

**MINUTES**  
**of the 146<sup>th</sup> MEETING**  
**of the SOUTHEASTERN PENNSYLVANIA SYNOD COUNCIL**  
**of the EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN AMERICA**  
**Immanuel Lutheran Church, Philadelphia, PA**  
**June 8, 2017**

The Reverend Dr. Norbert Hahn, host pastor, brought greetings and described the ministry of Immanuel, which is a bilingual worship community that is working on building stronger connections with the area community.

Bishop Burkat announced a prayer request for the Reverend Dr. Richard Stewart. Dr. Stewart fell while travelling in Namibia, injuring his leg which then became infected. He remains overseas during this time of healing.

The Reverend Dr. Paul Sorcek, Dean of Lower Bucks Conference, led the Synod Council in devotions.

Vice President Tracey A. Beasley called the 146<sup>th</sup> meeting of the SEPA Synod Council to order at 4:22 p.m.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

The minutes of the 145<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Synod Council were approved with following corrections from Vice President Beasley: on page 5, paragraph 2, she clarified it was the African Descent Lutheran Strategy Team, not the African Descent Lutheran Association that was discussed. She also wanted to be clear that it was for the ADL Strategy Team meeting, not the Church Council meeting, that she was in Chicago, and that the ADL Strategy Team and the Multicultural Desk were asked to write the apology to the African Descent community.

**SETTING THE AGENDA**

The Synod Council adopted the Agenda with the addition of a report on the Forward Together in Faith Campaign following the Treasurers Report.

**BISHOP'S REPORT**

**Re-election of Synod Vice President**

Bishop Burkat thanked Vice President Beasley for serving again as vice president.

**Newly Elected Synod Council Members**

Bishop Burkat welcomed each of the newly elected synod council members.

**2017 Synod Assembly**

Bishop Burkat noted the time and effort it took to plan an Assembly on the theme of racial justice, resulting in eleven times when people had a chance to interact on the topic of racial justice throughout the Assembly.

**Updates on the Sale of Properties**

Bishop Burkat noted that the properties of the former First, Collingdale and the former St. John's, Pottstown have both been sold, and the property of the former St. Michael's, Germantown has been listed for sale.

### **Northeastern Diocese of Tanzania Trip**

Bishop Burkat noted that she, along with the Reverend Brad Burke, Assistant to the Bishop, and Ms. Yvonne Curtis, Director of Operations, will be traveling to Tanzania later this month. As the Bishop will be away, the Synod Council needs to appoint an acting Bishop in her absence.

**S.C.17.06.01. THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod Council appoint the Reverend Patricia Davenport, Director of Evangelical Mission, as acting Bishop during the time while Bishop Burkat is in Africa.**

The Synod Council unanimously adopted the resolution.

### **United Lutheran Seminary**

Bishop Burkat said that she has invested a lot of time and energy to help the seminary get to this point. She is glad that we have gotten to the point where we are, and she'll be welcoming the new president of United Lutheran Seminary when she returns from Tanzania.

### **Actions on the roster**

The motion to call the Reverend Suzanne Marie Spaulding to serve at St. Luke's Lutheran Church, Ferndale, has been postponed due to the postponement of the vote by St. Luke's.

### ***Calls to Interim Ministry***

**S.C.17.06.02. THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod Council call the Reverend Arlene Greenwald to interim ministry at Messiah Lutheran Church in Downingtown, PA beginning May 1, 2017, and extending until a pastor is called by the congregation or until Pastor Greenwald resigns this call, whichever comes first.**

The Synod Council unanimously adopted the resolution.

**S.C.17.06.03. THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod Council call the Reverend J. Christian McMullan to interim ministry at St. Peter Lutheran Church in Lafayette Hill, PA beginning July 1, 2017, and extending until a pastor is called by the congregation or until Pastor McMullan resigns this call, whichever comes first.**

The Synod Council unanimously adopted the resolution.

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

**S.C.17.06.04. THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod Council grants Deacon Suzanne M. Rigg on leave from call status, 3rd year, effective June 1, 2017**

The Synod Council unanimously adopted the resolution.

### ***Retirement Requests***

**S.C.17.06.05. THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod Council grants the Reverend Richard M. Connor retirement status effective June 1, 2017**

The Synod Council unanimously adopted the resolution.

**S.C.17.06.06. THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod Council grants the Reverend Barbara Berry-Bailey retirement status effective July 1, 2017**

The Synod Council unanimously adopted the resolution.

**S.C.17.06.07. THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod Council grants the Reverend Gerald W. Faust retirement status effective July 1, 2017**

The Synod Council unanimously adopted the resolution.

**S.C.17.06.08. THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod Council grants the Reverend Karl D. Krueger retirement status effective July 1, 2017**

The Synod Council unanimously adopted the resolution.

**S.C.17.06.09. THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod Council grants Deacon Kathie Afflerbach retirement status effective July 1, 2017**

The Synod Council unanimously adopted the resolution.

**S.C.17.06.10. THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod Council grants the Reverend Paul H. Neff retirement status effective November 1, 2017**

The Synod Council unanimously adopted the resolution.

### **Information Not Requiring Action**

#### ***Transfers***

The Reverend Marjorie J. Neal to Florida-Bahama Synod effective May 19, 2017

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

Vice President Beasley welcomed the new Synod Council members and thanked those members who helped at Synod Assembly.

She would like the Synod Council to know that we will be aiming to start on time in the future, and reminded them of the attendance requirements as stipulated in the Constitution. She also noted that the Executive Committee is requesting all Synod Council members to sign a confidentiality sheet. In addition, she noted that it is a practice that all chairs of committees of the Synod Council be on Synod Council.

### **MISSION MOMENT**

The Reverend Patricia Davenport spoke on the theme of Synod Assembly on racial justice. She noticed that the Assembly opened people up to repentance and reconciliation, as well as prayer, giving people the opportunity to open up and speak to pain and regret they had been carrying for years. Pastor Davenport also noted that the history of racism that helped people see how we got to where we are, particularly the local history, opened people up to ask for and receive forgiveness from one another. She noted hopes that the Kingdom of God will be strengthened in our Synod through our growing diversity.

Ms. Emily Fowler asked what the purpose of the Synod's anti-racism team is. Pr. Davenport said that it is to open up the people of our congregations to the other.

Multiple members of Synod Council noted that the people in their congregations very much appreciated the topic and the way the conversation was handled. It was noted that this topic was not a one-time thing, but a launching point for the whole Synod to address the issue more deeply and fully going forward. Pr. Davenport noted that the Synod Council will have anti-racism training and that the Churchwide body recommends that every Synod revisit this issue every two years.

### **SECRETARY'S REPORT**

Pr. Tyler Rasmussen noted Pr. Karl Richard's apology for his absence at today's meeting. He then brought forward the following resolutions from the Secretary's written report.

To affirm the email poll which had been taken between the last meeting of the Synod Council and the Synod Assembly regarding appointment of a chairperson for the Committee on Bishop's election,

**S.C.17.06.11. THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod Council affirm the appointment of Ms. Christine Simpson as Chair of the Committee of Bishop Elections.**

The Synod Council unanimously adopted the resolution.

To fill an open position on the Synod Council not filled at the Synod Assembly,

**S.C.17.06.12. THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod Council appoint Nicholas Jacob Gentile as Lay Male Youth Representative on the Synod Council, term ending 2019.**

The Synod Council unanimously adopted the resolution.

### **TREASURER AND FINANCE COMMITTEE REPORTS**

Ms. Janet Neff, Treasurer, highlighted that we have an increase in our mission support at this point in the year. She also noted the sale of properties and unrealized investment gains, among other items noted in her written report. In the expenses related to the Forward Together in Faith Campaign Ms. Neff clarified that the recipient of the \$2,000 scholarship was St. Mark's in Conshohocken.

### **COMMITTEE REPORTS**

#### **Forward Together in Faith**

Vice President Beasley gave updates on the campaign, noting that our current campaign total is \$581,909. Bishop Burkat noted that we are about a year behind where we projected ourselves to be at this point, but many congregations are just now making 3-year pledges even though the campaign formally ends next year.

### **COMMITTEE DESCRIPTIONS**

Vice President Beasley described the committees of the Synod Council with the assistance of people on Synod Council who have been on those committees in the past. She invited the members of Synod Council to fill out a form marking their top three requests of committees on which they would prefer to serve.

#### **Executive Committee**

The following people were nominated and accepted the nomination as lay male representative: Mr. Emanuel Alves. The Synod Council elected Mr. Alves.

The following people were nominated and accepted the nomination as lay female representative: Ms. Susan Pursch, Ms. Sandra Zimmermann, and Ms. Lisa Hand. The Synod Council elected Ms. Hand.

The following people were nominated and accepted the nomination as pastor representative: Pr. Christopher McKinstry, Pr. Laura Tancredi, Pr. Serena Sellers, and Pr. Lydia Posselt. The Synod Council elected Pr. Tancredi.

## **OLD BUSINESS**

### **African Descent Lutheran Lives Matter**

At the April 2017 meeting this Synod Council made a motion to send a letter to the Church Council in regards to the apology to the African Descent community. The African Descent Lutheran desk and the Multicultural desk has asked that we hold off on our letter and let them try to handle the matter on their own first.

### **Election of the Bishop**

Vice President Beasley asked Bishop Burkat and the rest of the Synod Staff to excuse themselves so that the Synod Council could discuss the process for the election of the next Bishop.

After the staff removed themselves from the meeting, the Synod Council received the recommendations from the Executive Committee of persons appointed to fill the three Teams for the process for the Election of a Bishop. Discussion of the process and the configuration of the appointees followed. The following resolution was then presented for action by the Council.

**S.C.17.06.13. THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod Council approves the appointment of the following people to the Teams for the Process for the Election of a Bishop:**

**to the Transition Team: Ms. Julie Kinzel and Ms. Patricia Robinson as co-chairs, Dr. Addie J. Butler, Pr. Lynette R. Chapman, Pr. James Goodyear, Pr. Paul H. Neff, Mr. Doug Perry, Ms. Karen Paulus, and Pr. Donna Wright;**

**to the Discernment Team: Ms. Tracey A. Beasley as chair, Mr. Emanuel Alves, Pr. Fritz Fowler, Pr. Regina D. Goodrich, Ms. Susan Pursch, Pr. Daniel Spigelmyer, Ms. Karen Strobel, and Ms. Sandra A. Zimmermann;**

**to the Committee on Bishop Elections: Ms. Christine Simpson as chair, Pr. Kay Braun, Ms. Joanne Carlson, Pr. Jennifer Casey, Ms. Cheryl Detweiler, Pr. Carolann Hopcke, Mr. William Irwin, Mr. Bruce W. McCollough, Mr. George Romasco, Ms. Lisa Helmel Thomas, Mr. Tom Salber, and Ms. Nancy M. Stevens; all for a one year term.**

The Synod Council unanimously adopted the resolution.

At this time the staff was invited to rejoin the meeting.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

### **Unfinished Business**

Bishop Burkat provided details to the Synod Council on the proposed pipeline going through Bear Creek Camp, noting that only a mile of the pipeline will go through the camp and will do so along the route of an existing pipeline.

**S.C.17.06.14. THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod Council approves a pipeline right-of-way agreement between the Eastern Pennsylvania Lutheran Camp Corporation and the PennEast Pipeline Company, LLC, and authorizes the following corporate officers to execute the said agreement on behalf of the Synod, as title holder of the land leased to the Camp Corporation, with proceeds to be utilized for the purposes of the Camp Corporation: the Rev. Claire S. Burkat, Bishop, and the Rev. Karl M. Richard, Secretary, of the Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod.**

The Synod Council unanimously adopted the resolution.

The meeting adjourned at 6:40 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,  
The Rev. Tyler Rasmussen, Synod Council Member  
Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod, ELCA

*Approved by Synod Council, September 14, 2017*