursch, and Ms. Sandra Zimmerman. Nominated from the floor were Sister Jane Roper, Ms. Margie Pendarvis-Wright, and Ms. Carrie Johnston. Bishop Burkat declared Ticket 12 closed.

Report of the Treasurer

Ms. Janet Huber Neff, Treasurer, highlighted portions of the *Financial Statements and Report of Independent Certified Public Accountants*, dated January 31, 2015. She reported that the synod's Total Cash and Investments as of January 31, 2015, were \$1,989,681, and that the synod's Total Net Assets as of January 31, 2015, were \$3,117,997, of which \$1,996,178 was unrestricted; \$420,403, temporarily restricted; and \$701,416, permanently restricted. The synod's income for fiscal year 2014 consisted of Mission Support from congregations, \$2,148,802; Other Contributions, \$637,713; Registration Fees, \$241,187; Investment Income, \$182,958; and Proceeds from the Sale of Closed Church Properties, \$802,703.

The synod's Total Expenses for 2014 were \$3,487,665, consisting of Operating Expenses, \$1,300,126; ELCA Proportionate Share (50%), \$1,076,047; Property Management, \$149,277; Distributions to Other Agencies, \$404,987; Mission Expenses, \$464,445; and Grants to Congregations, \$92,783.

Ms. Neff identified 2014 Actual Expenses by Major Purpose: Partnerships: \$1,646,614; Mission: \$464,445; Office of the Bishop: \$905,201; Synod Administration: \$397,889; and Leadership: \$73,516.

Financial mission support provided by congregations to the synod, Ms. Neff reported, has been on a slight increase since 2012. In 2014, 81 of the synod's 157 congregations maintained or increased their mission support. As a percentage of congregational regular giving, 27 churches gave 10% or more, 66 gave 5-9%, 44 gave 0.1 to 4.9%, and 21 furnished no support.

Ms. Neff presented the following resolution:

S. A. 15.05.01 RESOLVED THAT the Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod Assembly receives as information the report of the auditors of the synod's financial statements for the fiscal year ending 2014.

The Reverend Charles Leonard asked if the \$20,000 grant in support of the African Descent Strategy, allocated by a previous synod assembly, had been made available to the strategy's task force. Bishop Burkat replied that the synod office had been waiting for the task force to request the funds.

The assembly approved the resolution.

Report of the Finance Committee

In presenting the proposed 2016 budget, Pastor Karl Richard, Chair, Finance Committee, stated that "this budget is not about dollars but about people... This is our budget. It represents what we will do in ministry." Citing examples of several ministries serving those in need, he urged the assembly to support the proposed budget and, by so doing, "make a difference in our world as we go out from our church walls."

He presented the following resolution, which the assembly approved:

S. A. 15.05.02 RESOLVED THAT the Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod Assembly adopts the 2016 budget as presented.

Forward Together in Faith: Equipping

"Thanks to the significant amount of work done by the people of the synod, God has cast a vision," said Mr. Jeff Kjellberg, Principal Owner, Kairos and Associates, the Christian resource development group contracted by this synod for its *Forward Together in Faith* campaign. "Now ... is the time for the people of [this synod] to take on the work God is dreaming for them to do." Mr. Kjellberg and Bishop Burkat then introduced the four components of the synod's three-year campaign: equipping, innovating, communicating, and networking.

The assembly then saw a “Dan on the Street” video, which depicted people offering suggestions for what the role of the church should be in today’s world.

“We need to remember that it is the 21st Century,” continued Mr. Kjellberg, “and we need to be creative and imaginative to meet the incredible amount of challenges and to do the work to meet those challenges.”

Ms. Teri Lanan, Trinity, Lansdale, described her congregation’s experience as they developed their own three-year campaign.

Bishop Burkat described some of the specifics planned to equip leaders in the church: to develop a “mission school” for the synod’s lay and rostered leaders, to use distance learning and social media to develop programs to equip leaders, to facilitate sharing of expertise and best practices, to provide continuing education grants, to offer congregational access to the assessment tool, and to raise scholarship funds for seminarians.

Prayer

Mr. Fritz Fowler, University/Incarnation, Philadelphia, led the assembly in prayer.

The assembly recessed for lunch.

Friday Afternoon, May 8, 2015

Prayer

Mr. Douglas Parry, Trinity, Lansdale, led the assembly in prayer.

Balloting

The Reverend Rebecca Eisenhart, Chair, Committee on Elections, explained the balloting procedure. The assembly then cast votes for Ticket 1, Ballot 1; Ticket 6, Ballot 1; and Ticket 7, Ballot 1.

Forward Together in Faith: Innovating

“Innovators have an innate ability to create something out of nothing” said the Reverend Patricia Davenport, Director of Evangelical Mission. “They have a passion for transformation. Innovators are focused on meeting needs and solving problems. Innovators are connected collaborators between church and community.” She cited the examples of the following initiatives: *Diakonia* graduates gathering innovative ideas and best practices; New Creation, a church in the “Philadelphia Badlands,” going under bridges to meet addicted and homeless people, feeding them, and providing resources; the one confirmation class offered cooperatively by nine Northeast Philadelphia Conference congregations; and the ministry of Rhawnhurst Turning Point, where “young people are compelling us to new creative things.”

In a video, the Reverend Keith Anderson, Upper Dublin, Ambler, described Pub Theology, which meets outside the church building and reaches unchurched people; the Reverend Dana Heiserer, St. Petri-Hope, Philadelphia, described Lydia’s Closet, a new ministry offering free

clothing; the Reverend Linda Manson described Living Gospel Ministries, which helps formerly incarcerated people find jobs, housing, and their way back into the community; and the Reverend Matt Lenahan, Zion, Akron, Pennsylvania, described the ministry of Peter's Porch, which provides a meal and the distribution of groceries to those in poverty.

Resolution Task Force: Report on Transitional Ministry

In response to **S. A. 14.05.07**, Ms. Teri Lanan, Chair of the Resolution Task Force, reviewed the report of the Resolution Task Force on Transitional Ministry. She noted that the complete report is available at the synod's website. She described interim ministry as a journey, "an experience that is unique to every congregation."

The Reverend Nancy Wiseman asked whether the task force looked at other models for the congregational transition process, including ones from secular sources. Ms. Lanan indicated that the task force could not find any other significant models.

The Reverend Robert Kilby indicated that the interim process did not work at Spirit and Truth, Yeadon, and that it devastated congregation.

The Reverend Donna Wright noted that the interim process is remarkably flexible and that the basic model should not be abandoned but added to.

The Reverend Christopher Franz observed that the report appears "defensive" and does not seem willing to look at other options.

Noting the value of interim ministry, the Reverend Don Wright said, "[Interim ministry] is work that needs to be diligently undertaken."

Bishop Burkat called for the order of the day and requested that any further comments be submitted to the task force in writing.

Forward Together in Faith: Communicating

"So many communications channels are available today," said Pastor Keith Anderson, "and they all can be used to share the gospel. And therein lies the challenge for the church." He noted, "Fewer people know what God and church are about. There is a cultural distance now and less engagement in faith. We need to bridge the gap. The church, which has been used to people listening, can't take that for granted anymore. The church needs to stop telling people and start listening to people."

The assembly then saw another "Dan on the Street" video, this one asked people, "What does it mean to be Lutheran?"

Mr. Robert Fisher, Assistant to the Bishop for Mission Interpretation and Communication, told the assembly, "Technology is changing very quickly. It's hard to keep up. We need to pay attention. We need to know our audience. [When we adopt] new things, we will make mistakes. Everything we invest in won't last. But we have to try." He closed, "The synod wants to help congregations become fluent in media, to connect with their audiences, and to help members share faith online with their friends who have no church connections."

Recognition of Congregational Anniversaries

Bishop Burkat recognized the following congregations, which were celebrating significant anniversaries: St. Paul, Ardmore, 250th; Zion, Zion Hill, 175th; St. Paul, Norristown, 150th; Grace, Royersford, 125th; and St. Mark, Conshohocken, 125th.

Forward Together in Faith: Networking

“We are only limited in our ability to network by the limits of our imaginations,” said the Reverend James Goodyear, Gloria Dei, Huntingdon Valley.

The assembly then saw videos about successful networking initiatives in the synod: the Welcome Church and its Welcome Threads, a program which empowers people to make use of their skills and discover self-esteem; and the Food Insecurity Alliance, coordinated by Resurrection, Yardley, and God’s Love, Newtown.

“Helping people find a purpose is where a network begins,” concluded Pastor Goodyear. “Networking [takes place at] the intersection of our gifts and the world’s needs.”

Report of the Churchwide Organization

Comparing the church today to the sick man who was lying by the pool at the Sheep’s Gate in Jerusalem (John 5:1-9), the ELCA Representative, Pastor Stephen Bouman said, “A church in mission” is called to face “paralysis with courage.” He continued, “The only question worth asking is, ‘Do you want to be made well?’ This is what I hear this synod saying.”

“We have to hitch our hope with our history,” he said. “When a synod rises up, it recognizes a need for change.” It puts its emphasis on congregational vitality and innovation, being together as a synod community, and the faith of its people.

He thanked the synod for its “robust mission support” and for holding its partnership support at 50% of congregational giving. Listing various churchwide ministries, such as World Hunger, Disaster Response, the Malaria Campaign, the Fund for Leaders, and new congregation starts, he proclaimed, “We are the church together for the life of the world.” Noting the many missionaries that the ELCA sends across the world, he added, “The greatest mission trip [begins] every Monday morning.”

He thanked the synod for providing leaders to the wider church: Church Council member, Pastor Raymond Miller; Mission Director, Pastor Patricia Davenport; former ELCA Vice President, Dr. Addie Butler; newly appointed Director of the ELCA Youth Gathering, Ms. Molly Beck Dean; and members of various ELCA committees and task forces.

The assembly then saw the ELCA’s synod assembly video, “We Are Church.”

Prayer

The Reverend Dwight Mason led the assembly in prayer.

The assembly recessed to participate in forums, to visit the Mission Center, and for dinner.

Friday Evening, May 8, 2015

Prayer

Ms. Cheryl Lafferty, Rhawnhurst Turning Point, Philadelphia, led the assembly in prayer.

First Report of the Committee on Elections and Further Balloting

Pastor Eisenhart reported the results for Ticket 1, Ballot 1; Ticket 6, Ballot 1; and Ticket 7, Ballot 1.

TICKET 1, Secretary (One to be elected for a term ending 2019)

393 total ballots, 393 valid ballots, 197 votes needed to elect.

William Vanderslice, 139; Karl Richard, 128; Pam Castellanos, 67; Ken Brown, 59.

Bishop Burkat declared that the names of Pastors Vanderslice and Richard would move forward to the second ballot for this ticket.

TICKET 6, Synod Council, At Large Representative, Lay Man (One to be elected for a term ending 2018)

388 total ballots, 388 valid ballots, 195 votes needed to elect.

Robert Hensil, 254; Henry Boyd, 134.

Bishop Burkat declared Mr. Hensil elected.

TICKET 7, Synod Council, At Large Representative, Lay Woman (One to be elected for a term ending 2018)

393 total ballots, 393 valid ballots, 197 votes needed to elect.

Susan Pursch, 226; Sandra Zimmerman, 167.

Bishop Burkat declared Ms. Pursch elected.

The assembly cast votes for Ticket 1, Ballot 2; Ticket 9, Ballot 1; Ticket 12, Ballot 1; and Ticket 10, Ballot 1.

First Report of the Committee on Reference and Counsel

Ms. Jill Meuser, Chair, Committee on Reference and Counsel, reported that the committee had received a resolution on world hunger from the Hunger Ministry Team after the deadline but that the team had withdrawn the resolution and provided a substitute.

She asked whether the assembly wished to grant permission to consider the substitute resolution on world hunger. The assembly approved by the required 2/3rds vote.

She reported that the committee had received a resolution on “solidarity with persecuted Christians” after the deadline and asked whether the assembly wished to consider that resolution. The assembly approved by the required 2/3rds vote.

Introduction of Candidates for Roster Status

After introducing the members of the committee, the Reverend Nancy Brown, Director of Candidacy, and Mr. Fred Renigar, Chair, Candidacy Committee, presented the following candidates approved for ordination and originating in this synod: Mr. David Lembo (awaiting call), the Reverend Linda Manson (assigned to this synod), the Reverend Angel Marrero-Ayala (assigned to the New England Synod), Ms. Kat Steinly (awaiting call), and the Reverend Gerald Tancredi (assigned to this synod).

They then presented the following candidates approved for ordination and assigned from other synods to this synod: Ms. Rachel Anderson (New England Synod, awaiting call), Mr. Jay Berry (Upstate New York Synod, awaiting call), Ms. Linnea Clark (New England Synod, awaiting call), Mr. Fritz Fowler (Upstate New York Synod, awaiting call), Mr. Jay Mitchell (New England Synod, awaiting ordination), and Mr. Daniel Spigelmyer (Upper Susquehanna Synod, awaiting call).

Evening Prayer

The Reverend Christopher Weidner and Ms. Yvonne Lembo led the assembly in worship.

The assembly recessed.

Saturday Morning, May 9, 2015

Worship

The Reverend Esther Rajashekar; the Eddie Mann Band; the Children’s Choir from St. James, Pottstown, under the direction of Mr. Bruce Tonkin; and Ms. Cassie Singh-Hueter led worship. Pastor Stephen Bouman preached the sermon.

Pastor Bouman’s Sermon

On a visit to Jerusalem, Pastor Bouman described how he found himself in the midst of a potentially violent confrontation between Palestinians and Israeli soldiers as he left the Church of the Holy Sepulchre. Approached by a stranger who offered to lead him to a safe place, Pastor Bouman followed the stranger to the Via Dolorosa. At that point, the stranger, identifying himself as a Palestinian Christian, invited Pastor Bouman to his home. Making reference to Luke 10:1-11, Pastor Bouman noted how Jesus instructed his disciples, when a neighbor invites them into the neighbor’s home, to eat what is set before them, cure the sick who are there, and say, “The kingdom of God has come near to you.” “We become companions with those with whom we share bread,” Pastor Bouman said.

“Mission is people seeking people,” Pastor Bouman stated. “Mission is not about categorizing people’s needs and meeting those needs.” As he learned from the Palestinian Christian who

invited him into his home, Pastor Bouman acknowledged, “We need to learn to listen to our table hosts. Who is to say that God is not there [among them]?”

“People in our society have a negative image of the church,” continued Pastor Bouman. “The problem is that there is an irreducible gap between the church and Jesus. We need to free Jesus from that self-serving image and address people’s brokenness. The crucified and risen Lord has promised to be with us and calls us to go with him to every place where [he] intends to go.”

During his visit, Pastor Bouman asked his Palestinian host, “What is the answer to the agony of your country?” “Patience and God,” his host replied. Refusing the money that Pastor Bouman offered him, his host thanked him for praying for his family. He then asked for Pastor Bouman’s address so that he could keep in touch with him. Then he led Pastor Bouman out to the Via Dolorosa, the road on which Jesus walked to the cross.

Second Report of the Committee on Elections and Further Balloting

Pastor Eisenhart reported the results for Ticket 1, Ballot 2; Ticket 9, Ballot 1; Ticket 10, Ballot 1; and Ticket 12, Ballot 1.

TICKET 1, SECRETARY (One to be elected for a term ending 2019)

281 total ballots, 281 valid ballots, 141 votes needed to elect.

Karl Richard, 149; William Vanderslice, 132.

Bishop Burkat declared Pastor Richard elected.

TICKET 9, CHURCHWIDE ASSEMBLY, YOUTH, Confirmed, not graduated from high school at the time of election, LAY WOMAN (One lay woman to be elected)

164 total ballots, 164 valid ballots, 83 votes needed to elect.

Emily Fowler, 111; Emily Thomas, 71.

Bishop Burkat declared Ms. Fowler elected.

TICKET 10, CHURCHWIDE ASSEMBLY, CLERGY (Six ordained ministers to be elected)

284 total ballots, 284 valid ballots, 143 votes needed to elect.

Jennifer Ollikainen, 175; Moses Dennis, 123; Carlton Rodgers, 116; Karl Richard, 111; Ben Krey, 111; Serena Sellers, 110; Regina Goodrich, 105; Marissa Krey, 105; Sandra Brown, 99; Mukesh Cheedie, 89; Christopher Weidner, 86; Karen Sease, 72; Bryan Penman, 69; Thomas Lang, 63; Dana Heiserer, 62; and Laura Tancredi, 62.

Bishop Burkat declared Pastor Jennifer Ollikainen elected and that the names of Pastors Moses Dennis, Carlton Rodgers, Karl Richard, Ben Krey, Serena Sellers, Regina Goodrich, Marissa Krey, Sandra Brown, Mukesh Cheedie, and Christopher Weidner would move forward to the second ballot for this ticket.

TICKET 12, CHURCHWIDE ASSEMBLY, LAY WOMEN (Four lay women to be elected)

280 total ballots, 281 valid ballots, one invalid ballot, 141 votes needed to elect.

Susan Pursch, 163; Jill Meuser, 144; Sandra Zimmerman, 138; Carrie Johnston, 128; Joyce Brown Adams, 122; Doreen Kinzler, 119; Jane Roper, 112; Margie Pendarvis-Wright, 99.

Bishop Burkat declared Ms. Pursch and Ms. Meuser elected and that the names of Ms. Zimmerman, Ms. Johnston, Ms. Adams, and Ms. Kinzler would move forward to the second ballot for this ticket.

The assembly cast votes for Ticket 10, Ballot 2, and Ticket 12, Ballot 2.

Recognition of Ms. Joanne Carlson

Bishop Burkat announced that Ms. Joanne Carlson, Assistant to the Bishop for Global Vision and Events, is retiring from the synod staff. During her time of service, she noted, Ms. Carlson has coordinated 25 synod assemblies, the recruitment of volunteers for the 1999 Churchwide Assembly at Philadelphia, and numerous trips to Tanzania and the Czech Republic. She described Ms. Carlson as someone with “a true missionary heart.”

Bishop Burkat invited Ms. Carlson to come forward and, joined by her husband, the Reverend John Carlson, their daughters and sons-in-law, and their grandchildren, she and Ms. Yvonne Curtis, Director of Operations, presented a gift to Ms. Carlson.

In her remarks, Ms. Carlson said that she was “shocked” by how well this moment of recognition had been kept from her. Describing the Franconia Mennonite Meetinghouse as “her home away from home” since 1999, she thanked the meetinghouse staff. Stating that she grew up as a Roman Catholic and later became a Lutheran, she said that she treasured both “the background from which she came and the heritage which she claimed.” She concluded by saying to the assembly, “This weekend belongs to you. Thanks for coming!”

Report of the Lutheran Theological Seminary at Philadelphia

Admitting that he is “only nine months into this new gig,” the Reverend Dr. David Lose, President, Lutheran Theological Seminary at Philadelphia, said that he felt privileged to bring greetings to the assembly.

Quoting Romans 10:14-15, “How beautiful are the feet of those who bring good news,” he said, “It takes community to raise up leaders for the church.” He continued, “This is not an easy time to be the church, because we are living in an ever-changing world that challenges our notions of what it means to be a congregation and a synod and a seminary.” He offered two convictions: (1) “none of us knows how to be church in this new time,” and (2) “in this room and across the church, God has blessed us with sufficient gifts, experience, and grace, so that we will be able to figure out what it means to be faithful in this time.”

“To be a good partner means to tell the truth,” confessed President Lose and then, speaking candidly, he acknowledged the financial hardships and budget deficits that the seminary has faced in recent years. Describing the situation as “urgent but not dire,” he said that the seminary faces a \$2,000,000 deficit in the current operating year. Though the seminary has a projected income of \$5,000,000 for this year, it has responded to its anticipated deficit by reducing

spending from \$11,000,000 to \$7,000,000. A recent bequest of over \$7,000,000, he added, has given the seminary “a second chance.”

He also said that the seminary is seeking to develop significant partnerships with Palmer Theological Seminary around shared space, as well as with social ministry organizations and community groups. He anticipated that new energy would emerge on campus, attracting more bright and capable students. “We cannot do it alone,” he concluded. Declining to make an appeal for additional financial gifts, he thanked the synod for its support and prayers, for helping to identify people with gifts for ministry, and for “your faithful work and ministry in so many settings. God is working through you and in you. It is not easy work but it is good work. Thank you and I thank God for you!”

Forward Together in Faith

Ms. Cheryl Lafferty announced the winners of the *Forward Together in Faith* drawing: Innovating, Christ the King Deaf, West Chester; Communicating, Faith, Philadelphia; Networking, Good Shepherd, Coatesville; and Equipping, Christ, Pipersville. So that congregations would be supported and the synod strengthened, she invited each of the synod’s congregations to appoint two persons to serve as “congregational connectors” for the campaign.

Bishop Burkat reported that 100% of Synod Council members have made a commitment to the campaign.

Welcome Home – Missionaries Susan and Tom MacPherson

Ms. Nancy Shaw, Chair, Tanzania Companionship Team, introduced a video on the Irente Children’s Home, a mission of the North-East Diocese of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Tanzania, where Ms. Susan MacPherson and Mr. Tom MacPherson, ELCA missionaries and members of St. John, Philadelphia (Mayfair), served for the past three years.

Welcoming the MacPhersons home, Bishop Burkat invited them to come forward and to offer remarks. Mr. MacPherson expressed “extensive thanks” to all of those who played a role in their time of service. “This synod planted so many seeds,” he said, “and these seeds were the service projects of many of the synod’s congregations.”

“You never know how God is going to use you,” Ms. MacPherson said. “Your gifts have had an impact on so many people, spreading out like concentric circles... You were an example of Christ’s love to the children of Irente.” The lesson that she learned from Irente is that God comes first in everything. “We never get tired of talking about our work at Irente,” she concluded. “Thank you for letting us represent you in Tanzania.”

Bishop Burkat then presented a gift to Mr. and Ms. MacPherson.

Celebrating Sebastian Kolowa Memorial University (SEKOMU)

Bishop Burkat invited Ms. Susan Pursch to come forward, noting that Ms. Pursch played an instrumental role in coordinating the synod’s partnership with the North-East Diocese of the Evangelical Lutheran of Tanzania in “building a college on the territory of the diocese to offer degrees in special education and other professions that would serve people with special needs in

Tanzania,” a college that later took the name of Sebastian Kolowa Memorial University (SEKOMU). She said that Ms. Pursch provided leadership in raising funds and sharing resources from this synod for use at the college. “A grateful synod and diocese thanks you and the [SEKOMU Coordinating] committee for helping to build a university from the ground up,” she said. (The SEKOMU Coordinating Committee has been incorporated into the Tanzania Companionship Team.)

Bishop Burkat and Ms. Shaw then presented a gift to Ms. Pursch.

“God gets all the glory and honor,” responded Ms. Pursch. Emphasizing that SEKOMU was truly a partnership between the diocese and the synod, she noted, “We were invited and, from the beginning, we knew that we were not in charge... We will always be grateful that we had this rare opportunity to start a new university in a small village in another land.”

Third Report of the Committee on Elections and Further Balloting

Pastor Eisenhart reported the results for Ticket 10, Ballot 2, and Ticket 12, Ballot 2.

TICKET 10, CHURCHWIDE ASSEMBLY, CLERGY (Five ordained ministers to be elected)

377 total ballots, 377 valid ballots, 189 votes needed to elect.

Moses Dennis, 221; Carlton Rodgers, 209; Ben Krey, 182; Christopher Weidner, 173; Marissa Krey, 169; Serena Sellers, 167; Regina Goodrich, 166; Sandra Brown, 163; Mukesh Cheedie, 159; and Karl Richard, 150.

Bishop Burkat declared Pastors Moses Dennis and Carlton Rodgers elected and that the names of Pastors Ben Krey, Christopher Weidner, Marissa Krey, Serena Sellers, Regina Goodrich, and Sandra Brown would move forward to the third ballot for this ticket.

TICKET 12, CHURCHWIDE ASSEMBLY, LAY WOMEN (Two lay women to be elected)

380 total ballots, 380 valid ballots, 191 votes needed to elect.

Joyce Brown Adams, 202; Sandra Zimmerman, 185; Carrie Johnston, 171; and Doreen Kinzler, 143.

Bishop Burkat declared Ms. Adams elected and that the names of Ms. Zimmerman and Ms. Johnston would move forward to the third ballot for this ticket.

The assembly cast votes for Ticket 10, Ballot 3, and Ticket 12, Ballot 3.

Second Report of the Committee on Reference and Counsel

Ms. Jill Meuser presented the following resolution, which the Committee on Reference and Counsel recommended for approval:

World Hunger

S. A. 15.05.03 Whereas 868 million people in our world are hungry; 1.2 billion live in extreme poverty on less than \$1.25 a day; and 49 million people in the United States – one

out of every six people - including 16 million children experience hunger or the risk of hunger;*

Whereas each day in the our world, 18,000 children die from hunger or preventable diseases (1 every 4 seconds);**

Whereas one in four children in Pennsylvania live in food insecure households;

Whereas hunger experts estimate that for an annual cost of \$13 billion dollars per year the nutritional needs of the world's poorest people could be met;***

Whereas ELCA World Hunger responds to hunger and poverty in the United States and around the world by addressing root causes through a comprehensive program of relief, education, advocacy, sustainable development, community organizing, and networking by which people are connected to the resources they need to lift themselves out of poverty;

Whereas ELCA World Hunger responds to Christ's call to find him in the "least of these" (Matthew 25) and "until all are fed" serving with compassion people who are vulnerable, paying focused attention to the full participation of women and the needs of children;

Whereas in 2016 the focus of the Campaign for the ELCA will be ELCA World Hunger;

BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Hunger Ministry Team develop mechanisms for congregational outreach and share congregational initiatives that work to alleviate hunger.

BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Hunger Ministry Team identify means for congregations to continue or increase their support for eliminating hunger in their local communities, and ways to advocate for elimination of the causes of hunger and poverty in the state of Pennsylvania, and by support of ELCA World Hunger.

BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Hunger Ministry Team identify mechanisms for collaboration for eliminating hunger and advocating to alleviate the underlying causes of food insecurity.

BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Hunger Ministry Team work with the Synod Assembly Planning Team to include hunger and food insecurity issues as part of the 2016 Synod Assembly, including inviting congregations to share their stories about local, state and ELCA World Hunger activities.

**Statistics from the ELCA World Hunger Appeal web site.*

*** "18,000 children die every day from hunger, U.N. says." USA Today (Feb. 17, 2007).*

**** Statistics from Bread for the World.*

Pastor Marissa Krey said that the Hunger Ministry Team will do this work but that it is asking for the gift of accountability and the full support of the assembly in this effort.

The assembly approved the resolution.

Solidarity with Persecuted Christians

Ms. Meuser presented the following resolution, which the Committee on Reference and Counsel recommended for approval:

S. A. 15.05.04 Whereas when one part of the body of Christ suffers every part suffers with it (1Cor. 12:26). We grieve for the persecution of Christians everywhere and especially of fellow believers who are threatened with displacement from their homes, bodily injury, and even death;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod declares its solidarity with fellow Christians everywhere and all people persecuted for their faith, that it makes public this statement of such solidarity, and that it encourages congregations to promote reconciliation that ends persecution.

The Reverend Richard Mathisen reported that this resolution had come as a request from his congregation, Immanuel, Philadelphia (Somerton).

The assembly approved the resolution.

Prayer

Ms. Judie Funk, Living God, Honeybrook, led the assembly in prayer.

The assembly recessed for lunch.

Saturday Afternoon, May 9, 2015

Prayer

The Reverend Marissa Krey led the assembly in prayer.

Fourth Report of the Committee on Elections and Further Balloting

Pastor Eisenhart reported the results for Ticket 10, Ballot 3, and Ticket 12, Ballot 3.

TICKET 10, CHURCHWIDE ASSEMBLY, CLERGY (Three ordained ministers to be elected)

338 total ballots, 338 valid ballots, 170 votes needed to elect.

Sandra Brown, 175; Marissa Krey, 170; Ben Krey, 162; Regina Goodrich, 159; Christopher Weidner, 150; and Serena Sellers, 141.

Bishop Burkat declared Pastors Sandra Brown and Marissa Krey elected and that the names of Pastors Ben Krey and Regina Goodrich and would move forward to the fourth ballot for this ticket.

TICKET 12, CHURCHWIDE ASSEMBLY, LAY WOMEN (One lay woman to be elected)

338 total ballots, 338 valid ballots, 170 votes needed to elect.

Sandra Zimmerman, 196, and Carrie Johnston, 142.

Bishop Burkat declared Ms. Zimmerman elected.

The assembly cast votes for Ticket 10, Ballot 4.

Bishop Burkat's Address

“I have to tell you,” Bishop Burkat told the assembly, “how exciting this assembly has been for me. This is my ninth time standing at this spot to address you as your bishop. Nearly every assembly has given me reason to hope in what God is doing here in Southeastern Pennsylvania. But this one has been particularly energizing for me because of the conversations I’m hearing that indicate to me the kind of renewal we are seeing in this synod. For some, just the sense of excitement and permission to get out of the building is a welcome relief. For others, taking the message of the Gospel on the road, out and about, is refreshing. Isn’t that what synod means? On the way together? ...

“As I said in yesterday’s sermon, this was the adventure and risk of the first century Christians. And now it is the adventure and risk of the twenty-first century Christians. Of course, there are some who would not see the future we face as being an adventure. I’ve been hearing for many years the voices of those who are sounding the death knell of the church, wringing their hands at the drain of membership and finances from our long-cherished mainline churches. But I have to say: Those conversations simply are not helpful, nor are they accurate. What I want us to do together for the next few minutes is to practice shifting our *thinking* and *seeing* to begin to recognize patterns that indicate not the demise of the church, but, in fact, the emergence of new designs and configurations...

“Diana Butler Bass in her book Christianity after Religion reminds us that, in the last few centuries, Western Christianity ordered faith in a particular way. Catholics and Protestants taught that *belief* came first, *behavior* came next, and finally *belonging* resulted. This pattern had rituals to reinforce it, such as Sunday school, first communion, catechism, and confirmation...

“Dr. Bass makes the case in her book that Christianity in this 21st century is undergoing a *radical reversal of the old formula*. We are seeing a new spiritual awakening where new generations are brought to the faith first through *belonging*, then *behaving*, then *believing*. In other words, what is bringing people to faith initially is not doctrinal didactics at the outset, but *relational community*. This is good news, because it is something many of our churches are already doing. Think of our practice of infant baptism – you belong *before* you believe. Your being accepted into the Body of Christ is not contingent on your intellectual capacity to understand and articulate your beliefs...

“Dr. Butler Bass writes, ‘Practices weave together a way of life, they shape character, create connections between people, order our choices, and deepen our wisdom about living in the world.’ Again, this is something we already know how to do. And we do not need to *apologize for the liturgy* that has sustained the church for over 2,000 years and the learning practices we already have in place that help to *apprentice* people into the faith. Millennial blogger Amy Peterson put it this way, ‘I want a service that is not sensational, flashy, or particularly *relevant*. I can be entertained anywhere. At church, I do not want to be entertained. I do not want to be the target of anyone’s marketing. I want to be asked to participate in the life of an ancient-future community.’

“That should be good news for those of you who are worried about trying to lure millennials to your church by having cool bands, hip worship, edgy programming, and impressive technology. Jesus never said: Go forth and be cool. Jesus said: Go forth and baptize. Start with being an *authentic* community of believers who love God, love people, and want to reach out. Ramp down expectations of church membership. Bring people into a sense of belonging, to a community of faith that tries diligently and joyfully to live into what it means to be a resurrected people. Some will come and see. Others will not. No guarantees, no gimmicks, no packaged programs. What lasts are the relationships we have with people who truly care about us and nurture us...

“Another millennial Christian blogger, Rachel Held Evans, explains just what makes these practices, these behaviors, so vital for faith, and what sets them apart from the rest of the culture: ‘You can get a cup of coffee with your friends anywhere, but church is the only place you can get ashes smudged on your forehead as a reminder of your mortality. You can be dazzled by a light show at a concert on any given weekend, but church is the only place that fills a sanctuary with candlelight and hymns on Christmas Eve. You can snag all sorts of free swag for brand loyalty online, but church is the only place where you are named a beloved child of God with a warm plunge into the water. You can share food with the hungry at any homeless shelter, but only the church teaches that a shared meal brings us into the very presence of God.’

“With belonging and behaving in place then, we find the component of *belief* emerging. But it is not an intellectual learning alone. It is *experiential belief*. In other words, what makes the faith real for us is when the biblical stories and the theology are connected to the experiences that have already shaped us and are forming us right now. We long for preaching that helps us frame our lives and our communities within a godly context...

“Dr. Bass acknowledges that there is much work to be done ‘to find new paths of meaning, new ways to connect with God and neighbor, to form new communities, and to organize ways of making the world a better place.’ But we do this *together*. We go *Forward Together in Faith*. That’s why I am supportive of what I have called entrepreneurial ministry, ministry that takes risks, seeks new frontiers and new partners...

“What I hope and pray for all of you is that this process of belonging, behaving, and believing becomes real for you *as members of this synod*. I hope that you feel excited about belonging to a synod that has the courage to embrace the challenges we face in this twenty-first century, in this corner of Pennsylvania. I hope you feel a sense of pride in the ancient practices of faith that have stood the test of time and are drawing more and more people to seek out the depth of meaning that comes through these God-ordained practices.

“I hope your belief is built not on *fear of the worst*, but *trust in the best* that God has to offer.

That’s how the first Christians did it. They had trust in the Holy One who was leading them.

We, too, have trust in the Holy One who is leading us *Forward Together in Faith*. It is a holy privilege, this calling of being the church. What more can we do? And how can we be? Where can we go? And don’t you want to go together?”

Report of the Vice President

“The Synod Council has been busy all year doing the work of the Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod,” reported Vice President Tracey Beasley. She invited Synod Council members to stand and thanked them for their dedication throughout the year. She offered special thanks to Pastor Regina Goodrich and the members of Mediator, Philadelphia, for preparing the packets distributed to the assembly’s voting members. She thanked the five congregations that hosted Synod Council meetings over this year: Resurrection, Horsham; Holy Communion, Philadelphia; St Peter, Lafayette Hill; St. John, Phoenixville; and Reformation, Media.

Saying that she was “amazed at how much they do to make this assembly happen,” she introduced a video highlighting the work of the media team.

Making use of photographs submitted by congregations to the synod office prior to the assembly, she recognized the following congregations that, she said, are reaching out to change the lives of people and make an impact on their communities: St Luke, Devon; Holy Trinity, Narberth; St. John, Quakertown; Faith Immanuel, East Lansdowne; Good Shepherd, Coatesville; St. Paul, Doylestown; and New Hanover, Gilbertsville.

Recognition of Anniversary Celebrants

Bishop Burkat recognized the Reverend Richard Scherer, celebrating fifty years of ordination, and Sister Janice Painter, celebrating fifty years of consecration. Neither rostered leader was able to be present.

She also recognized those celebrating significant anniversaries of ordination: 70th, the Reverend Allan H. Jahsmann; 60th, the Reverends Gilbert E. Doan, Jr., and Jay Donald Rea; 40th, the Reverends Charles R. Leonard, Daryl C. Nelson, George M. Harpel, Harry W. McDowell II, Hyacinth J. Mordey, Jack Saarela, John B. Hougen, Peter D. S. Krey, Robert E. Mitman, and William G. Erat; and 25th, the Reverends Elaine Quincey and Katherine Cartwright Knodel.

Report on Transitional Ministry (Continued)

Pastor Christopher Weidner commended the task force for its “insightful and thorough” work and suggested a resource that provides alternate models for interim ministry.

Pastor Larry Smoose said that he was surprised by the flexibility and the variety of models used by the task force. He added that he was disappointed that the task force did not look more closely at secular models. “Both sides,” he noted, “want to accomplish the same thing and that is to provide the best possible ministries for congregations.” He encouraged ongoing dialogue.

Pastor Ben Krey commended the Reverend Marcia Bell, Dean of Interim Ministry, and the Reverend Ellen Meissgeier, Director of Mobility, for the impressive amount of work that they do in support of congregations in transition.

Pastor Richard Mathisen noted that the secular model may not be entirely appropriate for congregational transitions.

Mr. Phil Tackett, St. Peter, Hilltown, said that there are “too many variables and too much is at stake” during a time of transition. He urged the task force to contact more of those who have participated in the interim process.

Report of the Reformation at 500 Committee

The Reverend Stephen Godsall-Myers, Chair, Reformation at 500 Committee, provided an update on what is being planned in this synod and in the ELCA, leading up to the observance of the 500th anniversary of the Reformation in 2017.

Fifth (Final) Report of the Committee on Elections

Pastor Eisenhart reported the result for Ticket 10, Ballot 4.

TICKET 10, CHURCHWIDE ASSEMBLY, CLERGY (One ordained minister to be elected)

288 total ballots, 288 valid ballots, 145 votes needed to elect.

Ben Krey, 148, and Regina Goodrich, 140.

Bishop Burkat declared Pastor Ben Krey elected.

Pastor Eisenhart thanked the members of the committee.

Unfinished Business

Sabbatical Guidelines

The Reverend Julie Bergdahl, Chair, Sabbatical Guidelines Team, reiterated the team's recommendation for the assembly's approval of the document, "Sabbaticals: Extended Study and Renewal, Guidelines for Implementation," as presented at this synod's 2014 assembly.

Secretary Miller presented the following resolution:

S. A. 15.05.05 RESOLVED THAT the Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod Assembly approves the document, "Sabbaticals: Extended Study and Renewal, Guidelines for Implementation (April 2014)," as presented at the synod's 2014 assembly.

He noted that the Synod Council reviewed the referenced document and approved a resolution that "strongly and without reservation" recommended that the assembly approve it (**S. C. 14.12.07**). He added that the document created "guidelines" which should not be interpreted as "requirements" or "an unfunded mandate."

The assembly approved the resolution.

Third Report of the Committee on Reference and Counsel

Resolution of Thanks

Ms. Meuser presented the following resolution, which the assembly approved by acclamation:

S. A. 15.05.06 Whereas it is right at all times and in all places to give thanks for God's grace and mercy, and the extraordinary gifts of the Holy Spirit which bless the people of God,

BE IT RESOLVED THAT we offer our appreciation and thankful applause:

To Ms. Joanne Carlson for her faithful service to the synod and our companion synod, the North-East Diocese of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Tanzania;

To the Reverend Ray Miller for his wisdom and leadership as our synod secretary;

To the ELCA representative, the Reverend Dr. Stephen Bouman for reminding us that we are church and for challenging us to get up, wade into troubled waters, and be made well;

To the Franconia Mennonite Church for their unfailing hospitality; and

To all participants from the Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod of the ELCA, who offered their energy, skills, and time to prepare for, plan, arrange, and attend this assembly.

Let us express our gratitude.

Final Report of the Registrar

Ms. Outterbridge presented the final report of the Registrar:

Total voting membership, 476 ; total number of pastors under call, 171; total number of retired pastors voting, 16; total number of associates in ministry, deaconesses, and diaconal ministers under call, 8; total number of retired associates in ministry and deaconesses voting, 4; total number of lay voting members certified, including council members, youth, and young adults, 277; total number of "persons of color and/or persons whose primary language is other than English" in the previous total, 100; percent of "persons of color and/or persons whose primary language is other than English" of total voting membership, 21%; number of female lay voting members, 134; number of male lay voting members, 115; number of youth/young adults members, 20.

Total registered (actually in attendance) voting membership, 440; number of pastors under call registered, 152; number of retired voting pastors registered, 13; number of associates in ministry and deaconesses under call registered, 8; number of retired associates in ministry and deaconesses registered, 3; number of lay voting members registered, including council members, youth, and young adults, 264; total number of "persons of color and/or persons whose primary language is other than English" in previous total, 97; percent of "persons of color and/or persons whose primary language is other than English" of total voting membership, 22%; total number of visitors and guests registered, 60.

Bishop Burkat reported that the 29th annual Assembly of the Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod was scheduled for May 6-7, 2016.

Recognition, Installation, and Blessing

Bishop Burkat offered a prayer of thanksgiving for Secretary Miller on the completion of his faithful service as secretary of this synod. She recognized the Synod Council members whose terms were ending at this assembly and installed the Synod Council members elected at this assembly.

Order for the Closing of the Assembly

Bishop Burkat and Vice President Beasley led the Order for the Closing of the Assembly. The twenty-eighth annual Assembly of the Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod adjourned at 3:10 p.m.

The Reverend Raymond A. Miller
Secretary
Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod, ELCA

MINUTES
of the 135th MEETING
of the SOUTHEASTERN PENNSYLVANIA SYNOD COUNCIL
of the EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN AMERICA
June 9, 2015
St. David's Lutheran Church, Philadelphia, PA

The Rev. Kevin Hilgendorf, Pastor of St. David's, welcomed the members of the Synod Council. The Rev. Benjamin Krey, Dean of the Northeast Conference, presented an overview of the ministry of the Conference, and highlighted the addition of four new congregations since the dissolution of the Northwest Philadelphia/Olney Conference. The congregations new to the Northeast ("the Great Northeast") Conference are Tabor, Zion, St. Paul's and Reformation. Dean Krey then led the Council in devotions.

Ms Tracey Beasley, Vice President, had the members of the Synod Council introduce themselves, as there were new persons elected to serve, and some who were being presented to fill open seats. Welcome new members Ms Joyce Maloney of Trinity, South Philadelphia, and Mr. Henry Strobel of Trinity, Lansdale.

The Vice President then called the meeting to order at 4:45 pm.

APPROVAL OF PERSONS TO FILL OPEN SEATS ON THE SYNOD COUNCIL

Four persons were recommended by the Executive Committee to fill the four open seats on the Synod Council:

The Rev. Lyzette Rios Sanchez, New Creation, Philadelphia – term expiring 2018, Clergy
The Rev. Dwight Mason, Good Shepherd, Philadelphia – term expiring 2016, Clergy
Mr. Philip Tackett, St. Peter, Hilltown –term expiring 2018, Upper Bucks Lay Male
Mr. Amos Garsaynee, St. John, Folcroft –term expiring 2016, Lay Male at Large

The Synod Council approved these persons, and those present took their seats for the remainder of the meeting.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The Synod Council approved the minutes of the 134th meeting of the Synod Council as presented.

The Synod Council approved the minutes of the 28th Annual Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod Assembly as presented.

SETTING THE AGENDA

Vice President Beasley presented the agenda for the 135th meeting.

BISHOP'S REPORT

Reflections on the Synod Assembly:

Forward Together in Faith

Bishop Claire Burkat expressed her pleasure that there has been 100% statement of support for the Forward Together in Faith appeal from the Synod Council prior to the Assembly. There has also been 100% statement of support from the Synod staff, and 100% statement of support from the Deans. Packets with pledge cards were provided to the new members of the Synod Council to give them the opportunity to express their support of this appeal as well.

Recognitions

Bishop Burkat noted the faithful service of Pr. Ray Miller as he completed his term as Secretary of the SEPA Synod. She was also pleased that we were able to surprise Ms Joanne Carlson with her family as part of the Synod's thank you to her on the occasion of her retirement from the Synod staff. It was also good to recognize Ms Susan Pursch and the team that helped build SEKOMU in the North Eastern Diocese of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Tanzania. And it was wonderful to welcome home Tom and Sue MacPherson as their time as missionaries to the ELCT came to a conclusion.

First Collingdale

The Bishop noted that the legal issues related to the title of First Collingdale have been settled in the Synod's favor. The nursery school run by the purchaser of the parsonage, who had claimed ownership of the church property, will be removed from the site.

Discussion of the Assembly

Bishop Burkat opened the floor for members of the Council to discuss their impressions of the Assembly. She began by saying the lack of a Keynote Speaker seemed to be a successful way for the Voting Members to understand the purpose of Forward Together in Faith. Each of the four initiatives had its own time of emphasis in the course of the Assembly. She also noted that the awareness seems to be growing that we cannot do things as we used to, as staffing is down from how the Synod used to be run.

Discussion ensued over how we can move from last century thinking to this century approaches, and how we might be able to identify ways in which the smaller Synod staffing opens opportunities for new ways of including more congregational involvement in the mission we share. This is precisely the goal of the four initiatives of Forward Together in Faith.

Comments were made that many of the Synod committees are indeed doing just this type of work, trying to bring new thinking to their work. Since strategy and direction are generally the purview of the CEO and staff, perhaps as the Bishop discovers places that are still lacking attention she can make these areas known so Council can assist in filling the needs.

One area that can use assistance is the Congregational Connector role for the appeal. Ms Emily Fowler was able to share some information about this role, and encouraged all to consider if they might be willing to be a Congregational Connector.

A suggestion was made to add a link to the Forward Together in Faith appeal to the Synod web site to facilitate pledges and/or contributions.

Actions on the Roster

Retirement Requests

Secretary Richard presented the following resolutions, which the Synod Council approved:

S. C. 15.06.01 RESOLVED THAT the Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod Council grants *retirement* status to the Rev. Bruce T. Davis, effective June 1, 2015.

S. C. 15.06.02 RESOLVED THAT the Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod Council grants *retirement* status to the Rev. Esther Rajashekar, effective July 1, 2015.

On Leave from Call Requests:

Secretary Richard presented the following resolutions, which the Synod Council approved:

S. C. 15.06.03 RESOLVED THAT the Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod Council grants *on leave from call* status to the Rev. Steven G. Jones, 1st year, effective January 1, 2015.

S. C. 15.06.04 RESOLVED THAT the Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod Council grants *on leave from call* status to Ms Nancy Selinger, Diaconal Minister, 3rd year, effective June 9, 2015.

S. C. 15.06.05 RESOLVED THAT the Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod Council grants *on leave from call* status to Sister Mary Julia McKenzie, Deaconess, 3rd year, effective June 30, 2015.

S. C. 15.06.06 RESOLVED THAT the Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod Council grants *on leave from call* status to Ms Suzanne M. Rigg, Diaconal Minister, 1st year, effective June 1, 2015.

Extension of Term Call

Secretary Richard presented the following resolution, which the Synod Council approved:

S. C. 15.06.07 RESOLVED THAT the Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod Council approve a *term call extension* for the Rev. David Oppold to Trinity Lutheran Church, South Philadelphia as pastor through September 30th 2015.

Information Not Requiring Action: Transfer

Bishop Burkat reported that the Rev. Dr. Philip D. W. Krey has transferred from the New England Synod to the Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod, effective June 1, 2015

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE AND VICE PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Vice President Beasley referred Synod Council members to the minutes of the Executive Committee of May 28, 2015. Referring to the Resolution on Solidarity with Persecuted Christians from the Synod Assembly, Ms Beasley asked for two Synod Council members who would agree to draft a statement to be posted on Ministry Link, and a prayer that congregations may use in worship, to address the concerns raised by the Assembly.

The Rev. Steve Keiser and Ms Joyce Adams agreed to draft a statement and submit it to the Executive Committee prior to posting.

Vice President Beasley introduced the gift list for Synod Council members to complete to assist the Bishop and the Vice President in placing members on Synod committees. She then shared who chairs each of the respective committees:

- Finance – the Rev. Steve Keiser
- Nominating – Ms Joyce Adams
- Constitution – the Rev. Jane Marston
- Audit – Mr. Rod Rothermel
- Administration – Ms Doreen Kinzler
- Investment – not yet selected

Vice President Beasley noted that we are one lay male short for the August 2016 Churchwide Assembly. She put forward Emanuel Alves, Holy Communion, Philadelphia as the candidate recommended by the Executive Committee.

The Synod Council approved Emanuel Alves as Lay Male Voting Member to the Churchwide Assembly.

SECRETARY'S REPORT

Investment Committee

Secretary Richard noted that we had approved the duties and functions of the Investment Committee at the December 2014 meeting of the Synod Council. To comply with the Synod Constitution +S11.01, we need to adopt them as a continuing resolution of the Synod Constitution. To that end, he presented the following resolution, which the Synod Council approved:

S. C. 15.06.08 RESOLVED THAT the Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod Council approves by two-thirds vote the document *Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod Investment Committee Duties and Functions* as a continuing resolution of this synod.

Messiah, Newtown Square

Secretary Richard proposed the following resolution regarding reception of the property of Messiah Lutheran, Newtown Square, upon its closure:

S. C. 15.06.09 RESOLVED THAT the Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod Council acknowledges with sadness the action of Messiah Lutheran Church, Newtown Square, to close, effective May 31, 2015, on which date the Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod received the property of Messiah, Newtown Square, in accordance with the Constitutions, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, specifically 9.71.b., +S13.23., and *C7.01.; and, on this date, June 9, 2015, authorizes the Bishop of the Southeastern

Pennsylvania Synod, or the Bishop's representative(s), to sell the property on behalf of the Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod.

The Synod Council approved the resolution after the following discussion:

The Rev. Paul Sorcek asked if there has been any evaluation of the site and its value for a new or different mission prior to selling. Property is difficult to come by, and there may be a value to keeping, rather than automatically selling, some of these assets.

The Rev. Patricia Davenport, Assistant to the Bishop, said the Evangelical Outreach Team does evaluate the needs of the area, and does an assessment of the properties we have, but it is not a formal process.

Pastor Sorcek emphasized his sense that we need a formal strategy to consider and evaluate these properties for future mission.

Secretary Richard shared a recommendation from former Secretary Ray Miller that when we receive a property we, as soon as possible, invest in a title search to verify any issues we may have. This should help mitigate issues such as those we have had with the former First, Collingdale. The Synod Council agreed. Mr. Martin Schwab, Synod Senior Accountant, will pursue this.

Ms Susan Pursch noted that in the minutes of the Finance Committee there was discussion, but no recommendation, with regard to engaging professional realtors to assist with the sale of these properties. She strongly suggests we pursue this option so we can sell the properties in a more timely, and in the long run, potentially less costly manner than holding them and maintaining them on our own.

Grant Application

The Synod is in the process of filing for a grant from St. Andrew Lutheran, Audubon, PA to assist with Youth Ministry expenses. To do this, the Synod needs an authorized person to file the request. Secretary Richard brought forward the following resolution, which the Synod Council approved:

S. C. 15.06.10 RESOLVED THAT the Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod Council acknowledges that Martin Schwab of Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod, ELCA is hereby authorized and directed to perform all acts necessary to properly complete and file an application for a grant of funds from St. Andrew's Evangelical Lutheran Church Endowment Fund on behalf of the Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod, ELCA in an amount not to exceed \$10,000, and upon approval of said grant/funds request to carry out and comply with all the terms and conditions of said grant approval.

Compliance with new Pennsylvania Laws

In discussions regarding the new laws for child protection, it seems as though the Synod Council would be in compliance even as we have members who are under the age of 18. Still, it is recommended that those members who have background clearances share a copy of them with the Synod office, and that those who do not be asked to sign a form which describes this Synod's practices and procedures with regard to interaction with youth.

FINANCIAL REPORTS

Report of the Finance Committee

Had been posted prior to the meeting, and was noted for members' consideration.

Report of the Treasurer

Ms Janet Huber Neff, treasurer, made the following comments on her report:

Currently we are doing fine. There is a slight deficit, but it is not a concern at this time.

Reports on giving are provided so members can check their congregation's support, and possibly that of the congregations in their Conference. Keeping aware allows us to keep current on our support before it becomes overwhelming.

Ms Neff reviewed the Balance sheet, particularly for the newer members of Synod Council, and pointed out that some funds that are used have been designated for particular purposes to assist in our ministry, e.g. there is a Candidacy Fund from which we use some money each year to supplement our budget.

Ms Neff also went into more detail about our "pre-paid rent" to the Seminary, which was included in her written report. She pointed out that in the future we will need to include rent in our budget, and that consideration is being made for this now. We are working on setting aside funds as though we were paying rent so that we have this in our practice, and so that there is a reserve for such expenses when they become a reality for us.

Ms Neff said that there has been consideration of the value of the space we are using at the Seminary, and while there are issues with the type of space that might be best for us, the square footage, the parking, and the security available to us at the Seminary is a very good value for our money.

Report of the Audit Committee

Mr. Rod Rothermel, chair of the Audit Committee, commented that we had a very positive audit this year, and there were no significant issues to be addressed from the financial reporting. He did note that he still feels a concern that we operate without deficits as we go into the future.

Ms Janet Neff commented that she heard many positive comments about the presentation of the budget and spending plan. It has been helpful to have an explanation of how and where we spend our money. This may encourage congregations to be more consistent in their support of our Synodical ministry.

The Rev. Jane Marston agreed, and asked if these summary statements could be made available, or more widely shared to encourage such support.

MISSION MOMENTS

Further reflection on the Synod Assembly

Vice President Beasley commented that the “Dan on the Street” segments were a fun and engaging way to present aspects of our initiatives.

Ms Doreen Kinzler enjoyed hearing from our own people about our ministry, rather than listening to a Keynote Speaker.

Pastor Jane Marston shared that she heard from some who missed the energy of a Keynote speaker.

Bishop Burkat liked the local sharing, while recognizing the extra work that made for the staff, particularly Bob Fisher and the communications team.

Mr. Robert Hensil noted that, while engaging, the presentations on the four initiatives all ran over time, as did the worship.

OLD BUSINESS

None

NEW BUSINESS

Election of the Executive Committee

Vice President Beasley led the process for the elections of the Executive Committee. In addition to the Bishop, Vice President, Treasurer and Secretary, there is need for one Clergy, one Lay Male, and one Lay Female on the Committee.

For Clergy person the following names were put in nomination:

The Rev. William Rex
The Rev. Tyler Rasmussen
The Rev. Jane Marston

The Synod Council elected the Rev. Tyler Rasmussen to the Executive Committee.

For Lay Female the following names were put in nomination:

Ms Doreen Kinzler
Ms Joyce Adams
Ms Susan Pursch

The Synod Council elected Ms Joyce Adams to the Executive Committee.

For Lay Male the following names were put in nomination:

Mr. Robert Hensil
Mr. Rod Rothermel

The Synod Council elected Mr. Robert Hensil to the Executive Committee.

Report of the Constitution Committee

The Rev. Jane Marston shared a report from Mr. Karl Segletes, previous chair of the committee. She put forward the following resolutions, which the Synod Council approved:

S.C. 15.06.11 RESOLVED THAT the Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod Council approves the Constitution of Holy Trinity Lutheran Church, Narberth, PA.

S.C. 15.06.12 RESOLVED THAT the Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod Council approves the Constitution of Living Word Lutheran Church, Roslyn, PA.

Pastor Marston also shared that there is consideration of the constitution for St. Luke's Lutheran, Gilbertsville, but there are a few revisions for which the committee is waiting.

The Rev. Steve Keiser asked what happens if we do not accept a congregation's revisions to their constitutions, yet they do not make the necessary changes. Pastor Marston said this rarely happens, and when there are questions it generally needs some clear explanation as to what the Constitution Committee needs and why. If there is still not compliance there is still a legal tie to the ELCA, and there are provisions that continue regardless of the congregation's action.

LYO Board

Ms Emily Fowler reported that the LYO Board will meet Friday, June 12th. The Board is working to incorporate the initiatives of Forward Together in Faith into its operation. Members of the Board intend to go to speak at congregations throughout our Synod to tell their story, and to be Congregational Connectors.

Ms Fowler again encouraged members of this Council to consider being a Congregational Connector.

Other new Business

Youth Ministry Staff

The Rev. Steve Keiser asked about the progress on finding a new Youth Ministry staff person.

Bishop Burkat stated that she hopes to have the position for a new staff person who will have responsibility for Youth Ministry posted in July or August.

Papal Visit

Ms Susan Pursch asked what we might do, or be doing, to assist with the visit by Pope Francis.

Bishop Burkat shared that we have offered to assist in whatever ways are helpful, particularly providing host families for visiting persons. There is much complexity to this endeavor, including tremendous security issues. It is a Vatican led operation, not a Diocesan led effort, and so we may or may not have a role. But we have made the offer to help.

Trips to Tanzania and “Lutherland”

Ms Joanne Carlson, Synod Staff, asked for prayers for the North Eastern Diocese of the ELCT as they celebrate their 125th anniversary, and for Bishop Burkat and herself as they travel to the celebration. Bishop Burkat will be preaching at the event.

Bishop Burkat made the following motion, which was approved by the Synod Council:

S. C. 15.06.13 RESOLVED THAT the Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod Council appoints The Rev. Patricia Davenport as Acting Bishop for the time of Bishop Burkat’s trip to Tanzania.

The Rev. Paul Sorcek asked for prayers for those who will be travelling to Germany this month to visit the Luther sites.

Thank you

Vice President Beasley thanked the Administrative Committee for their work on the Synod Assembly. She also thanked all the Synod Council members who were able to help with registration and as pages during the Assembly.

The Meeting adjourned at 6:50 pm with prayer led by the Rev. Tyler Rasmussen.

The 136th meeting of the Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod Council is Tuesday, September 15, 2015, at a location to be announced.

The Reverend Karl M. Richard
Secretary
Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod, ELCA

**MINUTES
Of the 136th MEETING
Of the SOUTHEASTERN PENNSYLVANIA SYNOD COUNCIL
Of the EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN AMERICA
September 15, 2015
St. Mark Lutheran Church, Conshohocken, PA**

The Rev. Bryan Penman, pastor of St. Mark welcomed the Synod Council. Pr. Penman described the setting and ministry of St. Mark, including the large number of children and persons under thirty in his community and congregation. The Rev. Julie DeWerth, Dean of Lower Montgomery Conference and Pr. Penman led the Council in a devotion which focused on fears and dreams as a new school year begins.

Vice President Tracey Beasley called the meeting to order at 4:30 pm.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The Synod Council approved the minutes of the 135th meeting of the Synod Council as presented.

SETTING THE AGENDA

Vice President Beasley presented the agenda for the 135th meeting with the following alterations: the Mission Moment will come at end of Bishop's Report; voting on changes to the roster will take place under the Secretary's Report; Constitution Committee will have a report under new business. Revised agenda approved.

BISHOP'S REPORT

Bishop Burkat began with prayer for various concerns: For healing and recovery for Pr. Tom Lang and Ms Emily Fowler; for Pr. Tyler Rasmussen's family as they mourn the death of his brother and for his sister-in-law and her child to whom she gave birth during a flood.

Assistant to the Bishop for Youth, Young Adult Ministry and Spiritual Formation

Pr. Bradley Burke was introduced as the successful candidate for the position of Assistant to the Bishop for Youth, Young Adult Ministry and Spiritual Formation. Pr. Burke has served for the past year with Lutheran Charities. He shared that this was not as good a fit for him as he hoped it might be. This was a development position, and he feels he is more suited for hands on work. His supervisor understands, and agrees with Brad's choice to move to a different venue for ministry.

Discussion ensued about Brad's passion, vision for the youth and young adult ministry over the next 5 years, his connection to the communities of color, some of the differences between what he will do vs what Molly Beck Dean has done, and concerns that he not be co-opted into a general clergy role, keeping him from being able to focus on his position as laid out in the description.

After many questions about youth and young adult ministry, he was asked about the Spiritual Formation portion of the position. Pr. Burke feels "spiritual formation" is a better term than faith formation, as faith formation seems to be seen by many as Sunday school. "Spiritual Formation is the umbrella under which all the youth/young adult ministry falls."

Zion Flourtown

The Bishop referenced the issues of Zion Flourtown, and encouraged members of Synod Council to re-read this portion of her report.

Ms Susan Pursch asked, “How do we educate people about their responsibilities if their congregation is facing closing? Can we help the congregations know more about our partnership so there is not an animosity or suspicion of the Synod?”

Bishop Burkat shared that we work on sharing this as we go through the process. We have a team of three pastors to help congregations navigate closure from planning to congregational meetings to final service and legal dissolution. In some cases there is withholding of information, not congregational lack of knowledge.

Papal Visit

Bishop Burkat has been asked to be part of the opening mass of the World Meeting of Families, and will be available as she is needed during the days of this event. She will be staying in center city. She will be writing some words of welcome and Christian unity.

The Bishop reminded congregations to be available and flexible if there are emergencies that need help from nearby congregations. See sheet from Pr. Jennifer Ollikainen and Julia Menso from Lutheran Charities to be aware of ways to help.

MISSION MOMENT

Pr. Dee Emmert, Pr. Dana Heiserer, Ms Marie Kinzler-Hand and Ms Diane Conn were present to share the story of the new Northeast Philadelphia Collaborative Ministry.

The name of the collaborative ministry is “God’s Grace Lutheran Community.” It involves the congregations of Redemption, St. Petri-Hope, and St. John’s. There are other congregations that were part of the discussion, but which chose not to enter into the collaborative ministry at this time. There remains the possibility of others joining in the future.

In this collaboration there will be a sharing of staff and resources. Each congregation will be responsible for its own building, and will provide financial support for its share of the combined staffing in proportion to the “services received.” Each will have about same amount of staff coverage they currently have, but this will come from all 3 pastors in the collaboration. The clergy involved will be Pr. Emmert, Pr. Heiserer, and Pr. Tricia Neale, who is called to Feast of Justice ministry and will serve the cooperative in a contracted capacity.

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE AND VICE PRESIDENT’S REPORT

Vice President Tracey Beasley stated that two emails went to Synod Council to find people willing to call congregations to recruit Congregational Connectors for the Forward Together in Faith Campaign. So far, no one has responded.

We are also looking for Ambassadors to assist the Congregational Connectors in telling the story of the Campaign. Any Synod Council people who can help are asked to respond to Vice President Beasley.

Congregational Connectors will be given a script and tool kit to aid them as they present the Campaign. Ambassadors for the Campaign will be available if there is need for deeper sharing or discussion. Connectors will go to their own congregations. Ambassadors will go to other congregations.

SECRETARY'S REPORT

Secretary Richard thanked Director of Operations Yvonne Curtis and Cynta Outterbridge for their dedication and assistance in registering our Voting Members to the 2016 Churchwide Assembly. We are blessed to have such faithful partners in the work of the Gospel!

Actions on the Roster:

Secretary Richard presented the following actions on the Roster, all of which were approved unanimously:

Call to Synod Staff:

S. C. 15.09.01 RESOLVED THAT the Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod Council approves the four year, renewable call of the Rev. Bradley R. Burke to the position of Assistant to the Bishop for Youth, Young Adult Ministry and Spiritual Formation.

S. C. 15.09.02 RESOLVED THAT the Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod Council approves that \$30,000 of Pr. Burke's compensation be designated as housing allowance.

Call to Specialized Ministry:

S. C. 15.09.03 RESOLVED THAT the Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod Council approves a one year renewable term call for The Rev. Patricia G. Neale as Executive Director of Feast for Justice, effective October 1, 2015.

Call to Coalition and Cluster Ministry:

S. C. 15.09.04 RESOLVED THAT the Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod Council approves a one year renewable term call for the Rev. Dee Emmert as pastor of God's Grace Lutheran Community.

S. C. 15.09.05 RESOLVED THAT the Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod Council approves a one year renewable term call for the Rev. Dana Heiserer as pastor of God's Grace Lutheran Community.

Renewal of Specialized Call:

S. C. 15.09.06 RESOLVED THAT the Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod Council approves a one year renewable term call for the Rev. Violet Little as Mission Developer at The Welcome Church, effective September 1, 2015.

S. C. 15.09.07 RESOLVED THAT the Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod Council approves a one year renewable term call for the Rev. Linda Manson as Mission Developer at Living Gospel Ministries, effective November 1, 2015.

S. C. 15.09.08 RESOLVED THAT the Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod Council approves a one year renewable term call for the Rev. Jonathan Shin as Mission Developer at Philadelphia Korean Ministry, effective October 1, 2015.

Renewal of Term Calls:

S. C. 15.09.09 RESOLVED THAT the Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod Council approves a one year renewable non-stipendiary term call for the Rev. Sozinho Alves as Workplace Pastor at JBC, Inc., Souderton, PA effective September 25, 2015.

In order to avoid any actual conflict of interest or any appearance of a conflict of interest, Mr. Emmanuel Alves abstained.

S. C. 15.09.10 RESOLVED THAT the Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod Council approves a three year renewable term call for the Rev. Brian Cox as Chaplain at Wesley Enhanced Living in Pennypack Park effective November 1, 2015

Calls to Interim Ministry:

S. C. 15.09.11 RESOLVED THAT the Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod Council call the Rev. Shirley S. Guider to interim ministry at Christ Evangelical Lutheran Church Kulpville, PA effective June 1, 2015, and extending until a pastor is called by the congregation or until Pastor Guider resigns this call, whichever comes first.

S. C. 15.09.12 RESOLVED THAT the Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod Council call the Rev. Wayne Shelor to interim ministry at St. Paul's Evangelical Lutheran Church Red, PA effective August 2, 2015, and extending until a pastor is called by the congregation or until Pastor Shelor resigns this call, whichever comes first.

Resignation from the Ordained Roster:

S. C. 15.09.13 RESOLVED THAT the Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod Council approves the resignation from the Ordained Roster of Ms Annette M. Freese effective July 1, 2015.

S. C. 15.09.14 RESOLVED THAT the Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod Council approves the resignation from the Ordained Roster of Ms Anita E. London effective August 22, 2015.

Retirements:

S. C. 15.09.15 RESOLVED THAT the Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod Council grants retirement status to the Rev. Steven G. Jones effective September 1, 2015.

S. C. 15.09.16 RESOLVED THAT the Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod Council grants retirement status to the Rev. Edward A. Niederhiser effective October 1, 2015

On Leave from Call Requests:

S. C. 15.09.17 RESOLVED THAT the Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod Council grants on leave from call status to the Rev. Ellen Anderson for disability, effective February 15, 2015.

S. C. 15.09.18 RESOLVED THAT the Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod Council grants on leave from call status to the Rev. Wende Bleam, 2nd year, effective June 14, 2015.

S. C. 15.09.19 RESOLVED THAT the Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod Council grants on leave from call status to the Rev. Althea M. Tysk, 2nd year, effective July 1, 2015.

S. C. 15.09.20 RESOLVED THAT the Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod Council grants on leave from call status to the Rev. Marcia Bell, 1st year, effective August 1, 2015.

S. C. 15.09.21 RESOLVED THAT the Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod Council grants on leave from call status to the Rev. Bruce Thorsen, 2nd year, effective September 15, 2015.

S. C. 15.09.22 RESOLVED THAT the Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod Council grants on leave from call status to the Rev. Stacie Dougherty, 2nd year extension, effective September 22, 2015.

S. C. 15.09.23 RESOLVED THAT the Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod Council grants on leave from call status to the Rev. Gwendolyn King, 2nd year, family leave, effective October 1, 2015.

Information not requiring action:

Transfers:

The Rev. Robert F. Matthias to Lower Susquehanna Synod effective August 1, 2015

The Rev. Wayne Shelor from Metropolitan Washington D. C. Synod effective August 2, 2015

The Rev. Gordon E. Simmons to Delaware-Maryland Synod effective August 12, 2015
The Rev. Sarah C. Stobie from North/West Michigan Synod effective August 16, 2015

Death:

The Rev. James A. Daniels, June 5, 2015

FINANCIAL REPORTS

Ms Janet Neff was not able to be present at this meeting. She submitted her written report prior to the meeting. Pr. Stephen Keiser referenced her report, and asked for comment.

Mr. Rod Rothermel highlighted the treasurer's concern that we are seeing an abnormality in the pattern of giving from congregations. He asked if we will make adjustments on our spending plan now, or wait until end of year when we are "in the soup."

Pr. Keiser stated that the Finance Committee is hoping the Stewardship Committee will be successful in follow-up with the congregations, like they were last year.

Synod Council encourages the Finance Committee to review expenses and make recommendations to the Synod Council regarding such cuts to the spending plan.

With respect to following up with congregations, Vice President Beasley stated that there is a need to thank people. We need to show up and tell people that they have done well, and that we are grateful.

Pr. Patricia Davenport concurred, stating "There is a Power in Presence."

The Stewardship Team will be encouraged to develop a list to give to Vice President Beasley so she can coordinate visitors to congregations to thank them. The hope is that members of the Synod Council will be those visitors.

Affirmation of Calls

Pr. Burke, Pr. Emmert and Pr. Heiserer, who had been excused from the meeting during the actions on the Roster, were readmitted to the meeting and informed of the unanimous affirmation of their calls.

COMMITTEE APPOINTMENTS

Vice President Beasley shared the revised list of committee appointments, which she had distributed in a separate document.

The Audit Committee shared a report to the Council, in which Mr. Rod Rothermel, outgoing chair, made the following motion:

S. C. 15.09.24 RESOLVED THAT the Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod Council retain the services of Tait Weller Certified Public Accountants for the next financial audit of the Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod. Approved unanimously.

The Investment committee is looking for members. Mr. Rod Rothermel, newly appointed chair, has considered several persons, but each has had conflicts of interest. If any member of Synod Council knows of anyone with the appropriate skill set, please share the information with Bishop Burkat or Vice President Beasley.

OLD BUSINESS:

Resolution on Solidarity with persecuted Christians: Pr. Stephen Keiser and Ms Joyce Brown Adams will bring something forward for Executive Committee to review, and Synod Council to approve.

NEW BUSINESS

Constitution Committee recommends adoption of the following:

S. C. 15.09.25 RESOLVED THAT the Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod Council approve the constitutions of Christ Lutheran, Kulpsville and Christ's Lutheran Church, Oreland. Approved unanimously.

Meeting adjourned at 7:05 p.m.

The 137th meeting of the Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod Council will be Thursday, December 10, 2015, 4:00 p.m., at Good Shepherd Lutheran Church, King of Prussia, PA.

The Reverend Karl M. Richard
Secretary
Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod, ELCA

**MINUTES
of the 137th MEETING
of the SOUTHEASTERN PENNSYLVANIA SYNOD COUNCIL
of the EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN AMERICA
December 10, 2015
Good Shepherd Lutheran Church, King of Prussia PA**

Devotions of Advent readings and prayers were led by Pr. Julie DeWerth, Dean and host pastor

Vice President Tracey Beasley called the meeting to order at 4:33 pm

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The Synod Council approved the Minutes of the 136th meeting of the Synod Council as presented.

SETTING THE AGENDA

Vice President Tracey Beasley presented the agenda for the 137th meeting with the following additions: Report from the Nominations Committee, Election of new Synod Council members. The revised agenda was adopted.

ELECTION OF NEW MEMBERS TO SYNOD COUNCIL

Pr. William Rex, term expiring in 2018, and Pr. Stephen Keiser, term expiring 2017, have both resigned from Synod Council for personal reasons.

Pr. Laura Tancredi, St. Paul's Ardmore, was presented for the term expiring 2018

Pr. Bryan Penman, St. Mark's Conshohocken, was presented for the term expiring 2017

Synod Council unanimously approved these persons, and Pastors Tancredi and Penman took their seats for the meeting.

BISHOP'S REPORT

Desecration of local mosque

Bishop Burkat shared that she received an email from Imam Shehata from the Al-Aqsa Islamic Society mosque which had been desecrated this past week. The Muslim community feels supported and affirmed by the interfaith community in Philadelphia, and is grateful for the prayers of the various faith communities.

Bishop's Convocation

Convocation was wonderful. There were 112 participants who attended at Bear Creek Mountain Resort and Conference Center. The new facilities worked well. The theme for the Convocation was "Thinking Outside the Walls: Surprising Places to be the Church" and focused on two "new" ventures in the church: Pub Theology and Dinner Church. As part of the discussion we had intentional conversation on race and injustice. This was very important conversation, even as it was uncomfortable for many.

Newly Ordained

Bishop Burkat was delighted to report that she presided at seven Ordinations this year! Intentional efforts to address the coming clergy shortage are paying dividends in our Synod, and we are seeing an increase in the number of pastors under the age of 50. This is a hopeful sign for the future of the Church.

Update from the Conference of Bishops

The Bishop directed the Council's attention to the section of her report that highlighted actions and discussions by the Conference of Bishops, particularly those issues coming before the 2016 Church-wide Assembly.

Regarding the report of the Theological Education Advisory Committee, which the Bishop had included with her report, the Baker/Tilly report in the back section is most enlightening. The current way we are training and educating people for the work of the Church is unsustainable.

The Bishop opened the floor for discussion and questions.

Ms Susan Pursch requested a regular report on the Forward Together in Faith Campaign at each Synod Council meeting. Bishop Burkat and Treasurer Janet Neff will plan make narrative reports.

Actions on the Roster

Secretary Richard presented the actions on the roster.

Call to Specialized Ministry:

S.C. 15.12.01 RESOLVED THAT the Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod Council approve a call for Ms. Anne Confer Martens as Associate Chaplain at the Hill School in Pottstown, PA effective January 23, 2016. The Synod Council unanimously approved.

Call to Interim Ministry:

S.C. 15.12.02 RESOLVED THAT the Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod Council call the Rev. J. Christian McMullan to interim ministry at St. Luke Lutheran Church in Gilbertsville, PA effective January 1, 2016, and extending until a pastor is called by the congregation or until Pastor McMullan resigns this call, whichever comes first. The Synod Council unanimously approved.

Synodical Appointment:

S.C. 15.12.03 RESOLVED THAT the Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod Council call the Reverend Boyce Daniel Whitener, Jr. to a two-year term call under synodical appointment at the Lutheran Church of God's Love in Newtown, PA effective January 15, 2016 to January 14, 2018. The Synod Council unanimously approved.

Retirement Request:

S. C. 15.12.04 RESOLVED THAT the Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod Council grants retirement status The Rev. Robert E. Mitman effective March 1, 2016. The Synod Council unanimously approved.

On Leave from Call Requests:

S. C. 15.12.05 RESOLVED THAT the Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod Council grants on leave from call status to the Rev. Kristine Peterson second year on leave effective July 14, 2015. The Synod Council unanimously approved.

S. C. 15.12.06 RESOLVED THAT the Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod Council grants on leave from call status to the Rev. Peter J. Naschke first year on leave effective August 10, 2015. The Synod Council unanimously approved.

S. C. 15.12.07 RESOLVED THAT the Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod Council grants on leave from call status to the Rev. Christopher Weidner first year on leave effective December 7, 2015. The Synod Council unanimously approved.

S. C. 15.12.08 RESOLVED THAT the Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod Council grants on leave from call status to the Rev. Jackson Haas first year on leave effective January 1, 2016. The Synod Council unanimously approved.

Information Not Requiring Action: Transfers

The Rev. Peter Hutchinson *to* New Jersey Synod effective September 29, 2015

The Rev. Deborah Dawson *to* Southwestern Minnesota Synod effective October 1, 2015

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE AND VICE PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Vice President Tracey Beasley shared that there is now a tab on SharePoint for Policies. The Synod's Director of Operations the Synod Secretary will post policies as appropriate.

Vice President Beasley presented the following response to the resolution adopted at the Synod Assembly regarding Solidarity with Persecuted Christians. Ms Joyce Brown Adams drafted this response for review and revision by the Executive Committee.

S.C. 15.12.09 RESOLVED THAT the Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod Council adopt the following Statement on Solidarity with Persecuted Christians:

The Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America stands in solidarity with the Christians and people of more than 60 nations that are suffering persecution for openly acknowledging and practicing their Christian faith.

The Christian Church is under attack and has been described by Mgr Bashar Matti Warda, Archbishop of Erbil in Iraq, as dissolving in front of the eyes of its own people. Christians in Iraq, Egypt, Syria, Pakistan, Nigeria and Korea are suffering various forms of persecution.

The attack on Christians is worldwide and extends beyond Iraq and the beheading of Egyptian Christians and American citizens by ISIS. It has taken the form of rape, enslaving and kidnapping of Christians in sub-Saharan Africa, Nigeria and Sudan. Christians in India live in fear, while North Korea continues to imprison large numbers of Christians in labor camps. The Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod agrees with and supports those who describe this problem as being major and serious but not unsolvable. The congregations and people of the Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod are encouraged to join with those crying out from the Christian community by calling for action from our governmental leaders, by becoming educated and informed, and through prayer. Demonstrating our belief in the power of prayer,

Good and gracious God, we pray for our brothers and sisters who suffer at the hands of their persecutors for demonstrating their love and belief in you. We pray that you give them strength and courage and that you make your presence felt despite their suffering. We pray for their captors and persecutors as you have taught us to pray for those who would do us harm. We ask you to guide our leaders to work to end the persecution of people of faith throughout the world. We ask for your divine intervention as we acknowledge that in you all things are possible. Into your hands we commend all for whom we pray. Amen.

The Synod Council adopted this Statement unanimously.

SECRETARY'S REPORT

It has come to the attention of the Executive Committee that the Synod Council should vote to approve the Audit committee. The members of the committee as put forward by the Bishop and Vice President are Ms Susan Pursch, Chair, Mr. Donald Gleiter, Pr. Lizette Rios-Sanchez, and Mr. Philip Tackett

S.C. 15.12.10 RESOLVED THAT the Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod Council approve the Audit Committee. The Synod Council unanimously approved.

TREASURER'S REPORT

Treasurer Janet Neff shared the following information and observations:

The Finance Committee has been reconfigured as Pr. Stephen Keiser has resigned from Synod Council, so the Committee did not have a report. The new Chair is Ms Sue Massey.

We are \$180,000 behind in our partnership support. Pr. Larry Smoose and the Stewardship Committee is following up with contacts to congregations that are behind in their stated support, and asking those congregations that are current to consider additional support. Please look at your congregation's giving record, and that of congregations close to you. Encourage each to follow up on their partnership support.

We will need to look at what decreases may need to be made in our spending plan. The Finance Committee will be looking at this in January to see where we are, highlight where we are over extended and offer suggestions to the Bishop and the staff of areas where reductions might be considered.

A large part of our deficit continues to be the cost of maintaining the properties of closed congregations. We anticipate a closing on the sale of one of the properties soon, but cannot predict exactly when.

The Treasurer then entertained questions and comments.

Mr. Rod Rothermel asked what the negative \$141,000 reflects on the balance sheet. Ms Neff explained it is the current cost for the Forward Together in Faith Campaign, which we owe back to ourselves from the receipts of the Campaign when they come.

Ms Susan Pursch stated that she feels we need to be looking forward with realistic expectations. This gap is not looking likely to close. Is there a deeper concern or unrest among our congregations?

Vice President Beasley replied that congregations are scared about membership declines, but are not necessarily discontented with the larger church.

Bishop Burkat added that we are seeing change at the local level that is calling for more resources locally. For instance, we are seeing several congregations that have added second staff members, indicating growth and not decline, but such additions need resources. They are not expressing animosity toward the Synod, but there are limits what they can share beyond the congregation.

Pr. Tom Lang noted that the “greatest generation” members are passing away; newer families have no sense of stewardship because they are not aware of the needs or interrelation with the congregation and the broader Church. They are also so mobile that they are not present as much. There is also a huge consumeristic mindset among our society that draws resources from church support.

Pr. Patricia Davenport, Director of Evangelical Mission shared she does not believe congregations are against the Synod. She spoke of one congregation that is decreasing its support but not feeling good about it. This congregation wants to restore its percentage of giving as soon as they can.

Ms Janet Neff shared that Grace, Royersford lost an independent daycare, hitting the congregation for 60K per year. Grace is decreasing support, but not because of discontent with the Synod.

Mr. Rod Rothermel said the bottom line is that income is down for congregations, so income to the Synod is down. We have done a great job bringing down our deficit over the past three years. Now need to look hard again at the rest of the expenses.

Secretary Richard commented about the importance of keeping the broader Church before the congregation. By sharing regularly how our offerings have an impact through the Synod and the ELCA we can show people why this is support important.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Audit Committee

Ms Susan Pursch, Chair, referenced the written report from the Audit Committee sent to the Synod Council. There were no questions raised.

Constitution Committee

Pr. Jane Marston, Chair of the Constitution Committee recommended approval of the following constitutions:

S.C. 15.12.11 RESOLVED THAT the Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod Council approve the Congregational Constitution for Atonement Lutheran Church, Philadelphia. The Synod Council unanimously approved.

S.C. 15.12.12 RESOLVED THAT the Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod Council approve the Congregational Constitution for Community of Love Lutheran Church, Oxford. The Synod Council unanimously approved.

S.C. 15.12.13 RESOLVED THAT the Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod Council approve the Congregational Constitution for Advent Lutheran Church, Harleysville. The Synod Council unanimously approved.

Administration Committee

Ms Doreen Kinzler, Chair, reported the committee will be meeting with Pr. Sue Lang to work on Synod Assembly. As this will be the first time for Pr. Lang to coordinate the Synod Assembly, all involved will be learning how this committee can best help with the process.

Nominating Committee

Vice President Beasley presented on behalf of Ms Joyce Brown-Adams, committee Chair. The Nomination form has been revised. It has been modified to more closely mirror information needed when submitting names for Church Wide Assembly, and to include information that will be helpful for our database. The Form will not be valid without a photo. The form will also not be accepted if it is not complete.

MISSION MOMENT

Mr. Dan Scharnhorst, Executive Director of Bear Creek Camp, reported on the very successful year experienced by the Camp. There has been a 51% increase of SEPA kids since 2012. Summer program attendance went up 12% this year even though there was a National Youth Gathering! Attendance from both Northeastern and Southeastern Pennsylvania Synods went up, and non-Lutheran attendance also increased by a significant amount.

The focus is not only on sharing the Gospel at camp, but encouraging kids to explore the question “how do we take this home?” The staff of Bear Creek Camp is focused on making a difference in life and living the faith.

OLD BUSINESS none

NEW BUSINESS none

Meeting adjourned at 5:54 pm with prayer by Pr. Patricia Davenport

The 138th meeting of the Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod Council will be Thursday, February 18, 2016, 4:00 p.m., at Trinity Lutheran Church, Lansdale, PA.

The Reverend Karl M. Richard
Secretary
Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod, ELCA

MINUTES
of the 138th MEETING
of the SOUTHEASTERN PENNSYLVANIA SYNOD COUNCIL
of the EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN AMERICA
February 18, 2016
Trinity Lutheran Church, Lansdale, PA

The Synod Council was welcomed at 4:20 p.m. by Pr. Paul Lutz, Senior Pastor of Trinity Lansdale, who also led us in devotions for the day.

Devotions – Pr. Lutz is a Biblical Storyteller, and began with a telling of Jesus’ Baptism from Luke’s Gospel. Pr. Lutz then invited people to share the story of their baptism with one another in groups of two or three, and reflect on what it means to be a Child of God.

Vice President Tracey Beasley called the meeting to order at 4:32 p.m.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The Minutes of the 137th meeting of the Synod Council were approved with one correction. Under the Executive Committee report V.P. Beasley noted that Ms Joyce Brown Adams had drafted the Resolution on Solidarity with Persecuted Christians on her own, not with other assistance. Secretary Richard made the change to the minutes.

SETTING THE AGENDA

Vice President Beasley presented the agenda for the meeting, which was then adopted by the Synod Council.

BISHOP'S REPORT

New School for Theological Education

Bishop Burkat, who serves on Board of Trustees of the Lutheran Theological Seminary at Philadelphia, shared that there are many things happening simultaneously as the Lutheran Theological Seminary at Philadelphia and the Lutheran Theological Seminary at Gettysburg move forward with the plan to close each school and form a new school. There are issues of administrative staffing, faculty requirements, accreditation, use or dispersal of properties, legal authorizations, and many other items which need to be configured prior to July 1, 2017. These are difficult but exciting decisions as we move into a new future of educating leaders for the Church. The Bishop encouraged the members of the Synod Council to sign up for email/text updates of the progress. The two presidents, Dr. David Lose and Dr. Michael Cooper-White, are trying to keep the process as open and forthright as possible.

Pr. Bryan Penman thanked the Bishop for her work with the Lutheran Theological Seminary at Philadelphia, and the planning for the new school.

Forward Together in Faith update

This is the “year of the ask”

The Bishop and the Campaign team are reviewing their efforts so far, and are asking “What hasn't worked?” so that the financial response can be more effective as we continue through the campaign.

One area that has not been working well is the Congregational Connectors. These Connectors are not moving forward with the “ask” to congregations. In some cases they haven't felt they have the right materials. In other cases the Congregation Councils and pastors are not on board. In other cases the Connectors do not seem clear what their role is in relation to the leadership of their congregations.

Another area that needs clarification is congregational understanding of the Church Assessment Tool. Twenty-four congregations took the CAT. Many of these congregations have then asked “what do we do now?” We as the Synod office don’t have the answers, or the resources to provide all the evaluation for the congregations. This needs to become more of an internal conversation and application within the congregation, and a more collaborative process between congregations that have engaged the Assessment Tool.

The Church Assessment Tool itself is proving to be too “evangelical” in flavor and perspective for our context and understanding of ministry. Jeff Kjellberg, Principle Owner of Kairos Christian Resource Development, has re-written the tool to be more applicable to our ELCA context. It will be less linear, more metaphorical. The hope is this will make the findings from the Assessment easier to grasp and implement.

In addition, “Navigators” are being gathered and trained to work with the congregations to walk through the assessment, helping to guide them and keep them on track.

The idea of the Bishop calling pastors to make congregational pledges has not worked. There is not enough time for it to happen, and not enough Lay presence to make it efficient. The new plan is to have lunches with the pastors of 30 – 50 congregations that are already supportive to present to them the Campaign and a suggested target to for their congregations to consider.

The Bishop is also giving a Forward Together in Faith presentation to Conferences that are electing Deans. Recently this included Lower Bucks and Chester Conferences.

Bishop Burkat is asking the Synod Council for names of people who would be good candidates to invite to a donor dinner. She distributed papers on which members can write the contact information for such persons and return it to her at the Synod office.

She asked that the Synod Council please invite officers of their Congregation Council to the leadership workshop in March, where more information will be shared with them.

She also is asking all members of Synod Council, the Staff, and the Deans to make a gift or pledge to the Campaign by the Synod Assembly. Regardless of the size of the gift, she would like to report that all of these leaders are on board with the Campaign.

Bishop Burkat then opened the floor for comment and questions.

Mr. Phil Tackett said his congregation is asking for clarification of what the money will be used for.

Mr. Bob Fisher, Assistant to the Bishop for Communications, mentioned some of the resources on the web site can help describe the intended use.

Ms Doreen Kinzler stated “our connectors have not shared the news with the congregation.”

Mr. Rod Rothermel stated he feels we should have 1 or 2 people go to the congregations and share what it is the Synod does and the Church at Large does. As we share the story people will be more inclined to give.

Ms Janet Neff, Synod Treasurer, shared that not everyone is at the Synod Assembly, but the PowerPoint presentation on the budget and work of the Synod was found to be helpful to summarize what we do in ministry, i.e., where the money goes.

Pr. Patricia Davenport, Director of Evangelical Mission said that when serving on different boards, such as Lutheran Services in America, you want to contribute to the cause. One thing we can do is to offer a “Jeffersonian dinner” where you sit down with people, tell the story, and have the group make an offering to the cause.

Pr. Jane Marston said “Description is good, but where we go from here, how we can help, should be clarified.”

Ms Susan Pursch “It is good we are working with congregations to help them identify issues. But let’s not fall back into seeming like we are doing this for them.”

Mr. Rothermel reiterated the need to make this ask personal. “When we meet with them and share what the mission is personally, then they get excited.”

Properties under management

First, Collingdale

Even though the Court has ruled consistently in our favor, the person who claimed rights to the property still won’t move. There are Liens on other properties she owns, yet she still refuses to move. An agreement has been made with her that she will have four months longer to vacate the property. This agreement is in writing, and in this document she has agreed that there will not be any further appeals. By the end of May she must be out, and we can then move forward with efforts to sell the property.

Redeemer, East Falls

There is an Agreement of Sale with a developer who wants to use the site to construct apartments. Closing is scheduled for the end of February.

Messiah, Newtown Square

A Korean Catholic congregation is set to take possession. The Archdiocese needs to take action to complete the transaction. With the coming of Pope Francis everything regarding this process slowed significantly. Now that the Pontifical visit is over, the hope is the Diocese will move forward so this sale can be completed.

St. John's, Pottstown

A Mennonite church is interested, but the building is in a flood zone. This will likely affect the sale price.

Domestic Synod Partnership

Flint, Michigan is on the territory of the Southeast Michigan Synod, with whom we are partners. We have posted on MinistryLink an appeal to help the people of Flint in this time of crisis, as lead levels in their water are dangerously high. Please encourage your members and congregations to support as they are able.

Desecration of Philadelphia Mosque

Following up on last meeting's information regarding the desecration of the Al-Aqsa Islamic Society mosque, Bishop Burkat shared she has written letters to seven local Imams. Lutherans are known in the City as being proactive and supportive. The Islamic community is very grateful for this support.

Racial Justice

Bishop Burkat spoke to the ongoing need to address issues of racial injustice and intolerance. She noted that several initiatives have been started in the ELCA, and in our Synod. We need to be proactive addressing issues of race and inequality.

Pr. Davenport expressed her gratitude to God for our Bishop who is such an ally in this venture. She stated that attention to this issue is not happening in every Synod. The Racial Justice team is being re-invigorated. They want to have fresh training in anti-racism for the Staff, the Synod Council, and the Deans. They plan to bring information to the Conferences to increase understanding and awareness, so that positive change can result. Persons of color are learning how to deal with "Post Traumatic Slave Syndrome." We all need to be aware of how deep the pain is, and how profoundly racism permeates all we do as a society.

Actions on Roster

Secretary Richard presented the following actions on the roster.

On leave from call requests:

S. C. 16.02.01 RESOLVED THAT the Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod Council endorses an extension for On Leave from Call for Graduate Study status to the Rev. Margaret Ainslie effective June 1, 2016.

And BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT the Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod Council requests an approval of this extension from the ELCA Conference of Bishops Roster Committee.

The Synod Council unanimously adopted this resolution.

S. C. 16.02.02 RESOLVED THAT the Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod Council grants on leave from call status to the Rev. Susan Kay Folks, second year, effective January 7, 2016.

The Synod Council unanimously adopted this resolution.

Calls to Interim Ministry:

S.C. 16.02.03 RESOLVED THAT the Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod Council call the Rev. Marcia Bell to interim ministry at Trinity Lutheran Church Perkasio, PA beginning January 3, 2016, and extending until a pastor is called by the congregation or until Pastor Bell resigns this call, whichever comes first.

The Synod Council unanimously adopted this resolution.

S.C. 16.02.04 RESOLVED THAT the Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod Council call the Rev. Katherine Cartwright Knodel to interim ministry at St. David's Lutheran Church Philadelphia, PA beginning February 1, 2016, and extending until a pastor is called by the congregation or until Pastor Knodel resigns this call, whichever comes first.

The Synod Council unanimously adopted this resolution.

Retirement Request:

S. C. 16.02.05 RESOLVED THAT the Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod Council grants retirement status The Rev. Kevin Hilgendorf, effective December 1, 2015.

The Synod Council unanimously adopted this resolution.

Information not requiring action:

Transfers

The Rev. Stacie Dougherty *to* Rocky Mountain Synod effective June 14, 2015

The Rev. Daniel Whitener *from* New Jersey Synod effective January 15, 2016

Removal from the ELCA Roster

Ms Nancy Selinger from the Roster of Diaconal Ministers of the ELCA

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE AND VICE PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Vice President Beasley thanked all the committees for the work they are doing. As the Synod Assembly approaches the various teams have been faithful in their service.

Continuing on the Bishop's reflections regarding racial justice and awareness, Vice President Beasley shared the following:

I was visiting our ELCA headquarters in Chicago about three weeks ago representing the African Descent Lutheran Association along with six others and representatives from our other Ethnic Specific and Multicultural ministries. About twenty-five people attended this gathering under the direction of the Rev. Albert Star, director for Ethnic Specific and Multicultural Ministries. In the course of the meetings that weekend, and in meeting with some key leaders of the ELCA, the team discovered that the focus on representation from Multicultural Ministries on the ELCA Church Council had fallen away. That weekend the team drafted a letter so that "we" can be back at the table, and now "we" are. Now sitting at the table on the African Descent Strategy team I am helping to address issues of such in our Church.

Vice President Beasley noted she is one of only four of the sixty-five Synod Vice Presidents who is a person of color.

Ms Beasley shared that there will be an event called the Grace gathering overlapping with the Churchwide Assembly for persons who are not Voting Members of the CWA. Grace gathering – August 10-13 New Orleans – Celebrating the 500th Anniversary of the Reformation – people can go to the ELCA website for more information.

SECRETARY'S REPORT

Secretary Karl Richard referred the Synod Council to his written report which contained three resolutions for the Council to consider. The first was needed to authorize a representative of the Synod to apply for grant money from the Endowment Fund of St. Andrew Lutheran Church, Audubon, PA.

Secretary Richard put forward the following resolution:

S.C. 16.02.06 RESOLVED THAT the Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod Council acknowledges the Rev. Bradley R. Burke of Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod, ELCA is hereby authorized and directed to perform all acts necessary to properly complete and file an application for a grant of funds from St. Andrew's Evangelical Lutheran Church Endowment Fund on behalf of Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod, ELCA in an amount not to exceed \$10,000, and upon approval of said grant/funds request to carry out and comply with all of the terms and conditions of said grant approval.

The Synod Council unanimously adopted this resolution.

The second resolution was to give formal recognition of the closing of Zion Lutheran, Flourtown, and to offer thanks for 197 years of ministry to the Gospel of Christ.

Secretary Richard put forward the following resolution:

S.C. 16.02.07 RESOLVED that the Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod Council gives thanks to Almighty God for the faithful ministry of Zion Lutheran Church of Flourtown for the past 197 years, recognizes the end of Zion's ministry as a congregation as of August 30, 2015, commends its leaders and people for their service to the Gospel, and encourages the members of Zion to seek new homes within the many ELCA congregations in the area.

The Synod Council unanimously adopted this resolution.

The third resolution was to recognize the ending of the ministry of St. Philip's Deaf Church, N.E. Philadelphia, and to offer affirmation and support for its merger with Christ the King Deaf Church, West Chester, PA.

Secretary Richard put forward the following resolution:

S.C. 16.02.08 RESOLVED THAT the Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod Council acknowledges, with thanksgiving to Almighty God and our Lord Jesus Christ, the faithful ministry of St. Philip's Deaf Church for the past 89 years, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod Council receives the notification that St. Philip's Deaf Church ends its independent ministry as of December 31, 2015, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod Council affirms with joy the merger of St. Philip's Deaf Church with Christ the King Deaf Church so that the Gospel of Jesus Christ may continue to be faithfully proclaimed to the Deaf community in Philadelphia and beyond, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod Council pledges its ongoing prayer support of the work and witness of this merged ministry as it moves into the future in the power of the Holy Spirit.

The Synod Council unanimously adopted this resolution.

Secretary Richard expressed his thanks to Pr. Patricia Davenport for her diligence and faithfulness in assisting these congregations as they walked through the process to become one ministry.

TREASURER'S REPORT

Ms Janet Neff, Treasurer, shared information from her memorandum to the Synod Council. A significant portion of our current shortfall is due to investment losses. We budgeted based on last year's gains. Not only have we had no gain this year, we actually had losses. For 2017 we are not budgeting for either gain or loss.

Partnership support from congregations is down \$130,000.

Pr. Jane Marston asked if we have any sense if there is a trend downward from congregations.

Ms Neff responded that we don't know. The Stewardship Committee has the role to investigate these questions. There are many congregations behind, but then there are several congregations that gave more than they gave before.

Ms Susan Pursch asked to whom does the Stewardship report? How does it make report to the Synod Council, and how do we send information or questions back to the Stewardship Committee?

Pr. Davenport replied that Pr. Larry Smoose is chair. He reports to the Bishop and Pr. Davenport.

Ms Pursch asked if we can have a written report form the Stewardship Committee.

Ms Neff shared that the Stewardship Committee did work to get responses by year-end, but even so we are behind.

Bishop Burkat commented that for the first time in many years several congregations are adding staff. This added expense has an impact on Synodical support.

Vice President Beasley stated we will ask Pr. Smoose for a written report, and will invite him to attend the next meeting of the Synod Council to present the Mission Moment.

Treasurer Neff noted that expenses related to the closed churches for which we have responsibility still have a large impact on our financial health.

We have renegotiated the Synod's insurance policies and saved money there.

In many categories we are not exceeding, but indeed are under budget. No salary increases are projected for 2017. One thing of which we should be aware: we have a large delay in our budget plan because of how far forward we need to work.

There were some areas of loss last year, e.g. Assembly and Youth events. We are assessing expenses so we can set fees accordingly. We want to receive enough funds to cover the cost of these activities.

At end of report there are records of transfers from restricted funds to bring the budget into balance. This is an appropriate action, as this is why the restricted funds exist.

Ms Pursch inquired as to how many additional churches are on the market. How many are we still funding?

Ms Neff referred to the list in the Bishop's report: Collingdale, Newtown Square, Redeemer, Pottstown, plus the Chalfont cemetery.

Treasurer Neff put the 2017 budget before the Synod Council for consideration:

S.C. 16.02.09 RESOLVED THAT the Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod Council receive the proposed 2017 Budget from the Finance Committee, present it to the Synod Assembly on May 6th, 2016, and recommend its adoption by the Synod Assembly.

The Synod Council unanimously adopted this resolution.

Ms Neff stated that we need to be aware that our lease with the Seminary ends in 3 years, just after next bishop is elected. She also shared that we are in a good position overall. We have some liabilities, but overall we are in good shape.

Ms Neff encouraged the Synod Council to review the progress of the Forward Together in Faith Campaign on the last page of her memorandum.

Vice President Beasley thanked the Treasurer, the Finance Committee and the Staff for all their hard work in this process.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Administration Committee

Ms Doreen Kinzler, Committee Chair, presented the proposed agenda for the May 2016 Synod Assembly to the Synod Council:

S.C. 16.02.10 RESOLVED THAT the Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod Council approve the agenda for the twenty-ninth Annual Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod Assembly, May 6 – 7, 2016

The Synod Council unanimously adopted this resolution.

Ms Kinzler shared that we will need help again this year with registration, and will need people to serve as pages at the Assembly. Members of the Synod Council, or members from their congregations, are asked to help with these tasks.

Constitution Committee

Pr. Jane Marston, Committee Chair, referenced her written report. A question was raised by Augustus Lutheran, Trappe, PA regarding consistency in the use of the terms "this congregation" and "the congregation" throughout the Model Constitution, including in some required

provisions. After consultation with ELCA Secretary Boerger, and with his concurrence, the following resolution is proposed:

S.C. 16.02.11 RESOLVED THAT the Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod Council, with the consent of the Secretary of this Church, grants permission to Augustus Lutheran, Trappe PA to alter required provisions in the Model Constitution to make consistent use of the term “this congregation” as referenced in Section C1.02 of the Model Constitution.

The Synod Council unanimously adopted this resolution.

Pr. Marston then brought forward the constitutions of two congregations with the committee’s recommendation that the Synod Council approve them both.

S.C. 16.02.12 RESOLVED THAT the Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod Council approve the Congregational Constitution for St. John Lutheran Church, Centre Square, PA.

The Synod Council unanimously adopted this resolution.

S.C. 16.02.13 RESOLVED THAT the Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod Council approve the Congregational Constitution for Good Shepherd Lutheran Church, Northeast Philadelphia, PA

The Synod Council unanimously adopted this resolution.

Nominating Committee

Ms Joyce Brown Adams, Committee Chair, thanked the committee for their hard work. She also expressed her thanks to Director of Operations Yvonne Curtis, Ms Cynta Outterbridge, and Secretary Karl Richard for their work on revising form and coordinating it with that of the ELCA forms. She also thanked Pr. Brad Burke, Assistant to the Bishop for Youth and Young Adult Ministry for his assistance in recruiting nominees.

Ms Adams referenced her report pointing out status of slates still needing nominees.

In addition to those listed in her report, Mr. John Ungerman is willing to run for Lay Male at Large.

We are nearly complete in our needed nominations. The Committee is extending deadline to 2/29 with the anticipation that the remaining slots will have nominees by then.

Audit Committee

Ms Susan Pursch, Committee Chair, stated that there is not a report this meeting but there should be a preliminary audit report for the next meeting.

OLD BUSINESS

Vice President Beasley requested that members who are not able to attend inform her, or Secretary Richard of their absence. Director of Operations Yvonne Curtis has enough on her plate the day of our meeting without adding this detail to the list.

Ms Beasley also informed members of the Synod Council that if they are attending the Synod Assembly and are not a Voting Member from their congregation they do NOT need to pay. However such Synod Council members DO need to register.

NEW BUSINESS

Pr. Brad Burke, Assistant to the Bishop for Youth, Young Adult Ministry and Spiritual Formation shared a paper with his Goals and Initial Visions for Young Adult Ministry with the Synod Council. Pr. Burke shared that he has had many conversations with young adults across the Synod, including Synod Council member Ms Adrienne Nash-Menendez and Pr. Nate Preisinger of the Lutheran Theological Seminary at Philadelphia's admission office. The purpose of these conversations was to gather thoughts for how we might broaden the impact we have in Young Adult Ministry. These conversations helped inform the goals and visions he shared with the Council.

A very large piece of the ministry we do with and for Young Adults is the South Dakota Service trip. Pr. Burke asked Ms Nash-Menendez to describe some of this event. She shared that while this trip has been a part of our Youth Ministry, over the years there have been increasing numbers of Young Adults who have been participating. We are now trying to make this Young Adult connection a specific part of the trip.

The theme of the trip this year is "Faith on the Frontier." This would include the frontier of our lives, of social justice issues. There are several teams that are needed for this trip which would involve Young Adults. There are devotional teams, work teams, and van teams (there is a lot of driving). Exposure to different culture is a huge part of the experience. Rosebud Reservation of the Lakota tribe is the second poorest county in the entire nation.

This trip is a very powerful experience, but it is not cheap. The short-fall for the cost of trip is around \$10,000. There are two ways the team is proposing for people and congregations to help:

The first of these is "South Dakota Sunday," April 24th.

We are asking each congregation to consider using this day as a time to support Young Adult Ministry in Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod. The day will raise awareness of Young Adult Ministry in our Synod, and if each congregation can donate \$50 - \$100, it will go a long way for the South Dakota trip and Young Adult Ministry in general.

The second way to help is to support Lutheran Night at the Phillies on Friday, June 3rd. Where proceeds from this event have gone to Youth Ministry in the past, this year we will use them to support the South Dakota Trip.

Ms Joyce Brown Adams shared that the African Descent Lutheran Association is willing to make a contribution to this cause.

MISSION MOMENT

Due to the lateness of the hour, the Mission Moment about the New School will be shared over dinner.

The meeting adjourned at 6:47 with prayer by Pr. Paul Sorcek, newly elected Dean of the Lower Bucks Conference.

The 139th meeting of the Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod Council will be Thursday, April 21, 2016, 4:00 p.m., at a location to be announced.

The Reverend Karl M. Richard,
Secretary
Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod, ELCA

Summary of Actions by the Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod Council in response to the 2015 Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod Assembly

The Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod Council at its June 2015 meeting elected persons to fill the seats on Synod Council still open following the Assembly:

The Rev. Lyzette Rios Sanchez, New Creation, Philadelphia – term expiring 2018, Clergy
The Rev. Dwight Mason, Good Shepherd, Philadelphia – term expiring 2016, Clergy
Mr. Philip Tackett, St. Peter, Hilltown –term expiring 2018, Upper Bucks Lay Male

The Synod Council also elected Mr. Emanuel Alves as Lay Male Voting Member to the 2016 Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

The resolution on World Hunger which was passed by the Synod in Assembly, the text of which can be found in the minutes of the 2015 Synod Assembly, was referred to the Hunger Ministry Team on June 28, 2015.

In response to the resolution that the Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod make a public statement of solidarity with persecuted Christians around the world, the Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod Council at its December 2015 meeting unanimously adopted the following statement:

S.C. 15.12.09 RESOLVED THAT the Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod Council adopt the following Statement on Solidarity with Persecuted Christians:

The Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America stands in solidarity with the Christians and people of more than 60 nations that are suffering persecution for openly acknowledging and practicing their Christian faith.

The Christian Church is under attack and has been described by Mgr Bashar Matti Warda, Archbishop of Erbil in Iraq, as dissolving in front of the eyes of its own people. Christians in Iraq, Egypt, Syria, Pakistan, Nigeria and Korea are suffering various forms of persecution.

The attack on Christians is worldwide and extends beyond Iraq and the beheading of Egyptian Christians and American citizens by ISIS. It has taken the form of rape, enslaving and kidnapping of Christians in sub-Saharan Africa, Nigeria and Sudan. Christians in India live in fear, while North Korea continues to imprison large numbers of Christians in labor camps. The Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod agrees with and supports those who describe this problem as being major and serious but not unsolvable. The congregations and people of the Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod are encouraged to join with those crying out from the Christian community by calling for action from our governmental leaders, by becoming educated and informed, and through prayer. Demonstrating our belief in the power of prayer,

Good and gracious God, we pray for our brothers and sisters who suffer at the hands of their persecutors for demonstrating their love and belief in you. We pray that you give them strength and courage and that you make your presence felt despite their suffering. We pray for their captors and persecutors as you have taught us to pray for those who would do us harm. We ask you to guide our leaders to work to end the persecution of people of faith throughout the world. We ask for your divine intervention as we acknowledge that in you all things are possible. Into your hands we commend all for whom we pray. Amen.

To the Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod of the ELCA from the Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod Council:

Proposal to amend the Constitution, By-Laws and Continuing Resolutions of the Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod of the ELCA by deletion of the by-law regarding Dean of Interim Ministry:

S12.01.12. The interim pastors rostered in this synod in assembly shall elect a dean, who shall be an interim pastor under call by the Synod Council, or actively seeking placement for an interim call, serving within the territory of this synod. The term of the Dean of Interim Ministry shall be the same as specified in 12.01.13. It is understood that the Dean of Interim Ministry advises, assists, and confers with the Bishop of the Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod as specified in S12.01.14 and relates to, consults with, and convenes the Interim Ministry gatherings of this synod. In the event of a vacancy in the office of the Dean of Interim Ministry, the interim pastors rostered in this synod in assembly shall elect a dean for a new three-year term.

Whereas the number of trained Interim Pastors has decreased over the past decade, and

Whereas the way in which we are approaching the Interim process has changed, utilizing more part-time persons, including lay persons, as consultants in the process, and

Whereas the Synodical Staff position which oversaw personnel aspects of the Interim Pastors no longer exists, and

Whereas the Bishop of this Synod needs the ability to have oversight of the personnel issues related to Interim Pastors and flexibility over how to best receive the insights of Interims in the Mobility process, and

Whereas this may be more effectively accomplished through an appointed person as Director of Interim Ministry rather than in the current configuration of a Dean of Interim Ministry,

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod in Assembly amend the Constitution, By-Laws and Continuing Resolutions of the Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod of the ELCA by deletion of by-law S12.01.12.

Report of the Nominating Committee

**REPORT OF THE NOMINATING COMMITTEE
SOUTHEASTERN PENNSYLVANIA SYNOD, ELCA
SYNOD ASSEMBLY 2016**

1. Nominations from the floor shall be made at the time of the first report of the Nominating Committee during the first business session of the Synod Assembly for all positions to be elected at this assembly.
2. A person making a nomination from the floor must immediately present to the Synod Secretary, or to the Assembly office, a clearly printed copy of the nominee's biographical information.

TICKET 1 - CONSULTATION COMMITTEE, CLERGY (One **ordained minister** to be elected for a term ending 2020)

NAME	CONGREGATION
Sandra Brown	Peace Lutheran, Bensalem

The Synod Assembly may make nominations from the floor.

TICKETS 2-10 - To elect Representatives to the Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod Council, which functions as the board of directors of the synod and as an interim legislative authority between meetings of the Synod Assembly.

TICKET 2 - SYNOD COUNCIL, CLERGY (Three **ordained ministers** to be elected for terms ending 2019)

NAME	CONGREGATION
Sarah Anderson	Grace Lutheran, Drexel Hill
Regina Goodrich	Mediator Lutheran, Philadelphia
David Charles Lutcher	Grace Lutheran, Hatfield
Dwight Mason	Good Shepard Lutheran, Philadelphia

The Synod Assembly may make nominations from the floor.

S9.08.01.b. Representatives of congregations in each conference shall meet prior to the annual meeting of the Synod Assembly and shall nominate at least one lay person from their conference for the Synod Council, one nominee per conference to be elected by the assembly at the annual meeting. These lay seats assigned to conferences shall alternate every six years (or two terms) between male and female Council members. The Nominating Committee shall receive these nominations from the conferences to include in its reports. Voting members at the annual meeting of the assembly may nominate from the floor persons from the assigned conferences for election to the Synod Council

TICKET 3 - SYNOD COUNCIL, DELAWARE CONFERENCE REPRESENTATIVE, LAY MALE (One **lay male** to be elected for a term ending 2019)

NAME	CONGREGATION
David Ehret	Grace Lutheran, Broomall

The Synod Assembly may make nominations from the floor. Persons not elected on this ballot will be added to Ticket 6.

TICKET 4 - SYNOD COUNCIL, NORTHEAST CONFERENCE REPRESENTATIVE, LAY MALE (One **lay male** to be elected for a term ending 2019)

NAME	CONGREGATION
Adam Clark	Zion Evangelical Lutheran Church of Olney, Philadelphia

The Synod Assembly may make nominations from the floor. Persons not elected on this ballot will be added to Ticket 6.

TICKET 5 - SYNOD COUNCIL, UPPER MONTGOMERY CONFERENCE REPRESENTATIVE, LAY FEMALE (One **lay female** to be elected for a term ending 2019)

NAME	CONGREGATION
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The Synod Assembly may make nominations from the floor. Persons not elected on this ballot will be added to Ticket 7.

TICKET 6 - SYNOD COUNCIL, AT LARGE REPRESENTATIVE, LAY MALE (One **lay male** to be elected for a term ending 2019)

NAME	CONGREGATION
Amos Garsaynee	St. James Lutheran, Folcroft
John Ungerman	St. James Lutheran, Pottstown

The Synod Assembly may make nominations from the floor.

TICKET 7 - SYNOD COUNCIL, AT LARGE REPRESENTATIVE, LAY WOMAN (One **lay woman** to be elected for a term ending 2019)

NAME	CONGREGATION
Joyce Adams	Faith-Immanuel Lutheran, East Lansdowne
Julie Funk	Living God Lutheran, Honey Brook
Doreen Kinzler	St. John's Evangelical Lutheran, Philadelphia
Sandra Zimmermann	St. John's Lutheran, Phoenixville

The Synod Assembly may make nominations from the floor.

TICKET 8 – SYNOD COUNCIL, YOUNG ADULT, LAY FEMALE (One **lay female young adult*** for a term ending 2019)

*voting member of a congregation between the ages of 18 and 30 at the time of election

NAME	CONGREGATION
Jessica Smith	St. John's Lutheran, Centre Square

The Synod Assembly may make nominations from the floor. Persons not elected on this ballot will be added to Ticket 7.

TICKET 9 – SYNOD COUNCIL, YOUNG ADULT, LAY MALE (One **lay male young adult*** for a term ending 2019)

*voting member of a congregation between the ages of 18 and 30 at the time of election

NAME	CONGREGATION
Emanuel Alves	Lutheran Church of the Holy Communion Lutheran, Philadelphia

The Synod Assembly may make nominations from the floor. Persons not elected on this ballot will be added to Ticket 6.

Ticket 10 – SYNOD COUNCIL, YOUTH FEMALE (One **lay female youth*** for a term ending 2018)

*voting member of a congregation who has not reached the age of 18 at the time of election

NAME	CONGREGATION
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The Synod Assembly may make nominations from the floor. Persons not elected on this ballot will be added to Ticket 7.

BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION



Adams, Joyce D. (F-P): Retired. BSW from Temple University. M.Ed. from University of Illinois Champaign –Urbana. Faith Immanuel Lutheran Church, Lansdowne. Currently serving on Synod Council as Delaware County Female Representative; Faith-Immanuel Office Administrator; Faith Immanuel Council President 2014-2015; Faith Immanuel Council Vice President 2012-2013; President of the Altar Guild; President/Coordinator – Faith-Immanuel Summer Enrichment Program 2014, 2015; African Descent Lutheran Association Philadelphia Chapter President; Faith-Immanuel Creative Arts Work Group; Facilitator and Instructor, Philadelphia Chapter of the American Sewing Guild Board 2009; Faith-Immanuel Benefit Bank Site Coordinator Benefit and Tax Counselor; Urban Seed Former Secretary.

Spiritual Gifts: Service, Giving, Mercy, Leadership, Teaching, Administration and Faith.

Personal Gifts: Leadership, Teaching, Administration and Management

I use my gifts in service to the church as past council president for Faith-Immanuel Lutheran Church, currently serving as the office administrator, coordinate and teach in our Summer Enrichment Program, organize and teach in the Creative Arts Works group, member of Women’s Ministry, and serving as Altar Guild, President.



ALVES, EMANUEL M. (M-P): IT Tech Services. Mobile Specialist, Ellucian. B.S. from DeVry University. Lutheran Church of the Holy Communion. SEPA Youth Servant Trips, God’s Work Our Hands, The Youth Gathering, Young Adult Ministry, Synod Council, Church Council, and Churchwide Assembly. Interested in continuing to grow the participation and sharing of God’s love to the world especially through our youth. As technology continues to evolve, I’d like to see the churches increase in usability to also better relate to the “now” generations.

Spiritual and Personal Gifts: Listening, Advising, Coaching, and Mentoring, On Hands Participation

I have cultivated youth Bible study groups, led youth to servant trips and local community services. I lead a contemporary service with live music as guitarist and share the Christ messages and help people know they’re not alone and where to find Christ.



ANDERSON, SARAH C. (F-P): Pastor, Grace Lutheran Church, Drexel Hill. M.Th. from Gurukul Lutheran Theological College, Th.M. from Princeton Theological Seminary, Ph.D. from Union Theological Seminary. Served on the Synod Council 2012-present (first term).

Spiritual/Personal Gifts: Being grounded in Theology – can add an ecumenical perspective to theological issues of the Church. Zeal for evangelism can provide creative models for evangelism, Worship and Prayer, living and sharing the presence of God, Seeking Peace and Justice.

As a pastor of suburban church, I have led several biblical/theologically sound worship services to demonstrate the richness of the Lutheran tradition. I have used my gifts to strengthen ministry among children. I have initiated new ministries and organized special programs to carry out the Evangelical task of the ELCA. My greatest gift has been to witness God's love in welcoming people to the church where everyone feels love, accepted, and important. I have also enjoyed sharing the gift of prayer and healing through child-like faith and inviting people to share in the abundance of God's love and grace.



CLARK, ADAM K. (M-W): Bookkeeper. Zion Lutheran Church, Philadelphia. Choir; Youth League; Church Council Member; Prayer Meeting and Bible Study Leader; Evangelism Committee; Finance Committee; visitor to shut-ins and hospitalized; assisting elderly with shopping and transportation; Campus Bible Study; Tutoring and Mentoring; Counseling; Licensed Ham Radio Operator; Reading; Anime; Foreign Languages; Travel; Feeding the Homeless.

Spiritual Gifts/Personal Gifts: Faith, Prayer, Empathy, Communication, ability to understand another's point of view.

For example, in leading Bible Study, I have to faithfully pray to be able to communicate my life experiences, as well as those of others, that relate to the day's reading to show that the Bible is not just stories but is the living word of God.



EHRET, DAVID W. (M-W): Retired. BBA from Eastern Kentucky University. Grace Lutheran Church, Broomall. Church Council President; Music and Worship; Thrivent Financial - Del Co. Chapter Financial Director; Habitat for Humanity Volunteer; St. Mark's Methodist Food Pantry.

Spiritual and/or Personal Gifts:

Over 40 years of business experience managing people, projects, and budgets; IT Audit experience of Information Security Systems – with CISSP certificate (now expired); Active member and currently president of Grace Broomall church council.

Managing investment portfolio for myself and other family members. A spiritual gift of faith – a trust that God will protect me

and lead me in each new chapter of my life. I believe that God will not ask me to do anything that I cannot handle.

I retired about 3 years ago. I have used my business experiences to help my church congregation through several pastor changes and keep us on solid ground. As a small congregation, we were one of the first to embrace a part time pastor – something that was not looked upon favorably 10 years ago. We survive as an “at risk” congregation while serving our community.



FUNK, JULIE (F-W): Director – Community Health and Wellness, Penn Medicine Chester County Hospital. MS from West Chester University. Living God Lutheran Church, Honey Brook, serve on Church Council as Secretary and on Executive Committee; Manage Health Ministry; Assist with all outreach events. My employment engages me in vast community outreach to educate on key health needs. American Health Association Heart Walk; Dash for Diabetes; Food Cupboards; Diabetes Management and Prevention.

Spiritual and/or Personal Gifts: Knowledge and experience in health prevention and wellness and public health; Team Building; Community Networking; Writing; Presentation Development

As a Registered Dietician and Certified Diabetes Educator, I oversee clinical and community based education programs and initiated a health and wellness ministry at our church. Have led large project groups in the community and workplace. Through my work, I engage key community groups in workgroups for the community health needs assessment project and work on leadership teams within the West Chester area. I enjoy writing articles and developing educational materials. As an educator and college nutrition instructor, I have expertise in teaching and learning strategies. Particular interest areas: Health literacy, nutrition access, health improvement.



GARSAYNEE, AMOS (M-P): Social Worker, Don Guanella Village. St, John Lutheran Church, Folcroft. MBA from Strayer University; MS from Philadelphia University. Tally team member; Congregation Council member; Greeter.

Spiritual and/or Personal Gifts: Teaching, Motivation and Communication



GOODRICH, REGINA (F-W): Pastor, Mediator Lutheran Church. B.A. from William Penn University; M.S.W. from Wayne State. Board Member/ ELCA Youth Ministry Network; Board Member, Bear Creek Camp; Synod Hunger Ministry Team; ELCA Youth Gathering (Captain); Community Pastor's Group; Faith-Based Group with Police Commissioner.

Spiritual and/or Personal Gifts: Preaching, Evangelism, Teaching, Leadership

In my work in the church at large and the community, I have used these gifts to further productive ministry to foster the God giving grace for all people to have a more abundant life. It is important to me to reach people in the trench and on the border line, that they might experience life in its fullness. It is not just about a relationship with Christ but also inner development towards that abundant life.



KINZLER, DOREEN M. (F-W): Network Support Specialist, City of Philadelphia. St. John Evangelical Lutheran Church, Philadelphia. I have served as a member of Synod Council for 3 ½ years for the NE Conference and have chaired the Administration Committee for 3 years. I am currently a member of our Congregational Council and have previously held the office of President and Treasurer. Over the years, I have been involved in many team ministries of the church which included: Christian Education (Director), VBS (Director), Stewardship, Finance, Leadership Development, Youth & Family, Fellowship, Worship & Music, Faith in Action, Global Companion, and Mutual Ministry. I completed a 2 year Diakonia Program and I am a Deacon and Worship Assistant in my congregation. I have attended workshops and Synod Assemblies with the Synod through

the years and have been an Assembly Page and Coordinator for many years. I am actively involved with our new collaboration, God's Grace Lutheran Community. I served on the Board and was Treasurer of Feast of Justice, a nonprofit which serves over 2,600 families monthly. I have traveled to Tanzania to build relationships with our companion church and synod.

Volunteer with Lutheran Disaster Relief. I have been a member of NE Conference Strategy Team to work together and share the resources and ministries of the congregations.

Spiritual and/or Personal Gifts: Giving, Faith, Teaching, Leadership and Service.

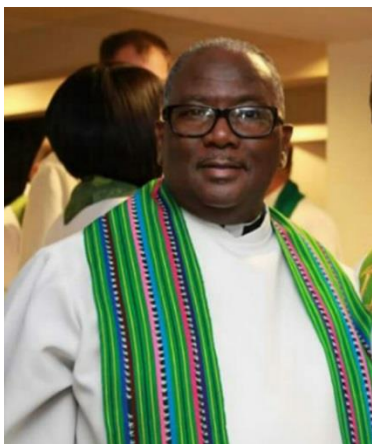
God has blessed me, so I give generously of my time, talents and treasure to the church, Synod, and the community. I will use my gifts to help lead, teach and encourage others to be Disciples of Christ.



LUTCHER, DAVID C. (M-W): Pastor, Grace Lutheran Church, Hatfield. BA from Susquehanna University; M.Div. from Lutheran Theological Seminary at Gettysburg; S.T.M. from Lutheran Theological Seminary at Gettysburg. Present-Bear Creek Camp Board; Lutheran Community at Telford Board; Past – Pennridge FISH Board; Pocono Area Leisure Ministry; Synod Coordinator for ELCA Youth Gathering; Big Brother/Big Sisters; Appalachia Service Project; Habitat for Humanity.

Spiritual and Personal Gifts: I enjoy listening to different views and bringing people together; 34 years of ministry experience in different settings; 5 years of outdoor ministry; Interest in Eco theology and the environment; Experience with youth and doing service in the community.

I helped rebuild a congregation that was close to closing and stabilize it with new leadership; service in a variety of congregations in different settings in eastern PA; I have led capital campaigns and a large building project, and currently in the midst of a building project following a catastrophic church fire, I enjoy gathering people together for large ministry projects.



MASON, DWIGHT (M-P): Pastor, Good Shepherd Lutheran Church, Philadelphia. M.Div. from The Lutheran Theological Seminary at Philadelphia. SEPA Synod Council; SEPA Synod Assembly Worship Committee; SEPA Synod Bishop's Convocation Task Force; Grace Food Distribution Center.
Spiritual and/or Personal Gifts: Business Management, Interpersonal Skills, Coaching Skills, Mentoring Skills, Ecumenical Experience.

I have been involved in church work since I was a young child. At the age of 16, I began working with the Second Shiloh Baptist Church as the Pianist for the Youth Choir and maintained that positions for eight years. I later went on to be the Minister of Music for Lewis Temple Church of God in Christ for 25 years. I was church administrator also. I became a Minister during this time, then an Ordained Elder in 1982. Then I became the Assistant Pastor. I worked in the corporate arena as a supervisor and manager for over 32 years. I spent many of these years, mentoring and coaching employees.



SMITH, JESSICA R. (F-W): Sales Coordinator, West German BMW. A.A. from Montco Community College. B.A. from West Chester University. St. John Lutheran Church, Centre Square. Lutheran Youth Organization(LYO) Secretary 2007-2009; Work with LYO and help Junior High Youth Gathering, Senior High Youth Gathering, Helping Hands Day. Coordinator of the Pages at Synod Assembly 2008-2009; Helped with VBS @ Good Shepherd King of Prussia and St. Timothy’s Fox Chase; I volunteer with Animal Care and Control Team of Philadelphia and Lucky You Animal Rescue. Homelessness is an injustice that is something I pay attention to for both humans and

animals.

Spiritual and/or Personal Gifts: Compassion; Love to help where needed; Organization; Advocating; Leading

My work with the LYO from the time I was a youth until now has helped me become a better leader and advocate. Before I got involved in the church, I was shy and not very good at leading and advocating for others. I use my compassion to advocate for the underdog. I love helping those who can’t help themselves and I do all of this with my work with the youth of the church by serving on planning teams, going on mission trips and assisting in various ministries throughout the Synod.



UNGERMAN, JOHN A. (M-W): Wealth Advisor, Thrivent Financial. BA from Drexel University. St. James Lutheran Church, Pottstown. Council President; Council Secretary; Finance Committee; Endowment Committee; Upper Pottsgrove Planning Commission; Habitat for Humanity Montgomery County Board Member; Manatawny Manor Advisory Board Member.

Spiritual and/or Personal Gifts: Financial knowledge, Community involvement, leadership, faith, planning

I have been an active congregation member for over 30 years between Grace, Hatfield and St. James, Pottstown. I’ve served in a number of capacities on boards and councils. In my work I help my customers to be wise with their money and to live generous lives.



ZIMMERMANN, SANDRA A. (F-W): Compliance Officer, Heidi Sue Variety. St. John's Lutheran Church, Phoenixville. Took Diakonia Course and facilitated it here at St. John's; Taught children's Sunday School for 35 years; Teach Adult Sunday School 3 years; Coordinator of Church Kitchen; Altar Guild; Fellowship Committee Chair; Member Property Committee; SEPA Faith Formation Team; Co-Chair Breast Cancer Coalition; Healthy Women Committee; Relay for Life Executive Committee; Scout Leader; President of Board Phoenixville Area Children's Learning Center; Phoenixville Holiday House Tour Committee.

Spiritual and/or Personal Gifts: Listening, Leadership, Compassion, Faith; Wisdom

I use the gift of listening in Diakonia, teaching Sunday School for children and as the President of the Board of the Learning Center. I use the gift of leadership in Church Committees – Fellowship and Property. Compassion in my vocation as a Phoenixville Community Leader. Faith – waking up each morning trusting God. Wisdom in patience and seeing God in others.

**Report of the
Treasurer
and
Budget Proposal**

Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod
Income Statement
as of January 31, 2016

	<u>YTD Actual</u>	<u>YTD Budget</u>	<u>Variance</u>	<u>2016 Forecast</u>	<u>2017 Budget</u>
01 - Unrestricted					
Revenues					
00 - Other Income	235,638	337,880	(102,242)	411,590	273,090
21 - Bishop/Director of Operations	200	-	200	200	200
31 - Candidacy	2,400	4,800	(2,400)	4,800	4,800
51 - Congregational Support	1,970,305	2,100,000	(129,695)	1,970,000	1,990,000
Total Revenues	2,208,543	2,442,680	(234,137)	2,386,590	2,268,090
Expenses					
21 - Bishop/Director of Operations	264,683	268,552	3,869	295,409	292,909
22 - Administration	355,257	351,798	(3,459)	318,713	290,929
23 - Deans	73,171	75,026	1,855	76,126	76,626
24 - Communications	187,070	200,923	13,853	198,739	199,239
25 - Finance	102,741	106,069	3,328	105,578	106,378
27 - Stewardship/Development	629	1,600	971	1,600	1,600
31 - Candidacy	79,374	83,792	4,418	86,799	86,799
51 - Congregational Support	1,150,029	1,214,880	64,851	1,145,380	1,155,380
52 - Ecumenical Organizations/Agency	3,400	3,400	-	7,900	7,900
Total Expenses	2,216,354	2,306,040	89,686	2,236,244	2,217,760
NET SURPLUS/(DEFICIT)	(7,811)	136,640	(144,451)	150,346	50,330

Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod
Income Statement
as of January 31, 2016

	<u>YTD Actual</u>	<u>YTD Budget</u>	<u>Variance</u>	<u>2016 Forecast</u>	<u>2017 Budget</u>
02 - Temporarily Restricted					
Revenues					
00 - Other Income	43	3,350	(3,307)	3,340	3,340
21 - Bishop/Director of Operations	62,406	75,250	(12,844)	81,700	84,000
26 - Special Events	37,508	45,000	(7,492)	41,000	43,000
41 - Congregations	4,125	-	4,125	4,000	4,000
42 - Global Vision	27,929	10,000	17,929	10,000	5,000
45 - Youth Ministry	90,941	81,800	9,141	114,500	87,500
51 - Congregational Support	34,073	15,000	19,073	16,000	16,000
Total Revenues	257,025	230,400	26,625	270,540	242,840
Expenses					
21 - Bishop/Director of Operations	77,185	75,250	(1,935)	81,700	84,000
25 - Finance	2,645	3,300	655	3,300	3,300
26 - Special Events	36,841	46,500	9,659	39,300	41,300
41 - Congregations	215	25,000	24,785	29,000	29,000
42 - Global Vision	24,228	12,281	(11,947)	10,000	5,000
45 - Youth Ministry	100,885	80,000	(20,885)	113,500	86,000
51 - Congregational Support	34,073	15,000	(19,073)	16,000	16,000
Total Expenses	276,072	257,331	(18,741)	292,800	264,600
NET SURPLUS/(DEFICIT)	(19,047)	(26,931)	7,884	(22,260)	(21,760)

Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod
Income Statement
as of January 31, 2016

	<u>YTD Actual</u>	<u>YTD Budget</u>	<u>Variance</u>	<u>2016 Forecast</u>	<u>2017 Budget</u>
03 - Mission					
Revenues					
00 - Other Income	86,265	68,500	17,765	962,000	402,200
26 - Special Events	-	2,000	(2,000)	-	-
43 - Missions	48,000	70,000	(22,000)	53,000	53,000
53 - Mission Congregations	44,666	56,000	(11,334)	44,000	44,000
Total Revenues	178,931	196,500	(17,569)	1,059,000	499,200
Expenses					
26 - Special Events	1,405	2,000	595	2,000	2,000
41 - Congregations	3,911	5,625	1,714	1,700	1,700
42 - Global Vision	41,874	45,956	4,082	11,250	8,250
43 - Missions	98,489	103,254	4,765	138,445	138,445
44 - Transformational Ministry	142	1,500	1,358	1,000	1,000
45 - Youth Ministry	72,823	96,753	23,929	149,839	148,339
46 - Young Adult and Spiritual Formation	-	-	-	-	10,000
53 - Mission Congregations	108,174	154,888	46,714	110,343	110,343
Total Expenses	326,819	409,976	83,157	414,577	420,077
NET SURPLUS/(DEFICIT)	(147,888)	(213,476)	65,588	644,423	79,123

Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod
Income Statement
as of January 31, 2016

	YTD Actual	YTD Budget	Variance	2016 Forecast	2017 Budget
04 - Permanently Restricted					
Revenues					
45 - Youth Ministry	2,037	1,000	1,037	1,000	1,500
51 - Congregational Support	63,855	55,000	8,855	60,000	60,000
Total Revenues	65,892	56,000	9,892	61,000	61,500
Expenses					
31 - Candidacy	9,000	19,000	10,000	19,000	19,000
32 - Interim Ministry	774	5,050	4,276	5,000	5,000
44 - Transformational Ministry	228	1,500	1,272	1,500	1,500
51 - Congregational Support	63,855	55,000	(8,855)	60,000	60,000
Total Expenses	73,857	80,550	6,693	85,500	85,500
NET SURPLUS/(DEFICIT)	(7,965)	(24,550)	3,199	(24,500)	(24,000)
TOTAL ALL FUNDS	(182,711)	(128,317)	(67,780)	748,009	83,693
Transfers - candidacy	7,500	7,000	500	7,000	7,000
Transfers - global vision	-	7,500	(7,500)	-	-
Transfers - salary sustentation	10,000	10,000	-	-	7,458
Transfers - Spirit & Truth/Clark Grant	-	20,000	(20,000)	20,000	20,000
Transfers - Est. Brickajlik - World Hunger	4,167	5,000	(833)	5,000	5,000
Transfers - NED 125th Ann. Donations	2,281	2,281	-	-	-
Transfers - Companion Synod	(4,963)	-	(4,963)	-	-
Transfers - Urban Philadelphia Con.	15	-	15	-	-
Transfers - from Youth Ministry	9,944	-	9,944	-	-
Transfers - to Youth Ministry Scholarships	(2,050)	-	(2,050)	-	-
Transfers - to Fund For Mission sale of church	(35,537)	-	(35,537)	(910,000)	(350,000)
Transfers - Fund For Mission	76,535	76,535	-	129,990	226,849
TOTAL ALL FUNDS AFTER TRANSFERS	(114,818)	-	(114,818)	-	-

**SOUTHEASTERN PENNSYLVANIA SYNOD OF THE
EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN AMERICA**

***FINANCIAL STATEMENTS AND
REPORT OF INDEPENDENT CERTIFIED PUBLIC ACCOUNTANTS***

JANUARY 31, 2016

**SOUTHEASTERN PENNSYLVANIA SYNOD
OF THE EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN AMERICA**

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REPORT OF INDEPENDENT CERTIFIED PUBLIC ACCOUNTANTS

**Synod Council of Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod
of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania**

We have audited the accompanying statements of Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (the "Synod") which comprise the statement of financial position as of January 31, 2016, and the related statements of activities, changes in net assets, and cash flows for the year then ended, and the related notes to the financial statements.

Management's Responsibility for the Financial Statements

Management is responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of these financial statements in accordance with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America; this includes the design, implementation, and maintenance of internal control relevant to the preparation and fair presentation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

Auditor's Responsibility

Our responsibility is to express an opinion on these financial statements based on our audit. We conducted our audit in accordance with auditing standards generally accepted in the United States of America. Those standards require that we plan and perform the audit to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements are free of material misstatement.

An audit involves performing procedures to obtain audit evidence about the amounts and disclosures in the financial statements. The procedures selected depend on the auditor's judgment, including the assessment of the risks of material misstatement of the financial statements, whether due to fraud or error. In making those risk assessments, the auditor considers internal control relevant to the entity's preparation and fair presentation of the financial statements in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the entity's internal control. Accordingly, we express no such opinion. An audit also includes evaluating the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of significant accounting estimates made by management, as well as evaluating the overall presentation of the financial statements.

We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our audit opinion.

Opinion

In our opinion, the financial statements referred to above present fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of the Synod as of January 31, 2016, and the changes in its net assets and its cash flows for the year then ended in conformity with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America.

**Synod Council of Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod
of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America**

Report on Summarized Comparative Information

We have previously audited the Synod's January 31, 2015 financial statements, and we expressed an unmodified audit opinion on those audited financial statements in our report dated April 17, 2015. In our opinion, the summarized comparative information presented herein as of and for the year ended January 31, 2015 is consistent, in all material respects, with the audited financial statements from which it has been derived.

Other Matters

Our audit was conducted for the purpose of forming an opinion on the basic financial statements as a whole. The accompanying supplemental schedule of receipts and disbursements – operating, designated and temporarily restricted net assets and sale of churches, on pages 13 and 14, is presented for purposes of additional analysis and is not a required part of the basic financial statements. Such information is the responsibility of management and was derived from and relates directly to the underlying accounting and other records used to prepare the financial statements. The information has been subjected to the auditing procedures applied in the audit of the financial statements and certain additional procedures, including comparing and reconciling such information directly to the underlying accounting and other records used to prepare the financial statements or to the financial statements themselves, and other additional procedures in accordance with auditing standards generally accepted in the United States of America. In our opinion, the information is fairly stated in all material respects in relation to the financial statements as a whole.

Tait, Weller & Baker LLP

**Philadelphia, Pennsylvania
April 15, 2016**

**SOUTHEASTERN PENNSYLVANIA SYNOD
OF THE EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN AMERICA**

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION

January 31, 2016 With Summarized Information For 2015

	Unrestricted	Temporarily Restricted	Permanently Restricted	Totals	
				2016	2015
ASSETS					
Cash	\$ 128,824	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 128,824	\$ 233,486
Investments, at market <i>(Note 2)</i>	144,357	414,998	-	559,355	555,755
Miscellaneous receivable	30,418	-	-	30,418	19,913
Prepaid expenses	35,007	-	-	35,007	49,638
Total current assets	338,606	414,998	-	753,604	858,792
OTHER ASSETS					
Investments, at market <i>(Note 2)</i>	483,680	-	702,915	1,186,595	1,200,440
Prepaid rent <i>(Note 5)</i>	162,460	-	-	162,460	218,161
Real estate	110,350	-	-	110,350	110,350
Leasehold improvements and equipment (net of accumulated depreciation of \$506,365 in 2016 and \$495,236 in 2015)	8,895	-	-	8,895	17,525
Land, buildings and improvements -- Bear Creek Camp	440,004	-	-	440,004	440,004
Equity in Chapel and Student Center	484,429	-	-	484,429	484,429
Total other assets	1,689,818	-	702,915	2,392,733	2,470,909
Total assets	\$ 2,028,424	\$ 414,998	\$ 702,915	\$ 3,146,337	\$ 3,329,701
CURRENT LIABILITIES					
Payables					
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America	\$ 149,543	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 149,543	\$ 176,377
Other accounts payable and accrued expenses	76,429	-	-	76,429	18,302
Deferred Revenue	29,755	-	-	29,755	17,025
Total liabilities	255,727	-	-	255,727	211,704
NET ASSETS					
Unrestricted					
Operating	65,307	-	-	65,307	231,321
Designated					
Fund for Mission	763,746	-	-	763,746	801,269
Other	19,211	-	-	19,211	39,155
Total designated	782,957	-	-	782,957	840,424
Real estate and property	924,433	-	-	924,433	924,433
Total unrestricted	1,772,697	-	-	1,772,697	1,996,178
Temporarily restricted <i>(Note 3)</i>	-	414,998	-	414,998	420,403
Permanently restricted <i>(Note 3)</i>	-	-	702,915	702,915	701,416
Total net assets	1,772,697	414,998	702,915	2,890,610	3,117,997
Total liabilities and net assets	\$ 2,028,424	\$ 414,998	\$ 702,915	\$ 3,146,337	\$ 3,329,701

See notes to financial statements.

**SOUTHEASTERN PENNSYLVANIA SYNOD
OF THE EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN AMERICA**

STATEMENT OF ACTIVITIES AND CHANGES IN NET ASSETS

Year Ended January 31, 2016 With Summarized Information For 2015

	<u>Unrestricted</u>	<u>Temporarily Restricted</u>	<u>Permanently Restricted</u>	<u>Totals</u>	
				<u>2016</u>	<u>2015</u>
Support and revenue					
Support					
Contributions from congregations					
Partnership support	\$ 1,970,306	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 1,970,306	\$ 2,148,802
World Hunger	-	-	-	-	98,942
Other designated gifts	-	-	-	-	13,564
Mission Partners	-	-	-	-	1,560
Malaria	-	-	-	-	5,583
Remittance to designated agencies	-	-	-	-	(119,649)
Lutheran Charities Appeal	-	-	-	-	75,795
Total from congregations	1,970,306	-	-	1,970,306	2,224,597
Other contributions	283,612	60,326	-	343,938	441,729
Total support	2,253,918	60,326	-	2,314,244	2,666,326
Revenue					
Investment income	50,424	2,730	1,499	54,653	63,023
Unrealized gain (loss) on investments	(62,763)	-	-	(62,763)	47,497
Income from outside trusts	-	63,855	-	63,855	55,042
Proceeds from sale of Church property – net <i>(Note 6)</i>	188,000	-	-	188,000	502,981
Registration fees	189,055	-	-	189,055	241,187
Remittance to designated agencies	-	(34,073)	-	(34,073)	(52,663)
Other	44,400	-	-	44,400	17,936
Total revenue	409,116	32,512	1,499	443,127	875,003
Net assets released from restrictions (Note 3)	98,243	(98,243)	-	-	-
Total support and revenue	2,761,277	(5,405)	1,499	2,757,371	3,541,329
Expenses					
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America					
Apportionment and other gifts	985,153	-	-	985,153	1,076,047
Budgeted operating expenses and disbursements	1,803,946	-	-	1,803,946	1,913,848
Distributions to beneficiary agencies	160,376	-	-	160,376	156,880
Distribution to Lutheran Charities agencies	-	-	-	-	75,795
Grants to organizations	35,283	-	-	35,283	92,783
Total expenses	2,984,758	-	-	2,984,758	3,315,353
Changes in net assets	(223,481)	(5,405)	1,499	(227,387)	225,976
Net assets					
Beginning of year	1,996,178	420,403	701,416	3,117,997	2,892,021
End of year	\$ 1,772,697	\$ 414,998	\$ 702,915	\$ 2,890,610	\$ 3,117,997

See notes to financial statements.

**SOUTHEASTERN PENNSYLVANIA SYNOD
OF THE EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN AMERICA**

STATEMENTS OF CASH FLOWS

Years Ended January 31, 2016 And 2015

	<u>2016</u>	<u>2015</u>
DECREASE IN CASH		
<i>Change in net assets</i>	\$(227,387)	\$ 225,976
<i>Adjustments to reconcile change in net assets used in operating activities</i>		
Depreciation	11,130	11,230
Dividends reinvested	(25,226)	(20,249)
Unrealized (gain) loss on investments	62,763	(47,497)
(Increase) decrease in		
Prepaid rent	55,701	55,701
Miscellaneous receivable	(10,505)	(17,533)
Prepaid expenses	14,631	(27,654)
Increase (decrease) in		
ELCA payable	(26,834)	(593,706)
Accounts payable and other accrued expenses	58,127	(111,373)
Deferred Revenue	<u>12,730</u>	<u>7,682</u>
Net cash used in operating activities	<u>(74,870)</u>	<u>(517,423)</u>
<i>Cash flows from investing activities</i>		
Purchase of equipment	(2,500)	(10,390)
Purchase of long-term investments	(48,215)	(66,347)
Proceeds from sale of long-term investments	24,523	65,618
Changes in short-term investments	<u>(3,600)</u>	<u>443,521</u>
Net cash (used for) provided by investing activities	<u>(29,792)</u>	<u>432,402</u>
<i>Cash flows from financing activities</i>		
Repayments on note payable	<u>-</u>	<u>(236,062)</u>
Net cash used for financing activities	<u>-</u>	<u>(236,062)</u>
Net decrease in cash	(104,662)	(321,083)
<i>Cash</i>		
Beginning of year	<u>233,486</u>	<u>554,569</u>
End of year	<u>\$ 128,824</u>	<u>\$ 233,486</u>

**SOUTHEASTERN PENNSYLVANIA SYNOD
OF THE EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN AMERICA**

NOTES TO FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

January 31, 2016 And 2015

(1) SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES

ORGANIZATION AND PURPOSE

The Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (“*Synod*”) is one of sixty-five geographical synodical units of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (“*ELCA*”). The Synod lies within Region 7 of the ELCA.

BASIS OF ACCOUNTING

The financial statements have been prepared on the accrual basis of accounting. Contributions from congregations received by the Synod represent calendar year (January through December) giving by congregations. These contributions are remitted to and support the fiscal year operations of the Synod.

ACCOUNTING ESTIMATES

The preparation of financial statements in conformity with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America requires management to make certain estimates and assumptions that affect the reported amounts of assets and liabilities as of January 31, 2016 and 2015, and the reported amounts of revenues and expenses for the years then ended. Actual results may differ from those estimates.

CASH AND CASH EQUIVALENTS

Cash and cash equivalents consist of amounts held in highly liquid securities with maturities less than three months at the time of purchase are stated at cost, which approximates fair value.

CONCENTRATION OF CREDIT RISK

The Synod occasionally maintains deposits in excess of federally insured limits. Accounting Standards Codification (“*ASC*”) 825, “*Financial Instruments*”, identifies these items as a concentration of credit risk requiring disclosure, regardless of the degree of risk. The risk is managed by monitoring the financial institutions in which deposits are made.

INVESTMENTS

Investments are stated at market value with gains and losses, both realized and unrealized included in the statement of activities. The fair value of investments traded on a securities exchange is determined based on quoted market prices for those investments.

PROMISES TO GIVE

Contributions are recognized when the donor makes a promise to give to the Synod that is, in substance, unconditional. Contributions that are restricted by the donor are reported as increases in unrestricted net assets if the restrictions expire in the fiscal year in which the contributions are recognized. All other donor-restricted contributions are reported as increases in temporarily restricted net assets. When a restriction expires, temporarily restricted net assets are re-classified to unrestricted net assets and reported in the statement of activities and changes in net assets as “*net assets released from restrictions.*”

**SOUTHEASTERN PENNSYLVANIA SYNOD
OF THE EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN AMERICA**

NOTES TO FINANCIAL STATEMENTS – (Continued)

January 31, 2016 And 2015

REAL ESTATE

Real estate held consists of property of active congregations acquired by the Synod and is recorded at cost.

LEASEHOLD IMPROVEMENTS AND EQUIPMENT

Equipment and furniture are carried at cost. Depreciation is provided on a straight-line basis over their useful lives, which is 3-7 years. Leasehold improvements are carried at cost and amortization of such costs is provided over the term of the lease. Depreciation expense for the years ended January 31, 2016 and 2015 was \$11,130 and \$11,230, respectively.

NET ASSETS

Unrestricted Net Assets – consist of net assets available for current operations.

Temporarily Restricted Net Assets – consist of gifts and contributions for which donor-imposed restrictions have not been met.

Permanently Restricted Net Assets – include gifts and contributions which require, by donor restriction, that the corpus be invested in perpetuity and only the income be made available for program operations in accordance with donor restrictions.

TAX-EXEMPT STATUS

The Internal Revenue Service (“***IRS***”) has determined the Synod to be an “association of churches” and, therefore, exempt from federal income taxes under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code. The IRS has further determined that contributions made to the Synod are deductible by the donors to the extent allowed by law.

The Synod has reviewed their tax positions and has concluded that there are no significant uncertain tax positions that would require recognition in the financial statements.

RECLASSIFICATIONS

Certain reclassifications have been made to the 2015 financial statements to conform to the 2016 presentation.

**SOUTHEASTERN PENNSYLVANIA SYNOD
OF THE EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN AMERICA**

NOTES TO FINANCIAL STATEMENTS – (Continued)

January 31, 2016 And 2015

(2) INVESTMENTS

Investments at January 31 were as follows:

	<u>2016</u>		<u>2015</u>	
	<u>Cost</u>	<u>Market Value</u>	<u>Cost</u>	<u>Market Value</u>
Short-Term Investments				
Savings, Certificates and Loans	\$ 540,001	\$ 540,001	\$ 536,647	\$ 536,647
Lutheran Brotherhood Money Market Fund	<u>19,354</u>	<u>19,354</u>	<u>19,108</u>	<u>19,108</u>
Total Short-Term Investments	<u>559,355</u>	<u>559,355</u>	<u>555,755</u>	<u>555,755</u>
Long-Term Investments				
Custodian Account				
Money Market Funds	80,173	80,173	27,337	27,337
Mutual Funds	516,082	342,976	535,335	399,080
Common Stocks	<u>69,899</u>	<u>87,761</u>	<u>74,890</u>	<u>93,613</u>
Total – Custodian Account	<u>666,154</u>	<u>510,910</u>	<u>637,562</u>	<u>520,030</u>
Mission Development Certificates – ELCA	106,089	106,089	106,089	106,089
Mutual Funds – Bond	55,522	65,367	53,570	65,563
Mutual Funds – Equity	<u>287,948</u>	<u>504,229</u>	<u>269,574</u>	<u>508,758</u>
Total Long-Term Investments	<u>1,115,713</u>	<u>1,186,595</u>	<u>1,066,795</u>	<u>1,200,440</u>
Total – Pooled Investment Funds	<u>\$ 1,675,068</u>	<u>\$ 1,745,950</u>	<u>\$ 1,622,550</u>	<u>\$ 1,756,195</u>
Equity in Pooled Investment Funds is allocated as follows:				
Unrestricted	\$ 628,037		\$ 634,376	
Temporarily Restricted	414,998		420,403	
Permanently Restricted	<u>702,915</u>		<u>701,416</u>	
	<u>\$ 1,745,950</u>		<u>\$ 1,756,195</u>	

At January 31, 2016 and 2015, gross unrealized gains on investments were \$243,988 and \$269,899 and gross unrealized losses were \$173,106 and \$136,254, respectively.

**SOUTHEASTERN PENNSYLVANIA SYNOD
OF THE EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN AMERICA**

NOTES TO FINANCIAL STATEMENTS – (Continued)

January 31, 2016 And 2015

The Synod utilized various methods to measure the fair value of its investments on a recurring basis. Generally accepted accounting principles establish a hierarchy that prioritizes inputs to valuation methods. The three levels of inputs are described below:

- Level 1 – Unadjusted quoted prices in active markets at the measurement date for identical assets and/or liabilities. An active market is one in which transactions for assets or liabilities occur with sufficient frequency and volume to provide pricing information on an ongoing basis. This category includes contracts traded on active exchange markets valued using unadjusted prices quoted directly from the exchange.
- Level 2 – Observable inputs other than quoted prices included in level 1 that are observable for the asset or liability, either directly or indirectly. These inputs may include quoted prices for the identical instrument on an inactive market, prices for similar instruments, interest rates, prepayment speeds, credit risk, yield curves, default rates and similar data.
- Level 3 – Assets or liabilities whose fair value is estimated based on internally developed models or methodologies using inputs that are generally less readily observable and supported by little, if any, market activity at the measurement date. Unobservable inputs are developed based on the best available information and subject to cost benefit constraints.

The inputs methodology used for valuing securities are not necessarily an indication of the risk associated with investing in those securities.

The summary of inputs used to value the Synod’s investments as of January 31, 2016 are as follows:

	<u>Total</u>	<u>Level 1 Quoted Prices</u>	<u>Level 2 Other Significant Observable Inputs</u>	<u>Level 3 Significant Unobservable Inputs</u>
Investments				
Savings, Certificates and Loans	\$ 517,654	\$ 517,654	\$ -	\$ -
Money Market Funds	99,527	99,527	-	-
Mission Development Certificates	128,436	128,436	-	-
Common Stocks	87,761	87,761	-	-
Mutual Funds - Bond	65,367	65,367	-	-
Mutual Funds - Equity	<u>847,205</u>	<u>847,205</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>
	<u>\$ 1,745,950</u>	<u>\$ 1,745,950</u>	<u>\$ -</u>	<u>\$ -</u>

**SOUTHEASTERN PENNSYLVANIA SYNOD
OF THE EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN AMERICA**

NOTES TO FINANCIAL STATEMENTS – (Continued)

January 31, 2016 And 2015

The summary of inputs used to value the Synod's investments as of January 31, 2015 are as follows:

	<u>Total</u>	<u>Level 1 Quoted Prices</u>	<u>Level 2 Other Significant Observable Inputs</u>	<u>Level 3 Significant Unobservable Inputs</u>
Investments				
Savings, Certificates and Loans	\$ 514,399	\$ 514,399	\$ -	\$ -
Money Market Funds	46,445	46,445	-	-
Mission Development Certificates	128,337	128,337	-	-
Common Stocks	93,613	93,613	-	-
Mutual Funds - Bond	65,563	65,563	-	-
Mutual Funds - Equity	<u>907,838</u>	<u>907,838</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>
	<u>\$ 1,756,195</u>	<u>\$ 1,756,195</u>	<u>\$ -</u>	<u>\$ -</u>

There were no transfers between Level 1 and Level 2 during the years ended January 31, 2016 and 2015.

(3) NET ASSETS

Temporarily restricted net assets are available for the following purposes:

	<u>2016</u>	<u>2015</u>
Urban Philadelphia Conference	\$ 7,943	\$ 7,958
Faith and Leadership	375	375
Auxiliary Pastor	34,697	34,697
University/Incarnation Air Rights	106,818	106,733
Companion Synod Reserve	15,118	10,812
Candidacy Bequest	167,685	175,185
Resurrection Scholarships	7,000	7,000
World Hunger	22,978	22,978
Other	<u>52,384</u>	<u>54,665</u>
	<u>\$ 414,988</u>	<u>\$ 420,403</u>

**SOUTHEASTERN PENNSYLVANIA SYNOD
OF THE EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN AMERICA**

NOTES TO FINANCIAL STATEMENTS – (Continued)

January 31, 2016 And 2015

Permanently restricted net assets are available for the following purpose:

	<u>2016</u>	<u>2015</u>
Investment in perpetuity, the income from which is separated into income reinvested in perpetuity, income remitted to beneficiary agencies and income which is expendable to support any activities of the Synod.	<u>\$702,915</u>	<u>\$701,416</u>

Net assets were released from donor restrictions by incurring expenses satisfying the restricted purposes. Total net assets used in various synodical programs totaled \$98,243 for the year ended January 31, 2016.

As of January 31, 2016, the Synod holds title to four churches which have closed, the value of which is not included in the net assets of the Synod. The Synod sold Redeemer, Philadelphia on February 26, 2016, and proceeds from the sale totaled \$450,000.

(4) PENSIONS

The Synod participates in pension plans administered by Portico Benefit Services of the ELCA for all eligible employees. Contributions made on behalf of such employees are accumulated in separate accounts and, upon retirement, pension benefits are provided based on the balance in the separate account of the participant. The Synod's policy is to fund all pension costs on a current basis. Contributions to the pension plan for the years ended January 31, 2016 and 2015 were \$61,713 and \$71,120, respectively.

(5) LEASE COMMITMENTS

The Synod entered into a lease agreement on May 15, 2008 with Lutheran Theological Seminary at Philadelphia (the "*Seminary*") to occupy space in the basement of the Chapel on the Seminary's campus. In connection with the lease agreement, the Synod would contribute \$1.5 million to cover one-half the cost of renovating the area for the Synod's use to be borrowed from the Synod's Fund for Mission. This payment would constitute payment of rent in advance for a term of 17 years. On January 15, 2009, this agreement was amended due to the economic conditions delaying the raising of necessary funds by the Seminary to complete the project, which was postponed. Under the terms of the amendment, the Seminary has provided interim space for the Synod to occupy for the term of the lease. As of January 31, 2009, the Synod had advanced \$696,061 of prepaid rent to the Seminary to be expensed over the term of the lease. Effective June 30, 2013 the rental agreement was extended to December 31, 2018 and the monthly rent reduced. The Synod shall be reimbursed all sums advanced less rent at \$7,353 per month through June 30, 2013 and \$4,642 after June 30, 2013, for the period from the date of its initial move to the date it has vacated the premises. The balance in prepaid rent was \$162,460 and \$218,161 as of January 31, 2016 and 2015, respectively.

**SOUTHEASTERN PENNSYLVANIA SYNOD
OF THE EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN AMERICA**

NOTES TO FINANCIAL STATEMENTS – (Continued)

January 31, 2016 And 2015

(6) REAL ESTATE SALES

Beginning in fiscal year 2014, in connection with the sale of properties, the Synod records the net proceeds as follows: 15% to the general operating budget, reimbursement for the Synod's expenses related to the church properties under management is deducted from the net proceeds and the remaining net proceeds, if any, to the Fund for Mission.

During the year ended January 31, 2016, Zion, Flourtown was sold for a net sales price, after closing costs, of \$188,000, which was transferred to the Synod, of which \$35,537 was recorded in the Fund for Mission and the remainder in operations for the 15% share to the general operating budget and as reimbursement for expenses incurred in managing the various church properties.

During the year ended January 31, 2015, the Synod sold St. James Lutheran Church, Chalfont for a net sales price, after closing costs, of \$502,981, of which all of the proceeds was recorded in operations for the 15% share to the general operating budget and as reimbursement for expenses incurred in managing the various church properties in fiscal year 2014 and prior.

(7) SUBSEQUENT EVENTS

Management has evaluated subsequent events through April 15, 2016, the date which the financial statements were available to be issued. There were no material subsequent events required to be disclosed.

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION

**SOUTHEASTERN PENNSYLVANIA SYNOD
OF THE EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN AMERICA**

***RECEIPTS AND DISBURSEMENTS –
OPERATING, DESIGNATED AND TEMPORARILY RESTRICTED NET ASSETS***

Year Ended January 31, 2016

	Balance January 31, 2015	Including Interfund Transfers Receipts	Disbursements	Balance January 31, 2016
Undesignated				
General operating	<u>\$ 231,321</u>	<u>\$ 2,687,877</u>	<u>\$ 2,853,891</u>	<u>\$ 65,307</u>
Designated net assets				
Fund for Mission	<u>\$ 801,269</u>	<u>\$ 39,012</u>	<u>\$ 76,535</u>	<u>\$ 763,746</u>
Other				
Educational Ministry	4,479	-	-	4,479
Salary Sustentation	17,458	-	10,000	7,458
Youth Ministry	17,138	-	9,944	7,194
Other	<u>80</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>80</u>
Total other	<u>39,155</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>19,944</u>	<u>19,211</u>
Total designated net assets	<u>\$ 840,424</u>	<u>\$ 39,012</u>	<u>\$ 96,479</u>	<u>\$ 782,957</u>
Temporarily restricted net assets				
Auxiliary Pastor	\$ 34,697	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 34,697
Candidacy Bequest	175,185	-	7,500	167,685
Faith and Leadership	375	-	-	375
Resurrection Scholarships	7,000	-	-	7,000
Comp Synod Reserve	10,812	4,963	657	15,118
University/Incarnation Air Rights Fund	106,733	2,730	2,645	106,818
Urban Philadelphia Conference	7,958	-	15	7,943
World Hunger	22,978	-	-	22,978
Other	<u>54,665</u>	<u>21,290</u>	<u>23,571</u>	<u>52,384</u>
Total temporarily restricted net assets	<u>\$ 420,403</u>	<u>\$ 28,983</u>	<u>\$ 34,388</u>	<u>\$ 414,998</u>

**SOUTHEASTERN PENNSYLVANIA SYNOD
OF THE EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN AMERICA**

RECEIPTS AND DISBURSEMENTS – SALE OF CHURCHES

Years Ended January 31, 2016 And 2015

	<u>January 31,</u> <u>2016</u>	<u>January 31,</u> <u>2015</u>	<u>Total</u>
Proceeds from Sale of Church			
Saint James, Chalfont	\$ -	\$ 502,981	\$ 502,981
Zion, Flourtown	<u>188,000</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>188,000</u>
Total Proceeds	<u>188,000</u>	<u>502,981</u>	<u>690,981</u>
Reimbursement of Property Management Expenses for closed churches	(124,263)	(206,371)	(330,634)
Repayment of Note Payable - Saint James	-	(221,163)	(221,163)
Operating Income for the Synod	(28,200)	(75,447)	(103,647)
Transfer to Fund for Mission	<u>(35,537)</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>(35,537)</u>
Total Disbursements	<u>(188,000)</u>	<u>(502,981)</u>	<u>(690,981)</u>
	<u>\$ -</u>	<u>\$ -</u>	<u>\$ -</u>

**Reports of
Committees
and
Task Groups**

SEPA SYNOD CANDIDACY COMMITTEE REPORT TO THE 2016 SYNOD ASSEMBLY

Those called to be rostered leaders of our church begin their journey in local congregations where fellow members and the called leaders of the congregation nurture them. These future leaders then formally enter the Candidacy Process through the Southeastern Pennsylvania (SEPA) Synod. Guided by seminary faculty and staff, as well as, the Candidacy Committee and with the input of Field Education Supervisors, Clinical Pastoral Education Supervisors and internship congregations, a candidate comes to serve as an Associate in Ministry (A.I. M.) a Diaconal Minister, a Deaconess or an Ordained Pastor.

The Candidacy Committee serves at the pleasure of Bishop Claire Schenot Burkat. Our Bishop appoints the members of the committee, so we represent her and our synod in the candidacy process. It is the intention of the ELCA that candidacy has a uniformity of the practice across all synods. To that end, the three major steps of candidacy – Entrance, Endorsement and Approval are prescribed by the wider church.

At the present time, there are 11 rostered leaders on the committee: this includes: Rev. Nancy B. Brown, *Director*, Rev. Dr. Bob Robinson, *LTSP representative*, Rev. Peggy Wuertele, *Region 7 and Churchwide Representative*, Rev. Thadd Book, Rev. Mukesh Cheedie, Rev. Moses Dennis, Rev. Dr. Shirley Guider, Rev. Nathan Krause, Rev. Matt Ollikainen,, Rev. Serena Sellers and Allison Wilcox, A. I. M. The following 8 lay members make up the remainder of the committee roster: Mr. Fred Renigar, *Chairperson*, Ms. Jacqui Cannon, Ms. Diane Casey, Mr. Rick Eberts, Mr. Chase Ferguson, Ms. Margie Pendarvis-Wright, Mr. Tom Salber and Ms. Arlette Stansbury.

The committee meets 6 times annually, including a Candidacy Retreat and a Fall Gathering Workshop with the candidates. Committee members are also assigned to contact teams made up of a rostered leader and a lay member. Each contact team relates to a maximum of five candidates and is in conversation with each of these individuals on a regular basis to provide support and guidance. We give a thank you to all members of the committee for the work they do on behalf of SEPA.

At present, we have a total of twenty-four candidates in active pursuit of rostering. Nineteen are on the Ordained Ministry track, two are on the Associate in Ministry (A.I. M.) track and three are on the Diaconal Ministry track. The 2016 class of approved candidates includes Hayley Bang, Ordained Ministry; Lisa Jester, Ordained Ministry; Alexa Kvande, Ordained Ministry; Tommy Richter, Ordained Ministry; and Dominic Smyth, Ordained Ministry.

I would like to thank Bishop Burkat for her support of the work we have been called to do and for her appointment of dedicated and discerning members to the committee. Thank you also to Rev. Steve Keiser and Rev. Gwen King for their prayerful “Initial Interviews” of applicants to the candidacy process. I extend many thanks to Rev. Susan Lynch and Ms. Bobbie Hoffman for their insightful facilitation of the “LifeKeys” discernment event. I would also like to thank The Rev. Jane Marston for her compassionate service as *Chaplain* to the candidates and the committee. A very special thank you to Bill Harp for his energy and commitment to detail and

communication that makes the work of the committee more efficient. He is an integral part of the Synod Staff as support to the work of the candidacy committee.

It is a time of change and challenge for those who are moving toward rostered leadership in the life of the ELCA. Congregational life is changing and God requires that the leaders of the Christian community change as well. Our committee, working together with our seminaries, congregations, and candidates seeks to nurture each individual to prepare them for the mission of God's church today.

Respectfully submitted by,
Fred Renigar,
Candidacy Committee Chairperson

THE COMMITTEE OF DEANS

Deans are generally elected by the conference (on occasion appointed by the Bishop) and serve three- year terms. The Committee of Deans meets on a monthly basis, along with Bishop Burkat. Much of their work centers on mobility situations in our synod. This work includes conducting exit interviews when a pastor retires or takes another call, explaining the basics of the transition time, interviewing candidates interested in serving in SEPA Synod, reviewing Ministry Site Profiles and Rostered Leader Profiles, and making recommendations of possible candidates in congregations. In addition, Deans conduct installations in the absence of the bishop, work with congregations in times of conflict and unfortunately also walk with congregations through the steps of closing if they have voted to end their ministry.

Committee of Deans: The Rev. Carlton Rodgers (Central Philadelphia), The Rev. Ronald Wesemann (Chester), The Rev. Leslie Richard (Delaware), The Rev. Paul Sorcek (Lower Bucks), The Rev. Julie DeWerth (Lower Montgomery), The Rev. Ben Krey (NE Philadelphia), The Rev. Serena Sellers (Upper Bucks), The Rev. Rebecca Eisenhart (Upper Montgomery), The Rev. Christian McMullan (Dean of Interim Ministry), The Rev. Marcia Bell (Directory of Mobility) The Rev. Claire Burkat (Bishop). Also working closely with the deans is the Rev. Pat Davenport (Director, Evangelical Missions), The Rev. Bradley Burke (Director of Youth and Young Adult Faith Formation), and Mr. William Harp (Coordinator, Vocation and Leadership). The Committee of Deans is very grateful for the long and faithful service of Pastor Ellen Meissgeier who served two terms as Dean of the Lower Montgomery Conference and then continued serving as Director of Mobility. She resigned from that position in February of 2016.

INTERIM MINISTRY

Intentional interims are experienced pastors who have gone through specific training to work with congregations through a transition time. Intentional interims are assigned by the Director of Mobility in consultation with the Dean of Interim Ministry and the Bishop. Throughout the transition the interim pastor attends required continuing education consultations, submits quarterly reports and at the end of each transition process an evaluation is conducted. This is far more scrutiny than most settled pastors receive. In addition to guiding the congregation through

the transition process and the preparation of the Ministry Site Profile, interim pastors are responsible for all of the normal pastoral responsibilities of the church.

Intentional Interims: The Rev. Roy Almquist, The Rev. Paul Beck, The Rev. Marcia Bell, The Rev. Sandra Brown, The Rev. Katherine Cartwright-Knodel, The Rev. George Detweiler, The Rev. Ghislaine Cotnoir, The Rev. Susie Folks, The Rev. Arlene Greenwald, The Rev. Shirley Guider, The Rev. Dick Mathisen, The Rev. Christian McMullan, The Rev. David Mueller, The Rev. Daryl Nelson, The Rev. Janet Peterman, the Rev. Kris Peterson, The Rev. Elaine Quincey, The Rev. Jack Saarela, The Rev. Wayne Shelor, The Rev. Bruce Thorsen, The Rev. Donna Wright, The Rev. Jeff Ziegler.

In recent months we have used interim consultants in congregations that are in transition but for various reasons, do not have an interim pastor. In some cases, these congregations are being served by bridge pastors who are contracted for pastoral services. Interim consultants have participated in extensive interim training and work with congregations on a limited, part-time basis. Our interim consultants are: Ms. Teri Lanan, The Rev. David Mueller, and the Rev. Jack Saarela.

The Transitional Ministry Development Team is made up of both pastors and lay leaders, most of who have gone through a transition in their congregation. This team reviews the interim quarterly reports, meets with congregational leaders at the end of a transition for an evaluation, and often attends initial meetings to talk about upcoming transitions as a pastor prepares to leave. This team has authored and updated the Transition Guide used in our Synod, provides support to the Director of Mobility and Dean of Interim Ministry. The current members of the Transitional Ministry Development Team include Teri Lanan, Barry Stock, John Lewis, The Rev. Marcia Bell, The Rev. Sandra Brown, and chaired by the Rev. Donna Wright.

Respectfully submitted by,

*The Rev. Marcia Brown,
Director of Mobility, SEPA Synod*

TRANSITIONAL MINISTRY DEVELOPMENT TEAM REPORT TO SYNOD ASSEMBLY 2016

Following our own leadership transition this year, the Transitional Ministry Development Team is continuing to respond to the 2015 recommendations of the Resolution Task Force.

Since the last synod assembly, we, along with the Dean of Interims, the Director of Mobility, and many of the trained interim pastors and bridge pastors in the synod, have devised various strategies to respond to “at risk” congregations. Six of our congregations have engaged the services of transition consultants. Often, one consultant may be used by more than one congregation at a time, leveraging our trained and experienced interim pastors.

Also since the last synod assembly, the “Pastoral Transition Guide” was revised (September 2015), to address concerns expressed by the survey respondents, as well as congregations completing transitions.

Members of the TMDT will seek opportunities to hear from multicultural congregations, regarding their specific transition needs. We hope to add to our membership representatives of multicultural and “at risk” congregations.

An ad hoc group has been formed to increase the usefulness of Phase IV (Implementation) of the “Pastoral Transition Guide.” With an expanded membership, we will have more energy to address the other recommendations from the 2015 Resolution Task Force, as well as other concerns, including:

- Meeting the growing demand for part-time pastorates, especially during the interim period, and developing resources (position descriptions, compensation/benefit guidelines, etc.) for congregations seeking part-time pastorates
- Responding quickly and informatively to initial requests from congregations in transition
- Working with the Conference of Deans to train/orient new deans on the transition process and resources
- Developing more fully and formally the interim consultant/bridge pastor option for “at risk” congregations
- Exploring additional ways lay leaders who have experienced a transition can be utilized throughout the process to help other congregations
- Reviewing requirements, guidelines, and recommendations for interim and bridge pastors in SEPA Synod

Please let me, Pastor Marcia Bell, or Pastor Christian McMullan know if you are interested in serving on the TMDT or on a sub-committee addressing one or more of these concerns.

Your sister in Christ,

Pastor Donna M. Wright, chair, Transitional Ministry Development Team

HUNGER MINISTRY TEAM REPORT TO SYNOD ASSEMBLY 2016

The Hunger Ministry Team’s mission is to educate congregations about hunger, initiate, support and enhance hunger ministries, and advocate together for God’s promised justice.

During 2015, the SE PA Synod Hunger Ministry Team experienced a bountiful year, working to educate and engage our congregations about the challenges faced by people that lack sufficient food to feed their families. With this focus, the Hunger Ministry Team conducted hunger simulation workshops, educated and informed congregations about domestic hunger grants, gathered and shared best practices and resource materials, as well as provided support for advocacy programs.

Our team is exploring strategies to create a format where our congregations can share their hunger ministry stories.

A Hunger 101 workshop was presented at the 2016 Synod Senior High Youth Gathering event and the students were really excited. We also engaged in the direct service of providing food to many families from our local food pantries in various congregations and, in some cases, providing education and job skills training. Advocating to influence food and nutrition public

policies that will help those in need continues to be an important focus of our work. We are truly blessed that our heavenly father has directed us in these efforts.

The Hunger Ministry Team completed the task of reviewing Domestic Hunger grant applications on behalf of our Synod and sent our recommendations to ELCA World Hunger. We encourage more congregations to apply for these grants.

As family dynamics continue to be challenging and where food insufficiency exist—for far too many children, families and older adults—the Hunger Ministry Team will continue to work towards addressing core issues to bring about a greater awareness, education, and work passionately towards eradicating hunger.

*Respectfully submitted,
The Hunger Ministry Team 2016*

MINISTRIES OF CHAPLAINCY, PASTORAL CARE, AND CLINICAL EDUCATION (MCPCCE)

Report to Synod Assembly – May 2016

The mission and ministry of the SEPA Synod includes service by approximately twenty rostered leaders who have been engaged in a variety of specialized Ministries of Chaplaincy, Pastoral Care, and Clinical Education (MCPCCE) representing the Synod in unique and demanding contexts wherein the presence of the Gospel addresses God's people in the face of difficult and extraordinary circumstances.

Members of MCPCCE currently provide pastoral care in diverse venues including hospitals, rehab centers, retirement communities, nursing homes, hospice facilities, counseling services, prisons, veteran centers, mental health facilities, spiritual guidance programs, et al. across the territory of the Synod. Those so engaged meet several times throughout the year (including an annual breakfast with the Bishop) for fellowship, light repast, and the sharing of challenges, concerns, rewards, frustrations, and joys of such a calling.

ELCA policy currently provides three criteria for anyone seeking a call from Synod Council to specialized ministry:

- 1) APC (Association of Professional Chaplains) certification
- 2) ELCA endorsement
- 3) Confirmation of employment in a chaplaincy position

Several recent retirements have reduced the number of Chaplains on the Synod roster currently active. Anyone interested in considering specialized ministry may contact Chaplain Linda Hatcher (Synod liaison) or Chaplain Maggie Ainslie (local convener) for information regarding the required procedures

Congregations seeking adult forum or other topical programs are encouraged to invite a MCPCCE member as a helpful and informative resource.

Respectfully submitted
Chaplain Maggie Ainslie
MCPCCE convener

Report of the Reformation at 500 Committee

The mission of Reformation at 500 Committee is to work with the Synod, institutions, congregations and interested persons in the Synod territory to prepare to mark the 500th Anniversary of the Reformation.

We are a year closer to October 31, 2017. The 500th Anniversary is coming and increasingly, it is appearing on congregations' radar screens (maybe still a distant blip). We understand there are many more current concerns facing folks in the parish – yet, we contend that Luther and the Reformation launched understandings and ideas that are still relevant for us today. We applaud this year's Assembly theme which invites us to look forward even as we commemorate events in the past. The keynote speaker at the Assembly, Professor Kirsi Stjerna, will help us make connections between our 16th century heritage and our present.

Our team continues to maintain a website with information about Luther as well as an annotated bibliography of resources and links to other organizations that are planning and preparing for 2017 including the ELCA website (<http://www.elca500.org>) and the Lutheran World Federation website (<https://www.lutheranworld.org/reformation-2017>). We also include a number of websites from Germany where preparations for 2017 started in 2008.

Since 2013, our Synod has sponsored a yearly trip to Germany to visit Luther and Reformation sites. This year, a trip is being led by Pastor Soenke Schmidt-Lange. In 2017, former President of the Philadelphia Seminary, Pastor Phil Krey will lead a trip.

We are currently exploring with our Bishop how congregations in this Synod and the Archdiocese of Philadelphia might use some of the materials developed through dialogues between Lutherans and Roman Catholics – (*From Conflict to Communion, Declaration on the Way, Common Prayer*). We have come a long way since the polemics, politics and condemnations of the 16th century. Unlike previous commemorations of the Reformation Anniversary, there are real possibilities in 2017 for strengthening ecumenical relations and exploring the broader dimensions of reforming impulses and their effects on all Christians beyond Lutheran circles.

The Committee hopes that there might be a Synod-wide event as we get closer to October 31, 2017. To date nothing has been planned. Local playwright and actor, Steve Seyfried, has developed a multi-media presentation on Luther (fashioned to be like a TED Talk) that will be a traveling 'show' available for presentation at congregations. We hope to have more details by the Synod Assembly.

The Committee is always looking to add members and connectors to our networking task so that we can learn from and with one another as we move toward October 31, 2017. If your congregation would like to further information or has a program to share, please contact the Committee chair, Steve Godsall-Myers (wittsgm@gmail.com). We have a website: <http://ministrylink.org/ministries/teams/luther2017> and a Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/518118854920866/>. We would love to hear from you.

Respectfully submitted
The Rev. Steve Godsall-Myers
Committee Chair

REPORT OF THE SYNOD STEWARDSHIP TEAM

The synod stewardship team would like to thank the congregations of our synod for their partnership support, and especially for those congregations that are modeling good stewardship to their members by giving at least 10% of their regular giving towards Partnership Support. Half of these offerings are used by the synod for its mission and half are sent by the synod to the ELCA in support of the work of national church. The specific uses of these funds are outlined on annual report covers used by many congregations for their annual meetings.

This year, after two years of modest increases in the Partnership Support, our support from congregations declined by \$178,496 which is a decrease of 8.3%. While a number of congregations may have experienced financial challenges, overall income to congregations through Regular Giving was up.

It once again shows that just as our congregations rely on the continued faithfulness of all of our members, the synod relies on the faithful response and proportional gifts of all of our congregations and the Synod Stewardship team urges congregations to model good stewardship by committing a proportional amount of its regular giving to Partnership Support, with intentional efforts to grow that proportional amount until your congregation is giving at least 10%. If each congregation would practice this principle of good stewardship, the only time Partnership Support would suffer is when congregational giving also suffered, and when congregation's experienced the joy of increased giving, the synod would share that joy.

Your synod stewardship team wants to partner with you in these efforts and during the past year has undertaken the following efforts to strengthen congregational stewardship:

- A Resource Table and a workshop at the Synod Assembly
- Sent congregations a Fall Stewardship response option based on the book *Ask, Thank, Tell*
- Provided a workshop on Electronic Giving led by ELCA stewardship staff members Keith Mundy and Steve Oeschlager.
- Provided resource packets for every congregation of the synod.
- Established stewardship sub-teams in seven of our eight conferences (the formation of the eighth team is in progress) with each conference working on plans for a workshop.

- Four congregations were selected to participate in a pilot program of the ELCA designed to strengthen stewardship in congregations with significant percentages of African descent members. The program, *Re-Kindle the Gift of Giving* is led by the ELCA.
- Sent, electronically, a poster *Where Your Offerings Go* to every congregation to show how Partnership Support funds are used for the work of the synod and ELCA.
- Met with conference team members to view the ELCA Webcast on Stewardship.

Our thanks to those serving on the Conference Stewardship sub-teams:

Chester Conference

Bill McAdoo, Pr. Mark Singh-Hueter, Pr. Cynthia Muse

Delaware Conference

Noel Smyth, Pr. Tim Ness, Pr. Wayne Matthias-Long

Lower Bucks Conference

Carl Reitz, Pr. Michael McKillip, Pr. Eric Reimer

Lower Montgomery Conference

Joe Tumolo, Pr. Jim Goodyear, Teri Lanan, Pr. Kim Guiser

Northeast Philadelphia Conference

Caralyn Edwards, Pr. Rod Kopp, Pr. .Dee E. Emmert

Upper Bucks Conference

Pr. Dave Deal. Tom Hebel, Pr. Axel Kaegler

Upper Montgomery Conference

Pr. Karen Sease Peter Huber, Pr. Paul Chapman

Members of the Synod Stewardship Team are Larry Smoose, Bobbi Hoffman, Bob Hensil, and Mike Carlson. We also want to thank our Synod Support staff member, The Rev. Patricia Davenport, along with Bill Harp, Martin Schwab, Bob Fisher, Cynta Outterbridge and Dionne Jackson.

Respectfully submitted

The Rev. Larry Smoose

TANZANIA COMPANIONSHIP TEAM REPORT

April 2015-April 2016

The Tanzania Companionship Team promotes and supports relationships between SEPA Synod and the North-Eastern Diocese (NED) of Tanzania.

Tanzania Month

From April 26-May 17, 2015, SEPA Synod collected offering from Synod congregations for the building of COMPASSION HOUSE at Sebastian Kolowa Memorial University (SEKOMU). Compassion House will provide a place for families to live when they visit SEKOMU to learn about how to care for family members with Special Needs.

Both the Bishop's Convocation in November 2014 and the Synod Assembly in May 2015 took up offerings for Compassion House. The total amount raised from these, as well as congregational offerings, was \$23,500. The gift was sent to the North-Eastern Diocese (NED) of Tanzania in honor of NED's 125th jubilee.

Synod Assembly 2015

MacPherson Mission

Susan and Tom MacPherson returned to the United States on August 23, 2014 after nearly three years of mission work at the Irete Children's Home in Tanzania. They were warmly welcomed home at the Synod Assembly (2015) where they shared photos and reflections on their mission work.

Honoring of the work of Susan Pursch

The 2015 SEPA Synod Assembly honored Susan Pursch for her leadership in SEPA's partnership with NED to establish Sebastian Kolowa Memorial University (which began as a college) over the past 10 years. Susan led the synod's SEKOMU Committee, which raised over \$450,000 to contribute to building SEKOMU from the ground up, brick by brick. SEKOMU focuses on serving people with disabilities and training graduates to work with people with physical and intellectual challenges. Now it is a university with 1500 graduates. Susan was invited to speak at the college's first graduation, along with the president of Tanzania.

Retirement of Joanne Carlson

Joanne Carlson, Assistant to the Bishop for Global Vision and Events, retired in July 2015 and was honored at the Synod Assembly for her 25 years of service to SEPA at the Synod Assembly. "Joanne has a truly missionary heart," the bishop said of her service representing SEPA to companion synods in Tanzania and the Czech Republic. A retirement dinner was held for Joanne at St. Luke Lutheran Church in Devon on June 19, 2015.

Mission Table Raffle

The Tanzania Companionship Team raffled items from Tanzania at the Assembly. Proceeds were added to the offering for Compassion House.

Connections

NED Jubilee

NED marked the 125th anniversary of the arrival of German missionaries who introduced Lutheran worship to the diocese in July 2015. Bishop Burkat and Joanne Carlson traveled to Tanzania for the Jubilee celebrations, where Bishop Burkat was chosen as the pastor to preach at the opening worship service on July 6.

Tanzania Tea, October 11, 2017

The Tanzania Companionship Team hosted a tea at St. Luke, Devon, on October 11, 2017 for Synod members currently in companion congregations, and those interested in Tanzania. The tea provided an opportunity for participants to share ideas about how to strengthen companionships with our partners in Tanzania. The event included remarks by two guests from Mikanjuni Lutheran Parish in Tanzania (the companion to St. Luke): Pastor Peter Zacharia and

lay member Julius Shoo. The event attracted 25 participants from 9 different SEPA Synod congregations.

Report on Region 7 Gathering for Global Mission and World Hunger

The Rev. Brad Burke and Nancy Shaw attended a regional retreat October 23-24, 2015 at Koinonia, Highland Lake, NY. They shared updates from regional teams and ELCA Global Mission.

New Companionship

NED has granted approval for the forming of a companionship between Little Zion Lutheran and the Irete School for the Blind. This action marks the first time a companionship has been created between a SEPA congregation and an NED institution (instead of congregation).

Tanzania Companionship Team

The SEKOMU Committee was disbanded in summer 2015; future work with SEKOMU will be coordinated by the Tanzania Companionship Team. Susan Pursch joined the Tanzania Companionship Team.

Following the retirement of Joanne Carlson, the Rev. Bradley Burke was called as Assistant to the Bishop for Youth, Young Adult and Spiritual Formation. In that role, he serves as the Synod Staff Liaison to the Tanzania Companionship Team.

Current members: Alice Bell, the Rev. Brad Burke (Synod staff), Sheldon Erb, Susan MacPherson, Tom MacPherson, Susan Pursch, Sharon Smith, and Nancy Shaw (team leader).

Respectfully submitted

Nancy J. Shaw

SEPA YOUTH, YOUNG ADULT MINISTRY & SPIRITUAL FORMATION

This has been a year of much transition for our synod's ministries with Youth, Young Adults and Spiritual Formation. With the departure of our long-time Youth Ministry Specialist, Molly Beck Dean, most of 2015 was spent in a process of crucial discernment with youth workers, key stakeholders, and lay leaders across our synod. That process led to the selection of Rev. Bradley R. Burke as the new Assistant to the Bishop for Youth, Young Adults & Spiritual Formation, and the beginning of a renewed vision for how our synod can support congregations in building up the faith of young people and equipping them to serve as leaders in our church.

Through the committed leadership of key youth workers and stakeholders across the synod, we have been able to continue to hold high-quality events for youth throughout this transition, including the Junior Youth Gathering (JYG), Senior High Youth Gathering (SHYG), Helping Hands Day, and SEPA's presence at the National Youth Gathering. Of all these events, our participation at last summer's National Youth Gathering in Detroit was undoubtedly the high point of 2015, and none of this would have been possible without the countless hours and committed leadership of pastors, youth workers and lay leaders across our synod. Thank you all for your critical work.

Over the past several months the excitement has continued, as we have launched a Visioning Process to discern how our synod can best support congregations in their work with children and youth. It has been a process filled with energy, new ideas, and a recognition of the vast changes in our church and society over the past decades. As we vision for the future it is our hope to partner with congregations across the synod to offer *more* youth activities and training events to equip your congregation's ministries for children and youth – and also to make these events as accessible as possible for congregations to participate in. It is an exciting and eventful time to be involved in Youth Ministry in SEPA.

Additionally, Young Adults across SEPA have begun gathering to envision what it might look like to have a synod-wide ministry for, with, and by Young Adults. There is an energy and passion among many of our young adults to “be church” in a way that genuinely and authentically engages them, but that may also look very different from what their parents or grandparents may have grown up with. As these conversations move forward, we are planning a series of opportunities for Young Adults across our synod to gather together over the summer months – beginning to create a networked community of young people passionate about this mission. It is exciting to think where this movement could go.

Finally, we have a number of important events coming up that we hope YOU will be a part of! ***Lutheran Night at the Phillies***, an incredible event that supports scholarships for youth in financial need to participate in synodical youth events, will take place on Friday, June 3. Then, this July will be our triennial ***Servant Trip to Rosebud Reservation in South Dakota***, when 85 youth, young adults, and adult leaders from congregations across our synod will serve and work beside the Lakota people in the third poorest county in the nation. And perhaps most importantly, we are working hard to further the overall conversation on faith formation, discipleship, and rising to the challenges the church is facing in the brave new world it finds itself in today. From intergenerational ministry to understanding the complex challenges of creating disciples in today's rapidly changing world – we want to partner with you in our sacred calling to pass the faith from generation to generation. Please feel free to invite me to your congregation, reach out anytime with questions, or join me for my workshop during Synod Assembly, ***“Growing in God NOW: Shaping Faith for a Changing World.”***

Your Partner in Mission,

Rev. Bradley R. Burk +

*Assistant to the Bishop for Youth, Young Adult Ministry & Spiritual Formation,
Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod, ELCA*

WOMEN OF THE ELCA - SEPA SYNOD REGION 7F Annual Report 2014-2015

The Synodical Board of the Women of the ELCA has been working diligently for many years to support the congregational units throughout the synod. Our recent goals have been to evaluate and strengthen our purpose within the Church and increase our communications with and support of the women of the Southeastern PA Synod.

At our 2014 Biennial Convention, held at St. Matthew Lutheran Church in Springfield, Delaware County, President Cindy Quirk Ryan welcomed our women to an event centered on the theme “Inter-Generational Blessings”. We were joined by a representative of the WELCA Churchwide Board, and Molly Beck Dean, who spoke about her work with youth in North Dakota. A new board was elected and installed:

President:	Joy Grace
Vice President:	Lisa Brown
Treasurer:	Elaine Keller
Secretary:	Helen Dungan
Board Members:	Carol Herstine, Joan Seader

We collected dozens of school supplies as in-kind gifts, and collected offerings which were donated equally to Women of the ELCA Churchwide, SEPA Youth Ministry and St. Michael’s Friday Family Night Start-up.

In July 2014, several women from SEPA Synod attended the Triennial Convention as voting members, and even more attended the Triennial Gathering. The theme “All Generations” resonated throughout the week in Charlotte, with worship, service and learning opportunities. The SEPA delegation was especially proud to hear our very own Bishop Burkat speak to all attendees on the opening night of our Gathering! We’re looking forward to meeting again at the 2017 Triennial to be held in Minneapolis, MN - the (so-called) heart of Luther Land!

In the Fall of 2014 and Spring of 2015, we met for a total of 8 conference events. Spring 2015 was also the year for the Region 7 WELCA Retreat, which occurs every 3 years. The retreat was held at the Holy Family Monastery and Retreat Center in West Hartford, CT. For some of us, this was the first time in attendance at this event, and we weren’t sure what we had signed up for. However, we had a really wonderful time, and we look forward to meeting our Region 7 sisters again at the same retreat center in 2018.

The board hosted a Synodical Gathering in June, 2015. Our theme, “Helping in Jesus’ Name”, was expanded upon through workshops, a service project, and a keynote address by Rev Jennifer Ollikainen, Executive Director of Lutheran Congregational Services. We again collected in-kind gifts which we donated to Dawn’s Place, and our offerings were shared with Dawn’s Place and a local chapter of the National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI), and WELCA Churchwide.

This past fall, we offered 5 conference events. We’re especially pleased that our Central Conference held their first event in years, and it was a great success. As I write this report, we’re in the midst of planning our Spring 2016 conference events, as well as our Biennial Convention

based upon the theme “Renewal Through the Holy Spirit”, which will be held at Silver Spring – Martin Luther School on June 4. We’ll be adding new members to our board and selecting voting members to the 2017 WELCA Convention.

We continue to look for ways to serve and support the women of the Southeastern PA Synod. In particular, we know there is a need to help units reach out to women who don’t have a history with WELCA, to grow existing units and to create new ones. We want to share our extraordinary resources wherever we can – to include the award-winning Gather Magazine, our various websites and blogs, and the print-ready resources available for FREE on the Women of the ELCA website. We’re also very excited to announce our **synodical** presence in cyberspace – you can find us at <http://ministrylink.org/women>, where we’ll post events and other news in an effort to reach more SEPA women. Please keep this valuable organization in your prayers as we work to increase our relevance in this busy and changing world.

Your sister in Christ,

Joy Grace
WELCA Board President, SEPA Synod

Zones of Peace: 2016 Report to the Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod of the ELCA

Zones of Peace is an initiative of the Religious Leaders Council of Greater Philadelphia, which is made up of senior leaders from 33 religious traditions who represent more than two million people in our region. Bishop Burkat is one of the Co-Conveners of the Council, serving with Archbishop Charles Chaput, Rabbi David Strauss, and Imam Anwar Muhaimin. From its founding in 2006, the Religious Leaders Council has prioritized building momentum among people of faith for creating peaceful neighborhoods and reducing violence throughout the region.

Zones of Peace exists to encourage those who are exemplary in the creative ways they address root causes of violence in their own neighborhoods. Honoring congregations and organizations lets them know they are not alone as they face immense challenges with meager resources. They are encouraged to know they are on the radar of religious leaders and allied with others who have been so honored. They are encouraged by the opportunity to tell representatives from *Zones of Peace* about their work, knowing that *Zones of Peace* will share their story with larger audiences: by a public presentation of the *Zones of Peace* banner which identifies them as a recipient of this honor; by publicizing their work to nearly 7,000 e-newsletter recipients; and by communicating their stories to both religious and civic leaders.

Since 2009, 54 Zones of Peace have been recognized and six more have been nominated. Honorees include large and small churches, synagogues, mosques, museums, government agencies, plus other local and region-wide initiatives. The most recent honorees include DePaul USA (reducing homelessness), NewCORE (New Conversations on Race and Ethnicity

– building understanding among people of differing racial and ethnic backgrounds), and the Church of the Advocate (Episcopal – neighborhood programs in North Philadelphia focused on hunger, children and youth, and the arts.)

Surely you know of a congregation or agency that is exemplary in its efforts to support youth, respond to grieving victims of violence, feed the hungry, curb drug activity, mediate conflicts, address illiteracy, welcome immigrants, or some other community outreach that stops violence before it starts. [Nominate a congregation or agency and begin the process of bringing recognition to a worthy effort.](#) Lutheran congregations already honored include: St. John’s, Ambler; St. John’s, Melrose Park; Grace, Wyndmoor; Prince of Peace, Lawndale; Rhawnhurst Turning Point (co-sponsored by Redemption, Rhawnhurst); and Upper Dublin, Ambler.

To find out more about *Zones of Peace* or nominate a congregation or an organization whose work you admire, visit <http://www.interfaithcenterpa.org/si/zop/> or contact Pastor John Hougen, jbh@interfaithcenterpa.org.

*Respectfully submitted,
Rev. John B. Hougen, PhD
Coordinator: Zones of Peace*

Reports of Social Ministry Organizations

DIAKON LUTHERAN SOCIAL MINISTRIES & DIAKON CHILD, FAMILY & COMMUNITY MINISTRIES

Diakon Lutheran Social Ministries and Diakon Child, Family & Community Ministries celebrate our partnership with the Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod and its congregations as we live out our mission to demonstrate God's command to love our neighbor through acts of service. Through Many Hands, guided by One Heart, Diakon continues a nearly 150-year tradition of care for people of all ages, especially those with limited financial resources. In 2015, Diakon provided more than \$17 million in benevolent care including \$2.7 million within the synod, increases over 2014 figures.

Last year was the first in which Diakon's two "sister" organizations operated separately, with individual boards of directors guiding each. Overall, the year was an exceedingly successful one, with Diakon staff members achieving many significant service, operational, quality, and financial goals—all critical to growth and to the two organizations' ability to serve more people.

Twining Village, a Diakon Lutheran Senior Living Community in Holland, Bucks County, continued to renovate and expand its accommodations in both renovated apartments and new cottage-homes. **Manatawny Manor** in Pottstown planned first steps in expanding short-term rehabilitation services and maintained its emphasis on caring for older adults with memory-related illnesses. **Diakon Adult Day Services at Manatawny** continued to offer daytime care for those living at home or with a relative, helping 57 older adults and their families.

Based in Media, **Diakon Youth Services' Bridge Program** serves youths in Delaware, Chester, and Lancaster counties. The program aids at-risk youths ages 11 to 18 by providing accountability-focused counseling and monitoring programs to prevent out-of-home placement. Participants frequently are served by the **Weekend Alternative Program**, located at the **Diakon Wilderness Center**, Boiling Springs. In 2015, the Bridge Program's community service activities included Darby's clean-up-the-streets effort. In all, Diakon's programs for adjudicated youths served more than 400 teens from within the Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod's territory. An additional specialized Diakon Youth Services component aids young adults from Bucks County; those who successfully complete the program can have their felony charges reduced or eliminated.

Other services aiding those in the area include **Diakon Adoption & Foster Care**. In addition, as prime contractor for the **Statewide Adoption & Permanency Network**, Diakon helps to coordinate all public adoptions within the synod's five-county area; the number of children and families within the synod's territory served through SWAN amounted to more than 4,780. In 2015, Diakon received an additional five-year contract from the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania to manage the statewide network.

We thank God for the gifts of staff, volunteers, congregations, donors, and board members who, together, enabled us to serve tens of thousands of people last year, including several thousand within the Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod.

Mark T. Pile, MSHA, MSW
President/CEO

GOOD SHEPHERD REHABILITATION NETWORK

We are proud to report that, over the past year, Good Shepherd Rehabilitation Network has executed its mission by providing innovative and outstanding care throughout the Lehigh Valley and beyond. Last year, Good Shepherd (including Good Shepherd Penn Partners, our joint venture with Penn Medicine in Philadelphia) served almost 60,000 people recovering from injury or illness. We provided services at 58 locations, including 36 in the greater Lehigh Valley and 22 in the Philadelphia area.

Good Shepherd is highly regarded for clinical excellence and its commitment to maximizing patients' functional outcomes, delivering compassionate care and being a national leader in the use of innovative rehabilitation technologies. Some highlights from the past fiscal year include:

Innovation and Technology

- Good Shepherd is the world's leading clinical user of the Ekso Bionics exoskeleton – a device that allows people with lower leg paralysis or weakness the ability to stand and walk.
 - Last year, Good Shepherd's patients surpassed 3 million steps in the device or the equivalent of 1,500 miles.
 - Using the Ekso with intense, repetitive therapy, some Good Shepherd patients who are unable to walk or have difficulty walking are making incredible progress in re-awakening their brains' signals to their spine and legs (neuroplasticity).
- Good Shepherd acquired the ProtoKinetics Zeno Walkway – a state-of-the-art gait and balance analysis system that is not available anywhere else in the region. At 20 feet long by 4 feet wide, the walkway has 40,080 sensors embedded in it to collect data while a patient is walking, running, jumping and turning.
- Good Shepherd developed numerous leading edge rehabilitation programs, including: physical therapy-based Pilates, women's health, oncology, bowel and bladder, neonatal abstinence syndrome (infant drug withdrawal) and non-accidental injury (for children who are victims of abuse or neglect).
- Good Shepherd Pediatrics acquired the Ntrainer system – the first in-market FDA-approved technology that reinforces non-nutritive suck in neonates (premies born as early as 25 weeks gestation). Good Shepherd is the only pediatric rehabilitation hospital east of Nebraska using the state-of-the-art system.
- Good Shepherd became the first rehabilitation facility in the region to offer the adult and pediatric ZeroG devices, which help people with a variety of neurological and orthopedic conditions to maximize function and improve independence.

Growth

- Credit rating organizations Standard & Poors and Fitch have reaffirmed GSRN's A bond rating as well as moved Good Shepherd's overall financial outlook from stable to positive.
- GSRN renovated a 4,000 square-foot area on the second floor of the Health & Technology Center in Allentown to allow for expansion of many services that focus on performance, function and recovery.
- Good Shepherd's joint venture with Penn Medicine in Philadelphia, now, in its eighth

year of operation, continues to grow. This year, Good Shepherd Penn Partners acquired a large practice in Bala Cynwyd and opened Penn Therapy & Fitness – University City, a supersized 28,000-square-foot facility that offers physical, occupational, speech and aquatic therapy.

Clinical Excellence

- Good Shepherd has the most certified rehabilitation registered nurses (CRRNS) and specially certified therapists in the region. The therapy staff alone boasts more than 20 different specialty certifications.
- Good Shepherd's two long-term care facilities have earned U.S. News and World Report's Best Nursing Homes highest rating – five stars – five years in a row.
- The Rehabilitation & Community Providers Association honored GSRN with its 2014 Innovation Award in recognition of implementing technologies and therapies that are maximizing recovery for people with neurological conditions.

Community Support

- Good Shepherd contributed more than \$10.8 million in total quantifiable community benefits in FY15.
- Good Shepherd partners with community organizations that have a significant impact on the health and wellness of Lehigh Valley residents, including the Children's Care Alliance, the Health Care Council of the Lehigh Valley and the Partnership for a Disability Friendly Community.
- Good Shepherd Associates participated in numerous community fundraisers to benefit causes that align with its mission, including: Walk Now for Autism Speaks, March of Dimes March for Babies, Stay Connected MS Walk, Bike MS: City to Shore Ride and MDA Muscle Walk.
- Good Shepherd's management team committed to serve on 15 local non-profit organizations' boards and committees.
- Good Shepherd held soccer clinics for children with disabilities at Steelstacks in conjunction with the 2015 Women's World Cup Viewing party.
- During FY15, Good Shepherd Associates donated more than \$53,000 to the United Way of the Lehigh Valley and delivered more than 200 backpacks filled with school supplies to students at Roosevelt Elementary School in Allentown.

Thank you for your support, which is vital in helping Good Shepherd continue its mission and the legacy of our founders, the Raker family.

John Kristel, MBA, MPT, President and CEO

David G. DeCampli, MS, Chair, Board of Trustees

KenCrest
Bulletin of Reports
2016 Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod Assembly

Another chapter in KenCrest's 110-year history was completed when William Nolan, the Executive Director of KenCrest for the past 35 years, retired in December, 2015. Bill is a well-known leader in the social ministry movement locally in the Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod, statewide as a founding member of Pennsylvania Lutheran Agency Network (newly reorganized as Lutheran Services in America – Pennsylvania), and nationally as a founder of Lutheran Services in America – Disability Network.

And another chapter has begun, with the naming of Marian Baldini as the new President/CEO of KenCrest. Marian is a member and Council President at Reformation Lutheran Church in Media, where she was formally installed at a service in March, 2016. Marian brings to KenCrest a depth of experience in human services throughout the areas where the agency serves.

KenCrest also moved its headquarters after 40 years at the same Plymouth Meeting location. The new headquarters address is: **960A Harvest Drive, Union Meeting Corporate Center, Blue Bell, PA 19422**. Telephone (610-825-9360) and web address (www.kencrest.org) remain the same.

KenCrest celebrated its 110th Anniversary of continued service to the communities and neighborhoods of Southeastern Pennsylvania in 2015. The celebration included a Salute to 110 Years with six other companies celebrating 110 years of operation last year, a KenCrest Family Reunion with 6,000 clients, staff, and families at the Philadelphia Zoo, a Flavors of the Community food tasting event, and a Community Champions Awards luncheon at which KenCrest recognized people and organizations in the community who have supported our mission in heartfelt ways through the years. This was the first such event, and the winners included Beds for Kids, formerly One House at a Time at Upper Dublin Lutheran Church, and The Rev. Harvey Davis, Retired.

KenCrest also celebrated its 110th year of community service to people with intellectual disabilities and autism with the highest service numbers in its honored history. We served 11,250 children, youth, and adults in 2015, including over 140,000 home visits, 420 service sites, and 2,000 dedicated staff.

KenCrest welcomed one of its newest members to our staff, The Rev. Dayle Malloy. Pastor Malloy joined us in the role of Church Relations Coordinator, and can be reached at dayle.malloy@kencrest.org.

It was a memorable year.



Synod Assembly Report 2016

The Services of Liberty Lutheran
Artman, The Becoming Center, Liberty at Home, Liberty Hospice, Lutheran Children and Family Service, Lutheran Congregational Services, The Hearth at Drexel (formerly the Mary J. Drexel Home), Paul's Run Retirement Community, The Village at Penn State and West Philadelphia Senior Center

Liberty Lutheran faithfully provides vital resources for individuals and families facing life-changing situations, from the earliest stages of life through the many stages of aging. Together, we are saying "Yes" to God's baptismal call to serve our neighbors alongside the congregations of eastern and central Pennsylvania to make a vital difference.

Saying "Yes" to service in the community

Lutheran Children and Family Service accompanies newly-arrived **refugees** in the Philadelphia, Lancaster and Allentown areas. Volunteers groups from congregations in all three areas support families and individuals in their transition to the United States, often after years of living in a refugee camp. This year, congregations throughout our area responded generously to the refugee crisis throughout the world. With donations, volunteers and offers to accompany families as congregational communities we embodied a Godly welcome to those who have been through so much as refugees.

Lutheran Congregational Services continues to offer educational opportunities to congregations including Lay Eucharistic Visitor Training, especially with congregations in pastoral transition, and Journeys through Grief. This year, we increased our repertoire of ministries around grief by offering educational opportunities for congregations exploring how we all support those who are grieving in our community.

Lutheran Disaster Response – Eastern Pennsylvania (LDR-EPA) works with congregational leaders in response to any size disasters affecting the community. LDR-EPA continued our Disaster Spiritual Partners pilot program, supported by a grant from ELCA Lutheran Disaster Response. We trained a group of Disaster Spiritual Partners to accompany communities with support and guidance so that the local congregation can take a leadership role in the healing of the community.

Lutheran Congregational Services continued in year two of an ELCA Hunger grant in partnership with members of the hunger coalition in Easton, PA. The grant supports programs which combat hunger beyond food relief by teaching healthy, economical cooking skills to food pantry patrons. Participants in the program not only prepared healthy meals but also took home new soup pots, measuring cups, cutting boards and knives.

On behalf of SEPA Synod, Liberty Lutheran managed the **2015 Christmas Ingatherings in Southeastern PA and three Northeastern PA mission districts**. SEPA congregations donated gifts, kits, food, quilts, work gloves, socks and toiletries valued at more than \$93,000! It was also our pleasure to distribute copies of our **2015 Advent Devotional Booklet** to all congregations in Southeastern and Northeastern Pennsylvania synods. This resource is full of stories and reflections about how we radiate the grace of God through the ministries of Liberty Lutheran.

Saying "Yes" to service with you through senior communities and services

Liberty Lutheran is responding to the changing needs of older adults through its ongoing development and refinement of programs that enhance their health and well-being. The entire family of Liberty senior

living communities—Artman, Paul’s Run, The Hearth at Drexel, and The Village at Penn State—have been undergoing a complete transformation that combines newly renovated residential, social and/or clinical spaces with a new approach to care and service that focuses on the unique individuality of each resident and the kind of activities and interactions that bring them meaning and purpose. Each of our senior living communities nurture an atmosphere of genuine fellowship and camaraderie between residents, staff, and the more than 100 volunteers who say “Yes to Service” and generously give of their time to enrich the lives of residents.

Artman, which provides personal care, memory care, and rehabilitation and skilled nursing, is celebrating its 100th anniversary this year. In concert with this important milestone, Artman will open a new memory care household and new personal care and long-term care households. This follows the July 2015 opening of its new, short-term rehabilitation unit that represents a model of best practices in care, service, technology and design.

Paul’s Run, which provides independent living, personal care, and rehabilitation and skilled nursing, has added a home-like, family-friendly country kitchen and living room to its health center, and in its residential living area has completed renovations on the front entrance, porch and lobby areas.

The Hearth at Drexel, a personal care and memory care community, recently opened an enclave of 20 new one-bedroom apartments that echo the historic and majestic architecture of the property. Unlike many personal care communities, the Hearth enables residents to remain in the beauty and comfort of their own apartment with all the necessary medical supports if their health should progressively decline.

The Village at Penn State, a university-based senior living community that provides independent living, personal care, and rehabilitation and skilled nursing, will open a newly constructed personal care home this spring. Encompassing 12 private rooms, the new space will feature an intimate, home-like ambience that includes beautiful common areas for sharing meals, enjoying social activities, and accommodating family visits.

For senior adults in the broader community, the licensed and accredited **Liberty at Home** and **Liberty Hospice** are able to provide critical services in homes throughout Southeastern Pennsylvania. These services include nursing, physical therapy, speech language therapy, occupational therapy, medical social services, hospice care, home health aides, certified home assistants, transportation services, personal household management, and home maintenance.

Finally, for the last 10 years, Liberty’s **Lutheran Children and Family Service** has provided leadership for the **West Philadelphia Senior Community Center**, a beloved neighborhood hub that represents a vital and edifying presence to thousands of underserved seniors, many of whom cope with severe economic hardship and/or food insecurity. Since its establishment, WPSCC has grown by more than 500% and today improves the lives of 4,000 individuals through social services, support groups, fitness and life enrichment programs, initiatives that help to remediate food insecurity and poor nutrition, and outreach to homebound seniors.

Saying “Yes” to service together WITH YOU!

We are honored to steward the generosity of congregations and individuals who support our work. Together, we make a vital difference in the lives of the most vulnerable among us. To further explore how we can help build your congregational capacity to serve the most vulnerable among us, contact the Rev. Dr. Jennifer Phelps Ollikainen, Executive Director of Lutheran Congregational Services, at 610.425.2981 or jollikainen@libertylutheran.org.

In Christ,
Luanne B. Fisher, PhD. CEO/President

Liberty Lutheran

LUTHERAN ADVOCACY MINISTRY IN PENNSYLVANIA

In response to God's love in Jesus Christ, we advocate for wise and just public policies in Pennsylvania that promote the common good. Lutheran Advocacy Ministry in Pennsylvania is a shared ministry of seven Pennsylvania synods, the ELCA Congregational and Synodical Mission unit, and Pennsylvania ELCA agencies and institutions. Through LAMPa, Lutherans who are “hungry for justice and mercy” are supported to voice their faith convictions in the public square with and on behalf of our most vulnerable neighbors and the world we share, while seeking to create a more just Commonwealth.

In 2015, LAMPa celebrated 36 years of advocacy ministry that supported and deepened your congregational efforts to address hunger, poverty, immigration, homelessness, school funding inequity and childhood trauma. Thanks be to God for the support of our Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod Policy Council representatives, Robert Fisher and the Rev. Jennifer Ollikainen. Bob ended his faithful service to LAMPa as his term expired in December. In 2016, we welcome Annette Sample, of Reformation Lutheran Church in Philadelphia, as your representative, as well as Bishop Burkat, who will provide leadership on the council for Pennsylvania bishops.

LAMPa advocacy takes place through staff work in the capital, partnerships with coalitions and engagement of Lutherans in letter-writing, email and call-in advocacy, legislative visits, offering of testimony, editorial writing, social media campaigns, press conferences and rallies. Highlights of LAMPa advocacy in 2015 include:

Feeding the Hungry: LAMPa staff met in January with the incoming Wolf administration officials to successfully advocate for a re-establishment of a Governor's Food Security Partnership and were present at the inaugural summit bringing together stakeholders with the goal of eliminating hunger in Pennsylvania, as well as a subsequent task group meeting, where we lifted up the work of Lutheran hunger ministries. LAMPa advocated for increasing funding for the State Food Purchase Program in the state budget, and engaged Lutherans in helping their local schools expand participation in the school breakfast program.

Fighting Homelessness: LAMPa advocates helped bring affordable homes within reach by expanding the highly effective Housing Trust Fund statewide. After two years of work on a bill that received unanimous bipartisan support, it signed into law by Gov. Wolf in late 2015. The trust fund had already shown success in creating jobs, battling blight and preventing homelessness in the communities where it had been available prior to the expansion.

Giving All Children a Better Chance at Academic Success – Pennsylvania Lutherans spoke at rallies and press conferences as part of the Campaign for Fair Education Funding to address the state's rating as the least equitable in the country for education funding. LAMPa staff also testified about the possibilities of trauma-responsive schools at a hearing of the Basic Education Funding Commission, which made a recommendation to the Department of Education to develop protocols for assessing student trauma in an attempt to improve teaching and learning.

Addressing Poverty: LAMPa continued to fight attempts by predatory lenders to gain a foothold in Pennsylvania through proposals to introduce payday lending to the state.

Fighting Climate Change: LAMPa staff and Lutheran advocates offered testimony on the state's proposed Clean Power Plan.

Connecting Service to Advocacy: LAMPa provided information, resources and support for congregations and conferences participating in the Churchwide Day of Service as well as partnering with Charlie Roberts, Director of Children, Youth and Family Ministries to help connect advocacy to the new RiseUp service retreat.

Teaching: LAMPa staff addressed classes at both Lutheran Theological Seminaries -- in Philadelphia and Gettysburg -- and led a workshop during Spring Academy Week in Gettysburg. Staff also preached and taught at area congregations and a post-confirmation retreat at Camp Nawakwa.

In 2016, LAMPa will be developing service-and-advocacy projects for congregations to engage in for the Churchwide Day of Service on Sept. 11. We would be glad to help your congregation plan to make that day one of "God's work. Our hands. Our voices." We would also be happy to help your conference or congregation participate in faithful citizenship in this election year.



Lutheran Charities builds resources to support Lutheran Social Ministry Organizations in our region. Through the powerful work of these Lutheran Charities, the gifts of individuals and congregations offer relief on the journey for those who are struggling along the way. Together, we bring light into the lives of people sharing the good news of the love of God with those who need it most.

These Social Ministry Organizations began as an outpouring of compassion and care from faithful Lutherans of previous generations who created social services to reach out to those who were vulnerable in the community. Today, the Ministries of Lutheran Charities collectively serve one in every 49 people in our area each year, over 100,000 people in the communities in which we all live. We make an incredible impact in the lives of so many. We continue in this legacy as a sign of God's ongoing love for every child of God in our midst.

At the writing of this report, Lutheran Charities is searching for a new Manager of Donor Relations and Church Partnership. By synod assembly in May, we hope to introduce our new staff person who will be reaching out to current donors and donating congregations and looking for new connections for generosity.

Thank you for your support of Lutheran Charities! Stay tuned to hear about what the next chapter will bring for Lutheran Charities. Feel free to contact me with your questions or ideas about our next steps at jollikainen@libertylutheran.org or 610.425.2981. In the meantime, we look forward to continuing our legacy of compassion and care.

Respectfully submitted,

The Rev. Jennifer Phelps Ollikainen, D.Min.
Chair of the Board of Lutheran Charities



SOUTHEASTERN PENNSYLVANIA SYNOD ASSEMBLY REPORT, 2016

Motivated by Christ's Love and command to extend that Love, Silver Springs – Martin Luther School (Silver Springs) was founded in 1859 as an orphanage. Today, Silver Springs provides educational, residential, and community based mental health services that promote resilience, stability, and bright futures for children, and families, who face steep challenges. Through trauma-informed care, Silver Springs helps children to manage overwhelming memories, feelings, and behavior problems caused by the frightening and sad things that have happened to them.

In Fiscal Year 2014/2015 (FY 14/15) **Silver Springs served 1,426 children and their families** from Philadelphia, its surrounding counties, the State of Delaware, and more than 40 area school districts. All programs have a strong mental health component that brings an opportunity for trauma recovery and healing to children who range in age from day-old infants to college students, and families of all ages, in a child-centered, family-focused ministry. Silver Springs is non-denominational with regard to who is served.

Residential Treatment Program – During FY 14/15, the Residential Treatment (RT) Program served **121** boys and girls, ages 6-14 (and **72** families/caregivers) with serious emotional and behavioral health issues. The RT Program provides a therapeutic living environment that includes individualized treatment, supervision, care, and nurturing for children on a 24-hour-a-day basis through outcome-oriented treatment, psychiatric evaluation, trauma-informed therapy, case management, behavior management, and health care. Available therapies include individual, family, group, a highly structured milieu, counseling, behavioral, and medication. Children participate in recreational activities and interact, if they desire, with a Lutheran Vicar on staff available to advise the children. All services are provided with the valued participation of biological, adoptive and/or foster families.

Community Based Programs – During FY 14/15, our Community Based Programs served **245** children, ranging in age from birth to 21 years old, and **345** foster and/or biological parents. Children in Foster Family Care (FFC) benefit from community placements that address their emotional, behavioral, medical, social, and developmental needs. The FFC Program offers structured home living with foster parents trained to provide for the specific, identified needs of each child. Case management, various clinical therapies, and outreach services are extended to each child’s foster family and biological family. Children are encouraged to participate in specialized summer experiences depending upon their individual, educational, medical, and/or emotional needs.

Through community-based Behavioral Health Rehabilitative Services (BHRS), Silver Springs provides Mobile Therapy, Behavior Specialist Consultants, and Therapeutic Staff Support services that include individual and family therapy for children in home, school, and community settings, assessment of a child’s behavior in these settings, consultation, one to one supervision, modeling, coaching, and support to children based on a behavioral plan.

Outpatient Mental Health Services provides mental health treatment for children and families in the community at two locations, Plymouth Meeting and Philadelphia. This program helps children, and their families, ages two to 18 years old achieve and maintain emotional and behavioral stability.

Martin Luther School – During FY 14/15, Martin Luther School served **231** students and **163** caregivers. A Pennsylvania Department of Education “Approved Private School,” Martin Luther School provides an individualized educational program designed to meet the needs of emotionally disturbed students, students with autism or PDD, and intellectually disabled students in grades K-8, and also to provide elementary education for grades 1-6. Students are referred to Martin Luther School from public school districts and the Silver Springs RT Program. In addition to academic, social, and emotional deficits, many students attending Martin Luther School have significant learning disabilities. Individual Educational Plans identify their instructional needs. School facilities include a gymnasium, outdoor recreational facilities, a library, technology instruction, tutoring in reading and mathematics, an art room and a music room.

Family Resource Services (FRS) – Family Resource Services, which served **51** clients last year, primarily assists children and families currently served by one of Silver Springs’ programs. FRS represents Silver Springs’ focused response, on a case-by-case basis, to those extenuating circumstances that can debilitate a family and jeopardize the well-being of a child. Through FRS, Silver Springs provides direct financial assistance for families. Some examples of this assistance include but are not limited to: paying utility bills to keep the heat on in a home, providing a parent with support for transportation costs so s/he can get to work, providing families with assistance with unforeseen medical expenses, and more. Through FRS, Silver Springs also assists families as we are able to provide special holiday experiences for their children. When funds are available, Silver Springs also provides scholarship assistance to alumni of our programs for post-secondary education expenses.

Your Partnership: More than 50 Lutheran congregations of the Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod actively assist Silver Springs in meeting the needs of a challenging population. We are grateful for these generous and supportive partners. Relationships with congregations of other

denominations, community groups, and philanthropic organizations extend a mosaic of funding that demonstrates “fervent love is an action.”

To learn more about our programs, please visit www.silver-springs.org. If you would like to schedule a visit and tour of our campus, please contact Lynn Unipan, CFRE Development Director, at (610) 825-4440 x206 or Lunipan@silver-springs.org.

Thank you for partnering with us to help vulnerable children learn, heal, and reach for bright futures!

Kristen E.M. Gay, Ph.D., President/CEO



LUTHERAN HOME AT GERMANTOWN FOUNDATION SOUTHEASTERN PENNSYLVANIA SYNOD ASSEMBLY REPORT, 2016

Lutheran Home at Germantown Foundation receives, holds, and invests all endowment and similar funds of the corporation and raises, holds, and invests contributions for the support of social ministry organizations affiliated with the Church with particular reference to Silver Springs – Martin Luther School, recognizing the common heritage and historical ties between the corporation and Silver Springs – Martin Luther School.

The Foundation's continuing interest and investment in helping to meet the compelling needs of children who have faced steep challenges and pain, and so early in their lives, is the focus of its attention and the heartbeat of its mission.

Kristen E.M. Gay, Ph.D., President/CEO

**Reports of Colleges
and
Seminaries**

**Report of the Eastern Cluster of Lutheran Seminaries
To the Synods of Regions 7, 8 and 9
Spring, 2015**

Since its founding in 1995, the Eastern Cluster of Lutheran Seminaries (ECLS) has fostered strong collaboration between the three eastern schools and other partners, enhancing our common task of theological education for a broad spectrum of students and lifelong learners. In these challenging times when all seminaries seek new approaches to forming leaders for the Church, we are also engaged with the other ELCA seminaries, our regional synods and additional partners in the search for financial sustainability and programmatic flexibility.

A separately incorporated entity, the Cluster is governed by a Board of Directors made up of board chairs and other officers from each of the three schools. One of the three seminary presidents serves in rotation as Cluster executive director. With the retirement of Philadelphia's president Phil Krey, the Cluster is pleased to welcome David Lose as the new leader of LTSP. We continue on with only modest core funding from the seminaries. One of the key partnerships that has made the work of the Cluster flourish has been the reception of over \$6 million in grants from foundations to support common projects and subsidize seminary budgets.

Current Collaborative Programs

- The Cluster's *One Library Under Three Roofs* links the collections at Gettysburg, Philadelphia and Columbia, providing students, faculty and other borrowers with access to a vast array of books, periodicals and e-resources.
- Through the Cluster-sponsored *Project Connect*, hundreds of young persons have been invited to "consider their callings" over the past half-dozen years. With project funding from Lilly Endowment now completed, each school's Admissions Office continues working closely with many partners in encouraging persons to consider public ministry. The Cluster is working with a grant researcher who will help to identify potential partners for future work.
- The *Abundant Life Grant* was received this past year from the Lilly Endowment, Inc. Totalling \$750,000, this grant enables each school to engage in research on the subject of seminarian indebtedness and explore means by which to reduce graduate debt.
- Given the geographical proximity of the two Pennsylvania seminaries, Gettysburg and Philadelphia have joined forces in exploring new ways to work together, including faculty sharing.
- **Future Cluster Directions:** Following the merger of LTSS with Lenoir Rhyne University, the Cluster is exploring new directions and new strategic partnerships for the coming years.

With Appreciation: The Cluster is grateful for support to theological education and our seminaries from our partner synods and churchwide organization. Special appreciation is expressed to Phil Krey for his many years of faithful service to the Cluster and the church.

The Rev. Dr. Bill Trexler, Cluster Board Chair
The Rev. Dr. Clay Schmit, Cluster Executive Director

2015 REPORT OF THE LUTHERAN THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY AT PHILADELPHIA

Greetings in the name of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ!

I write with a heart filled with gratitude for the ministry we share to educate leaders for Christ's Church. This is a mission that The Lutheran Theological Seminary at Philadelphia has pursued with passion and fidelity for 150 years and will continue to pursue well into the future. But let me be clear: we could not fulfill this mission without your prayers, financial gifts, and partnership in identifying and forming capable congregational leaders, and so we are most grateful for your support. As we all know, the landscape in which our congregations and church-related agencies do ministry has changed dramatically over the last twenty-five years and will continue to change. For this reason, our challenges and opportunities are often bound closely to one another. In this report, I will outline several of those.

Financial Sustainability

The major challenge facing all seminaries today is financial sustainability. LTSP is addressing these concerns by re-organizing its administrative structures in order to function more effectively and efficiently. The cost savings of these adjustments are absolutely critical to moving to a healthier future. LTSP is also actively seeking a) to make better use of its campus to further the mission of the school and generate additional revenue, b) expand opportunities for life-long learning in response to the requests of congregational leaders throughout our territory, c) more effectively market its specific programs and urban location to prospective students, and d) rebuild and redirect our mission advancement team in order to increase annual unrestricted giving.

Partnerships

If we are to have a future as a seminary, it will only be as a deeply invested and trusted partner with many other parts of the church. For this reason, we are actively cultivating partnerships with congregations and synods, social ministry agencies, church camps, and other seminaries. In this last category, our work with The Lutheran Theological Seminary at Gettysburg to share faculty and explore means by which to align our administrative structures has been most exciting. Closer to home, we are currently in conversation with Palmer Theological Seminary of Eastern University about the possibility of Palmer relocating to our Mt. Airy campus in order to share facilities and to explore other possibilities of collegial collaboration in forming leaders for faith communities.

New Programs

After an extensive period of conversation with representatives of our supporting synods and other constituent groups, it has become clear that there are needs in our church that LTSP is well positioned to meet. Chief among these is creating robust Life-long Learning opportunities that draw congregational leaders into rich learning, conversation, and collaboration about how best to minister in a changed and changing world. Focusing our D.Min. degree offerings toward particular ministry-oriented tracks (biblical preaching, for example) and offering a Distributed Learning program for M.Div. student are two more strategies we are currently pursuing. This past year, we have experimented with a "Co-operative" model of education whereby students can

earn an M.Div. while working in a congregation across three years, a model that will continue to be valuable in our immediate region and will pair well with a DL M.Div. program.

As I said at the outset, we couldn't do any of this without your help, and so I would encourage every congregation to place in its budget a commitment to support LTSP in training our future leaders and to hold all the seminaries of the ELCA in prayer. We will live into God's preferred future together or not at all. As we move forward, know of our gratitude for your fidelity and partnership.

David J. Lose
President, LTSP

Muhlenberg College 2014-15 Highlights

At Muhlenberg College, admissions, development, academic quality and the student experience continued to be robust during the past year. The College opened the year with a record 15% students of color in the freshman class. The first year class also included 19 international students, including students from Jordan, Afghanistan, Rwanda and nine students from China. This past November, the College also approved its Diversity Strategic Plan.

Religious Life continues to thrive at Muhlenberg. Drawing on our relationship with the ELCA, the College welcomes students from all faith traditions. We have a thriving Interfaith Leadership Council, in addition to offering worship services for our Protestant, Roman Catholic and Jewish students. This year we hosted Eboo Patel from the Interfaith Youth Core and sent ten students to three different national interfaith leadership training events.

Mallory Bernstein '14 earned a Fulbright Grant and biology professor Bruce Wightman was awarded a prestigious NIH grant. The College received a three year grant from the Mellon Foundation. The grant will help the College implement its new general education curriculum, especially in areas of global engagement and digital pedagogy, and provides bridge funding for a faculty position in Religion Studies. In addition, the College is part of the newly formed Pennsylvania Liberal Arts Consortium, also initially funded by a grant from the Mellon Foundation, which will provide cost-efficient opportunities for faculty and staff development, shared programming, and other benefits. The College also earned "Community Engagement Classification" by Carnegie Foundation.

The faculty added public health as a major. This is an exciting new development and will complement Muhlenberg's science and health care professionals program, which have been the flagship programs at the College for many years.

Muhlenberg's nationally ranked theatre and dance program produced several outstanding productions, including the summer music theatre productions of "Spamalot" and "A Chorus Line." Creative children's programming included this year's production of "Gruff." The mainstage production was Steven Sondheim's rarely produced early musical "Anyone Can Whistle." The Master Choreographers dance concert and "New Visions" were also well received. The Muhlenberg College choir, under the direction of music professor Michael Schnack, performed at the New York Workshop production of "The Events."

Four creative and successful alumni events generated both alumni pride and support. Mulementum, a 24-hour “Day of Giving,” inspired more than 1600 donors, smashing last year's inaugural day of giving by more than 200 and producing many first time donors. In January, the College hosted the second annual THAW events – Toast Heard Around the World – in more than 30 different locations. People toasted the College from Tel Aviv to Florida to Los Angeles to Hilton Head to New York City. Mule Madness, in its fourth year, produced dozens of new donors and increased participation rates as former athletes rose to the competitive challenge. The Muhlenberg Golf Classic raised significant dollars for the athletic programs. In sports, the Mules won the Centennial Conference soccer championship and advanced to the NCAA playoffs. The football team also earned an NCAA tournament bid. The wrestling team competed in the "Grapple at the Garden" event in Madison Square Garden.

The Center for Ethics brought several nationally recognized speakers to campus, including performance artist and poet Ursula Rucker. This year's theme was "Civility and Disobedience." Other campus programming included "Black Lives Matter: A Luta Continua (The Struggle Continues)", a week of interactive, interdisciplinary programming that celebrated the life of Martin Luther King Jr. Artist and curator Vicki Meek delivered the Black History Month keynote address.

Student engagement in service continues to be a hallmark of the Muhlenberg. Students volunteer for scores of service projects and organizations in the community and the College has a presence in schools, churches and non-profit agencies throughout Allentown and the Lehigh Valley. This past year, Air Products and Chemicals Inc., partnered with the College to set up a paid internship program at five non-profit organizations. The College has also partnered with the Civic Theatre and the West End Alliance to strengthen the surrounding neighborhood.

President Randy Helm, who retires June 30, 2015, had a farewell tour that included 13 stops including Los Angeles, San Francisco, several stops in Florida, plus Boston, New York, Philadelphia and Washington, DC. After leading the College for 12 years, Helm turns the reigns over to John I. Williams, Jr., an entrepreneur and innovator who has been involved as a trustee or life trustee at Amherst College for more than 30 years.

Reports of Agencies



BEAR CREEK CAMP

Explore, celebrate & grow in God's creation!

Greetings from Bear Creek Camp the Lutheran Outdoor Ministry for the Southeast and Northeast Pennsylvania Synods of the ELCA.

The summer of 2015 was a great one at Bear Creek Camp!

- For the first time in over 20 years our summer camp attendance increased three years in a row. 2015 saw an increase of 12.5% over the previous summer and we are up 44% since 2013.
- 35 summer staff members did an excellent job of showing and sharing the Gospel through activities, Bible studies, games, team building moments and having fun!
- Campers, parents and chaplains were very encouraging of the current program that is in place at BCC.
 - o Among the comments we received:
 - *My camper's knowledge about Jesus being a teacher, healer and savior was reinforced at camp. He grew in his personal understanding and relationship with God!* **Camper Parent**
 - *He experienced God in nature. He learned some new bible verses. He expressed that it was like a reinforcement of what he's learned at Sunday school.* **Camper Parent**
 - *This camp is not only fun for kids but teaches about God.* **Camper**
 - *It's super fun and when I grow up I will bring my kids here.* **Camper**
- Our Church Day Camp program continues to grow as we will serve 11 churches this summer with our “on the road” day camp program.

Thank you Northeast and Southeast PA Synods and congregations for your ongoing support of the ministry at Bear Creek Camp. We are grateful to work in partnership with each of you and to be an extension of your ministries at our location near Wilkes-Barre. The enthusiasm for the ministry of Bear Creek Camp is spreading we are very excited about the months and years to come.

Our associate director, Pete Smith, and I have been very busy visiting congregations to promote BCC and our summer programs. If you are interested in a visit, please contact us after our summer season ends and we will be happy to find a date that works.

Please continue to pray for Bear Creek Camp this summer as we have a great time exploring, celebrating and growing in God's creation.

Respectfully submitted,
Dan Scharnhorst
Executive Director

Lutheran Historical Society of Eastern Pennsylvania Annual Report to Synods and Congregations 2015

The Lutheran Historical Society exists to preserve and celebrate Lutheran congregations and institutions in eastern Pennsylvania. Most of these congregations and institutions are or have been part of Northeastern and Southeastern Pennsylvania Synods of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. A few are now part of the United Church of Christ, the Episcopal Dioceses of Pennsylvania and Bethlehem or other denominations. Together their shared stories, dating back to 1638, help us understand our church today. You are part of these shared stories. This past year the society sponsored pilgrimages to St. John, Easton; Zion, Zion Hill; and Heidelberg, Slatinton. Each of these congregations have celebrated major anniversaries and have made significant contributions to their communities and the church at large. We also prepared one issue of The Periodical. Our membership is stable but declining slightly. In order to control expenses, we decided to produce only one Periodical a year. We are, however, exploring the possibility of a smaller publication in newsletter format. We continue to look at ways to increase membership and awareness of the Society.

We are preparing pilgrimages for 2016 to include Jerusalem Western Salisbury Church, Allentown in summer and Christ Church (Old Swedes) Upper Merion in the in October. These congregations are among the oldest in their regions and each has a significant ecumenical component to its history. These events are open to members, fellow Lutherans and the general public.

We are also mindful that there are other Lutheran congregations in our territory which are not in the ELCA and wish to include them as they have played significant roles in the development of Lutheranism in eastern Pennsylvania. We are discussing other projects, including recognition certificates for congregations celebrating anniversaries and second volume of the guidebook. We are in the process of restoring the Ross Photo Poster Collection and indexing the photos. During the year some of the societies holdings have been relocated the Northeastern Pennsylvania Synod Offices on Schoenersville Road near the Lehigh Valley International Airport. We are also holding our board meetings there.

I would also thank our officers and board members for another successful year together. I would like to particularly thank Vice-President the Rev. George Spieker, Recording Secretary Phyllis Boyer, Financial Secretary/Membership the Rev. Virginia Biniek, Treasurer and Periodical Editor Joshua Fink and Board Members the Rev. Dr. Harry Heffelfinger and the Rev. George Kinney for the special tasks they performed during the past year. We welcomed the Rev. Dr. Herbert Michel back to the Board, as well as Mary Redline and Nancy Miller. I would also like

to acknowledge the ongoing support and encouragement of our curator John Peterson and our membership for their contributions and faithful support.

Thank you for your support of the Lutheran Historical Society of Eastern Pennsylvania. Membership is open to all, please join us.

The Rev. Richard B. Baumann, President

**LUTHERAN HOME AT GERMANTOWN FOUNDATION
SOUTHEASTERN PENNSYLVANIA SYNOD ASSEMBLY REPORT, 2016**

Lutheran Home at Germantown Foundation receives, holds, and invests all endowment and similar funds of the corporation and raises, holds, and invests contributions for the support of social ministry organizations affiliated with the Church with particular reference to Silver Springs – Martin Luther School, recognizing the common heritage and historical ties between the corporation and Silver Springs – Martin Luther School.

The Foundation's continuing interest and investment in helping to meet the compelling needs of children who have faced steep challenges and pain, and so early in their lives, is the focus of its attention and the heartbeat of its mission.

Kristen E.M. Gay, Ph.D., President/CEO

**Lutheran Archives Center at Philadelphia
President's Letter to Synod Assemblies**

I write this President's Letter from the Lutheran Archives Center at Philadelphia to our constituent Synods during the Lenten season. Just so, there was a recent news story about Jaromir Jagr, the 44 year-old right winger for the Florida Panthers of the National Hockey League. Jagr is an award-winning player who has played on a number of teams over his professional career. At 44 years of age (old for a professional hockey player) he is playing better than many players half his age. Jagr is also known as a Christian who gives something up for Lent each year. Last year he gave up Diet Coke. This Lent he gave up drinking his reported ten cups of coffee a day. He had become accustomed to drinking those ten cups of coffee to keep his energy level going each day. Since he went off coffee for Lent Jagr has actually increased his points per game average, and as of the writing of this letter, he is one point away from tying the famous Gordie Howe for third place for the highest number of points scored in NHL history. All without his daily ten cups of coffee! Sports writers reminded the ice hockey-viewing public that what Jagr gave up for Lent didn't hurt him – in fact, it helped him.

In the secular world, that may come as a surprise to some. We in the church know, though, that our Christian discipline of prayer, fasting, and works of love help us to focus on the one needful thing in this world and in the next – Jesus Christ.

For those of us on the Board and on the Staff of the Lutheran Archives Center at Philadelphia, we don't need ten cups of coffee to keep us going! We know that what we do is a form and offshoot of Christian ministry that ultimately points to the Lord of history, Jesus Christ. We often do our work with less, with a part-time staff, and relying on Synodical support and funding from closed congregations (\$5000 from each closed parish whose records we receive), as well as contributions from a variety of supporters (all of which are gratefully accepted). We do trust that what we offer through the work of this regional ministry is something that helps and assists the congregations, Synods, and institutions of the Northeast Region.

During the Lenten season, as throughout the rest of the Church Year, the Lutheran Archives Center touches the lives of Lutherans in Region Seven in a number of ways: we receive the archival heritage of congregations that are closing, and our Synodical Archivists help congregations preserve their stories during that often painful process; we assist individuals looking for a variety of records, from baptisms, confirmations, marriages, and funerals; we help researchers who are delving into the history of congregations and individuals and our constituent Synods and ministries; we act as a resource for congregations celebrating their histories and their heritage in our region. Your Archives Center helps individuals and the larger church as we remember the role that Lutherans in the Northeast have played and continue to play in the life of our communities.

As always, I encourage you to pick up a copy of the *Archives Advocate* (the newsletter of your regional Archives Center), and try to say "thank you" to your Synod Archivist at your Synod Assembly for the work that he or she does on your behalf. Please speak to your Archivist about any archival help that you may need within your congregation, or about how your Synod supports the necessary and Constitutionally-mandated work of preserving our Lutheran archival heritage. And remember, you always have an open invitation to stop by and visit your regional Archives Center!

Wishing you blessings on your Synod Assembly!

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "J. Francis Watson".

The Rev. J. Francis Watson, Ph.D.
President of the Board, Lutheran Archives Center at Philadelphia



Mission Investment Fund
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
God's work. Our hands.

The Mission Investment Fund (MIF), a financial ministry of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, makes low-interest loans to established ELCA congregations, new-start congregations and ELCA-related ministries for building projects.

Established congregation use MIF loans to renovate, expand or relocate. New-start congregations rely on MIF loans to buy land and construct their first church buildings. ELCA-related ministries use MIF loans for a variety of capital projects.

At year-end 2015, MIF had 830 loans outstanding, totaling \$492 million.

To fund these loans, MIF offers a portfolio of investments for congregations, their members, synods and ELCA-related ministries to purchase. MIF investments offer adjustable – or fixed-rate terms and earn interest at competitive rates.



At year-end 2015, MIF investments by congregations, their members, synods and ELCA-related ministries totaled \$464 million. The Mission Investment Fund is a financially strong and stable organization, with a record of steady, controlled growth. With total assets of \$663 million and net assets of \$194 million at year-end 2015, MIF maintains a capital ratio of 29 percent – positioning MIF in the top tier of well-capitalized church extension funds.

MIF Investments and Loans in the Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod
As of December 31, 2015:

- 22 Mission Investment Fund loans, with a balance of \$18, 027,351, are at work throughout the synod.
- Investments in the Mission Investment Fund by 182 individuals, 81 congregations, 6 ministries and the synod totaled \$12,253,488.

MIF representative

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Region 7 Report to Synod Assemblies, Spring 2016

The ELCA constitution provides for nine geographic regions for the purpose of administration and shared ministry. Each of the regions is staffed by one full time coordinator, who is a Churchwide staff member; some regions may have additional staff as the work varies somewhat, depending on the synods of the region. Region 7 is comprised of these six geographic synods: New Jersey, New England, Metro New York, Upstate New York, Northeastern Pennsylvania and Southeastern Pennsylvania. In addition, the only non-geographic synod of the church body, the Slovak Zion Synod is assigned as a partner in Region 7. Another key institutional partner is the Lutheran Theological Seminary at Philadelphia.

In all regions, the coordinator is the Churchwide resource person for the candidacy committees and process of that region, as well as coordinating first call assignment. The Churchwide candidacy staff completed the revisions to the Candidacy Manual and it was approved in October by the Conference of Bishops and in November by the Church Council. As we move into 2016, we will begin the implementation of the new process. In 2015 I participated in approximately 20 candidacy meetings across the region and traveled to Chicago to meet with colleagues twice. I also convened 12 theological review panels at seminaries, to assess the preparedness of people ordained in another Christian tradition who seek to be on the roster of the ELCA.

In Region 7 the coordinator also directs the first call theological event called the Leadership Guild.

A team of rostered leaders from across the region plans and staffs the event. Our focus for the past three years is teaching and modeling Adaptive Leadership, which our bishops endorse highly. This event happens during the fourth week of January each year.

Regional coordinators also assist the bishops and their staff as well as key synod leaders in a variety of ways. We sometimes refer to ourselves as “air traffic control” or “connective tissue.” We are coordinators, not directors, and take our assignments largely from our partners. Some of these include assisting with campus ministry reviews, organizing in-service for Global Mission and World Hunger Leaders, and nurturing networks of youth and family ministry leaders, Directors of Evangelical Mission, Mission Developers and bishops.

Submitted by:
The Rev. Peggy M. Wuertele