

MINUTES
of the 144th MEETING
of the SOUTHEASTERN PENNSYLVANIA SYNOD COUNCIL
of the EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN AMERICA
University Lutheran, Philadelphia
February 23, 2017

Vice President Tracey A. Beasley introduced the Reverend Fritz Fowler, host and pastor of University Lutheran.

Pr. Fowler passed out a packet about the ministry at “UniLu,” and led the Synod Council in devotions based on the Transfiguration texts. “We do not need to be afraid, because the God of love and mercy and forgiveness goes with us. We are called as people of this God to listen to and walk with the people in our city and our world, not be a people of fear, but a people of faith.”

Bishop Burkat stated that Pr. Fowler has been appointed to the Interfaith Network and has been doing a fine job with it.

Vice President Beasley called the 144th meeting of the SEPA Synod Council to order at 4:32 pm

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The minutes of the 142nd and the 143rd meetings of the Synod Council were brought before the Council for approval.

In the Minutes of 142nd meeting of the Synod Council Vice President Beasley noted one correction: she had asked Pr. Davenport to ask Pr. Larry Smoose, chair of the Stewardship Committee, to attend the February meeting of the Synod Council Meeting.

The Synod Council approved the minutes of the 142nd meeting of the Synod Council as corrected, and the minutes of the 143rd meeting of the Synod Council as presented.

SETTING THE AGENDA

The Synod Council adopted the Agenda with reports received from the Audit and Constitution Committees.

BISHOP’S REPORT

Interfaith Relationships

Bishop Burkat was honored by the Muslim Quba Institute of Philadelphia with the Excellence in Service Award for the work she has done in the Interfaith Community. Bishop Burkat has been asked to attend the Islamic Society of North America national convention in Chicago this coming July with Imam Muhaimin to share how Lutherans and Muslims in Southeastern Pennsylvania have worked together to promote peace.

The Bishop stated she is excited to see these interfaith efforts growing strongly as we live into the next phase of being the Lutheran Church in this diverse American arena. The “Coming Together” event on February 27th that will bring together leaders from the Muslim, Jewish and

Christian traditions in Philadelphia is a great example of how we can speak openly and learn from each other.

Conference of Bishops

The Conference of Bishops met in Charleston SC, and was present at the time when Dylan Roof was being sentenced for his crime of the shootings at the Mother Emmanuel AME Church. Bishop Burkat attended worship there along with three other ELCA bishops. She brought greetings to the congregation from SEPA Synod and from Mother Bethel AME in Philadelphia.

United Lutheran Seminary

The work of the search committee for a president for the new seminary has been moving forward, and the committee has some great candidates. The new school will begin July 1st. The offer of full tuition for ELCA candidates has resulted in over thirty people inquiring about attending seminary next year, with fifteen seriously in discernment, just from SEPA Synod alone.

Bishop Burkat will challenge all fifteen supporting synods to raise up at least two candidates each year. If we can do this it will be a tremendous gift for the whole Church.

Bishop in Residence

Bishop Burkat was given the opportunity to be Bishop in Residence at the Lutheran Theological Seminary at Gettysburg. She spoke with several professors who have commented on how effectively the hybrid of online learning and on site class time is working as the faculty also lives into a new model of teaching students at a distance.

Anti-racism Retreat

The hoped for retreat to train Synod Council and the Committee of Deans needed to be rescheduled due to an inability to find suitable space at a feasible cost. The desire was to have the Synod Council trained before the Assembly. This was not possible. An alternate time will be arranged as soon as possible.

Brave New Church

Pr. Brad Burke, Synod Staff described the “Brave New Church” initiative.

He noted the tremendous shifts in the culture around us, and how particularly the millennial generation is not connecting with the Church. This is not just a concern of, or about, the millennial generation. We all need to consider this shift in the culture. To address some of these concerns and shifts, a synod wide, on-line initiative is being launched.

There are four components to this initiative:

A Podcast – weekly on Mondays dealing with texts of upcoming week

A Blog – featuring a rotation of voices wrestling with the changing dynamics of ministry

Community Forums – a space for civil conversations on our changing communities and experiences

A Resources Page – links offered to quality, engaging tools to address these changing times. Congregational connections will also be developed here.

This initiative will be one of the topics discussed at the council officers gathering in March, as well as at the Cross + Gen event at the Seminary March 10th & 11th.

Actions on the Roster

Requests for extensions of On Leave from Call status

S.C.17.02.01. THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Reverend Wende Bleam, the Reverend Dr. Harold Evans, the Reverend Gwendolyn King, the Reverend Kristine Peterson and the Reverend Bruce Thorsen be granted an extension for *On Leave From Call* from the ELCA Conference of Bishops Roster Committee, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT the Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod Council request an approval of these extensions from the ELCA Conference of Bishops Roster Committee.

The Synod Council unanimously adopted the resolution.

On Leave from Call Requests

S.C. 17.02.02. THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod Council grants the Reverend Jonathan Shin on leave from call status, 1st year, effective February 1, 2017

The Synod Council unanimously adopted the resolution.

Retirement Requests

S.C. 17.02.03. THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod Council grants the Reverend James E. Gulotta retirement status effective May 1, 2017

The Synod Council unanimously adopted the resolution.

Authorization of Housing Allowances

S.C. 17.02.04. THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod Council approve the 2017 housing allowance for the Reverend Violet Little and the Reverend Linda Manson, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT that the recipients be reminded that the amounts so designated as rental/housing allowance are excludable from the gross income of the respective recipients only to the extent that said amounts are used to rent or provide a home. Further the amount eligible for the Section 107 exclusion may not exceed the fair rental value of the minister's home (including furnishings and appurtenances) plus the cost of utilities. To the extent a greater amount is designated as rental/housing allowance, the designation will be ineffectual with respect to such amount.

The Synod Council unanimously adopted the resolution.

Information Not Requiring Action

Transfers

The Reverend Paul Xander to Northeastern Pennsylvania Synod effective January 18, 2017

The Reverend Stephen Weisser to Northeastern Pennsylvania Synod effective February 14, 2017

Deaths

The Reverend Dr. Allan H. Jahsmann, which occurred December 13, 2016

Ms Susan Pursch thanked the Bishop for her report. She shared that she is proud of our Bishop and the work she does to represent us across denominations and in interfaith dialogues. Still, she would like a report on what is happening within the Synod as well.

Bishop Burkat asked the Council to clarify what might be helpful.

Mr. Phil Tackett said that, as an example, we have a new Dean in Upper Bucks, but we do not have any notification of this at Synod Council.

Pr. Sarah Anderson-Rajarigam suggested perhaps a sense of the finances of congregations beyond finance report.

Bp. Burkat noted the Deans do work, the Staff does work, and various Teams do work. What does Council need? Perhaps we have Pr. Marcia Bell, Director of Mobility, write a summary of the work of the Deans for the Synod Council?

Ms Pursch thought that might be helpful.

Vice President Beasley suggested perhaps we have Pr. Bell attend twice a year to give us an impression of what is going on. We need to be very careful of confidentiality. Perhaps she could give list of congregations in transition, and perhaps list the congregations that are now part-time.

Mr. Rod Rothermel suggested perhaps the Deans could share what is going well, and what challenges they have in their Conferences.

Some consideration will be given to this, particularly to if it is best to have a written report, or just an occasional visit from Pr. Bell.

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE AND VICE PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Vice President Beasley alerted members of the Synod Council that information for the upcoming Synod Assembly is on MinistryLink. She reminded members that if a member of Synod Council wishes to attend the Assembly and is not a Voting Member of their congregation, the Synod will cover their registration. However, members will still need to fill out the registration form and submit it to the Synod office.

Vice President Beasley then welcomed the Reverend Larry Smoose, Chair of the Synod's Stewardship Committee, to present the Mission Moment.

MISSION MOMENT

Pr. Smoose gave an overview of the Synod's financial history over the past thirty years.

In 2016 partnership support (the regular offerings from congregations to the Synod) was down \$119,000 from the amount given in 2015. Likewise, partnership support in 2015 was down from the amount given in 2014. This is nothing new. It is part of at least a 30 year trend from the time the ELCA began. This leaves us in difficult straits financially, as the Synod has received fewer actual dollars, not just dollars adjusted for inflation, than were received in 1986.

Pr. Smoose then addressed some of the causes of this decline. As a visual aid, he provided each member of the Council a copy of the ELCA trend report of their congregation, covering the last 8 years.

Some general information about the 27 congregations represented on the Synod Council:

Regular giving by members:

- In 14 congregations regular giving by members to the congregations went down
- In 11 congregations regular giving went up
- In the remaining 2 regular giving stayed the same

Partnership Support:

- For 18 congregations partnership support went up
- For 3 congregations partnership support stayed the same
- For 6 congregations partnership support went down

Percent of regular giving shared as Partnership Support

- For 11 congregations, 2015 partnership support was 8% or more
- For 16 congregations 2015 partnership support was less than 8%, and some gave nothing
- 22 congregations share a lower percentage now than in 2008
- 4 congregations share a higher percentage now than in 2008
- 1 had no change

What are the attitudes and concerns that contribute to this overall decline of support for the Synod?

- Some have memories of conflict from 30 years ago
- Shrinking membership
- Buildings that need care
- A trend, not necessarily in these congregations, to give to local needs
- Not as much denominational loyalty
- Active worship is now 2x/month rather than weekly
- Connection to own location causes resistance to cooperative ministry.

Multiple factors have contributed to the decreased level of support, but:

What is the Stewardship Team trying to do?

1. Rescue the term Stewardship. If “stewardship” is managing what has been entrusted to you, then every congregation needs to be involved with that, as does every member.
2. We want to help congregations develop a culture of generosity. It is more than just asking for money, but learning how to manage all your assets. The resources we have to share drive our mission and our ministry. We need people time and money. If we do not develop generous sharing of these we are in trouble.
3. We are going to the Conferences – what do your congregations need? How can we provide training, information, or events to help with that?
4. Workshop on 4/29 – Representatives from Vanco will discuss electronic giving. 60% of our congregations have some form of electronic giving, but most are using “Simply Giving” style of donations. How can we effectively reach millennials, who don’t use checks or carry cash?
5. We are offering a Pilot program with NEPA Synod – each synod is getting 8 congregations of varying sizes to engage in a 2 year program to cultivate a culture of generosity. The cost of the program will be about \$2,000/year, covered in part by a grant. Congregations will contribute a portion, based on size of congregation. These congregations will also commit to sharing with the Synod financially and sharing the information with other congregations.
6. Other ways the Stewardship Team is reaching out: Stories of Generosity contest; Stewardship Tip of the Month in MinistryLink; workshop on how to make a narrative budget to tell the story of the congregation through its budget; forum on e-giving at Assembly; teaching basic biblical principles of stewardship, such as why see 10% as a mark for sharing our financial resources.

What is needed to do?

It is a long process to turn this around.

We need to tell the story of what the Synod is doing. This needs to be more than MinistryLink. It needs to be personalized. No group knows more about the Synod than the Synod Council. We need to commit to this work. We need to tell the story!

The Synod Council thanks Pr. Smoose for his presentation, and his work on behalf of our Synod.

SECRETARY’S REPORT

Secretary Richard brought to the Synod Council the following resolution concerning the closing of St. John Lutheran Church, Pottstown. St. John has already closed, and the Synod Council did act to recognize this fact, but the bank that is working with the Synod for the sale of the property has requested this specific language.

S.C. 17.02.05. THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod Council acknowledges with sadness the action of Evangelical Lutheran Church of St. John of South Pottstown, PA to close, effective January 6, 2015, on which date the Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod received the property of Evangelical Lutheran Church of St. John, 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, February 23, 2017, authorizes Rev. Claire Burkat, the Bishop of the Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod, or the Bishop's representative(s), to sign the Deed and all Seller Affidavits and other closing documents and sell the real property having an address of 75 E. Main Street in Pottstown, Pennsylvania, on behalf of the Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod to the Living Hope Mennonite Fellowship at a sales price of Two Hundred Sixty Thousand Dollars (\$260,000.00).

The Synod Council unanimously adopted the resolution.

Secretary Richard thanks Pr. Jane Marston for taking over the recording of the minutes as he presented numerous resolutions affecting the Synod's Constitution, Bylaws and Continuing Resolutions.

Actions on Synod Constitution

Synod Secretary Karl Richard presented a series of proposed amendments to our Synod's Constitution, Bylaws and Continuing Resolutions. Some of these changes were recommended by a committee formed to review the existing constitution in light of changes in the Model Constitution for Synods adopted by the 2016 Churchwide Assembly as well as in the number of Conferences in our Synod. Pr. Richard; Pr. Jane Marston, chair of the Synod Constitution Committee; and Pr. Tyler Rasmussen, member of the Executive Committee, served on this committee.

The ad hoc committee also drafted a continuing resolution describing procedures for electing a bishop based on the discussion with ELCA Secretary Wm. Chris Boerger with the Executive Committee and at the special meeting of the Synod Council held on January 31, 2017. This continuing resolution was reviewed by the Executive Committee, which recommended it to the Synod Council for adoption.

The following amendments were discussed and voted on:

1. SEASONAL MEMBERS:

Secretary Richard noted that the Model Constitution for Congregations now allows for seasonal members when the Synod Council has approved this on its territory. The ad hoc committee recommended the following resolution:

S.C. 17.02.06. THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod Council adopt the following Continuing Resolution regarding seasonal members of congregations:

*S13.02.A17. This synod allows congregations to provide for seasonal membership in accordance with *C8.02.e. of the Model Constitution for Congregations.*

The Synod Council unanimously adopted CR S13.02.A17.

2. PROCESS FOR WITHDRAWAL FROM ECCLESIASTICAL BALLOT FOR BISHOP

Secretary Richard reported that ELCA Secretary Boerger had suggested we clarify the process for how those nominated for the office of bishop may withdraw their name from consideration. The ad hoc committee recommended the following resolution:

S.C. 17.02.07. THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod Council amend Continuing Resolution S9.04.A94.1) by addition as follows: (suggested additions are underlined)

S9.04.A94. 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.

A nominee may withdraw from the process by informing the Committee on Elections by one of the following means:

a. written notification

b. email notification

c. verbal notice, in person or by electronic means, to 2 members of the election committee.

The Synod Council unanimously adopted the amended version of CR S9.04.A94.

3. PROCESS FOR PREPARING THE SYNOD FOR THE ELECTION OF A BISHOP

Secretary Richard reported that, following discussions with ELCA Secretary Boerger on January 31, 2017, the Executive Committee proposed the following resolution to the Synod Council:

S.C. 17.02.08. THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod Council adopt the following Continuing Resolution for the process of electing a Bishop:

S9.04.B17 Process for preparing the Synod for the election of a Bishop

When there is an election for a bishop where there is no incumbent, this synod shall use a three-stage process which will allow for those who will be voting members to the Synod Assembly at which a bishop will be elected to consider both the needs of the synod and persons who might exhibit the gifts to serve as bishop. This process shall begin the year prior to such election and conclude with the ecclesiastical ballot for bishop at the appointed Assembly. This process will not be required in the event of a special election for a bishop. The teams for this process shall be appointed by the Executive Committee in consultation with the Bishop and approved by the Synod Council. The teams shall be chaired by laypersons.

A. Stage One. A Transition Team shall develop a Synodical Mission Profile. Included in such a Mission Profile might be the latest demographics and vitality indicators of the congregations on the territory of the synod, updated demographic information on the rostered leaders serving in the synod, and an assessment of the hoped for direction of the synod and its ministry. This Synodical Mission Profile shall be completed by December 1st of the year prior to the election and made available upon completion.

B. Stage Two. A Discernment Team shall develop a prayer-filled process for conversation and discernment across the synod. This process shall include ways to discuss the gifts for ministry that might be helpful to advance the Synodical Mission Profile and how to identify persons who might possess these gifts. The structure for this prayerful conversation shall include consideration of:

1) how persons with gifts for this ministry might be identified, e.g., who might raise up names, by what authority, and by what mechanism;

2) how the names of those persons might be brought forward for discussion, e.g., through conference meetings, cluster meetings, or synod-wide gatherings;

3) how the conversations about those brought forward might be structured so that their gifts for ministry might be explored;

4) how these conversations might be shared across the synod for the edification of the whole.

The process for these conversations shall be completed and shared by the time the Synodical Mission Profile is completed. These conversations shall begin after the completion of the Synodical Mission Profile and be completed at least one month prior to the election.

C. Stage Three. The Committee on Bishop Elections shall oversee the process of ecclesiastical ballot as specified in S9.04. No names raised in stage two of this process shall be on the ballot at the start of the Assembly. Any names to be placed in nomination shall be made from the floor of the Assembly on the first ballot.

Secretary Richard noted that the names of the teams conducting the three stages of the process had been changed from those initially suggested by ELCA Secretary Boerger at our meeting with him on January 31. This was something Secretary Boerger had specifically said we would be free to do.

Ms Susan Pursch stated that she continues to have concerns about lifting up specific names before the ecclesiastical ballot.

Secretary Richard replied that the conversations identifying potential nominees would be concluded at least one month prior to the Synod Assembly and that the Discernment Team will be charged with removing names and biographical information from the synod's social media prior to the election, as was done at the most recent Churchwide Assembly.

Mr. Bob Hensil noted that in his experience these kinds of conversations were already being held in previous elections and that the proposed continuing resolution formalizes what has already been occurring.

Bishop Burkat noted that she has already been approached by groups asking her to reflect on the personal characteristics needed for serving as bishop. She reported that she will refuse all invitations to participate in the discernment process.

Pr. Larry Smoose asked for and received permission to speak as a visitor. He wanted to know whether the conversations led by the Discernment Team would include opportunities to reflect on the spiritual gifts and skills needed in a bishop. Secretary Richard replied that this is the desire. The Team will determine the way in which this might take place.

Secretary Richard noted that the proposed continuing resolution specifies a framework of times for completing each of the phases of the work.

Vice President Beasley reiterated the point that much of what is being proposed is not really new, but rather establishes guidelines for our usual practices.

The Synod Council unanimously adopted CR S9.04.B17.

4. CLARIFICATION OF COMMITTEE TITLE

Secretary Richard reported that the Executive Committee suggested that there be a distinction between the committee that coordinates the election of a bishop and the committee that coordinates the election of other positions at the Assembly. To that end, the Executive Committee proposed the following resolution to the Synod Council:

S.C. 17.02.09. THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod Council amend Continuing Resolution S9.04.A94. by addition as follows: (suggested additions are underlined)

S9.04.A94. 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.

A nominee may withdraw from the process by informing the Committee on Bishop Elections by one of the following means:

a. written notification

b. email notification

c. verbal notice, in person or by electronic means, to 2 members of the election committee

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 Bishop 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 Bishop Elections unless otherwise delegated by the Synod Council.

The Synod Council unanimously adopted the amended version of CR S9.04.A94.

5. MOVEMENT OF PERSONS FROM THE YOUTH BALLOT TO THE AT LARGE BALLOT.

Secretary Richard noted that currently Continuing Resolution S6.04.D10. has those nominated for the youth position who are not elected on that ballot to move forward to the ballot for lay person at large. The Youth term is a two year term, where the at large term is a three year term. As the terms are not commensurate, the ad hoc committee recommended that the Synod Council amend the continuing resolution as follows:

S.C. 17.02.10. THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod Council amend Continuing Resolution S6.04.D10. by deletion as follows: (suggested deletions are ~~struck through~~)

S6.04.D10. The Synod Assembly shall elect two Synod Council youth representatives, one female and one male, and two Synod Council young adult representatives, one female and one male. At least one of the youth and young adult representatives shall be a person of color and/or person whose primary language is other than English. The terms of the two youth representatives shall be two years and staggered so that one of the terms expires every year shall expire at the same time. The youth representatives may serve two consecutive terms if eligible. The terms of the young adult representatives shall be three years. The young adult representatives may serve two consecutive terms if eligible. Those nominated for the youth and young adult representative positions and not elected shall be added to the nominees for the Synod Council “at large” positions.

The Synod Council unanimously adopted the amended version of CR S6.04.D10.

6. DIVERSITY AMONG THE YOUTH AND YOUNG ADULT MEMBERS OF THE SYNOD COUNCIL

Secretary Richard reminded the Council that our goal is to have at least one of the four positions of youth and young adult members held by a person of color and/or whose primary language is other than English. Currently the way in which the youth and young adult positions are staggered potentially limits the number of persons we may consider for a particular position. To that end, and because the Youth Female position is currently unfilled, the ad hoc committee recommended that the Synod Council amend this continuing resolution so that the youth positions are elected in the same year, rather than be staggered as follows:

S.C. 17.02.11. THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod Council amend Continuing Resolution S6.04.D10. as follows: (suggested additions are underlined, suggested deletions are ~~struck through~~):

S6.04.D10. The Synod Assembly shall elect two Synod Council youth representatives, one female and one male, and two Synod Council young adult representatives, one female and one male. At least one of the youth and young adult representatives shall be a person of color and/or person whose primary language is other than English. The terms of the two youth representatives shall be two years and ~~staggered so that one of the terms expires every year~~ shall expire at the same time. The youth representatives may serve two consecutive terms if eligible. The terms of the young adult representatives shall be three years. The young adult representatives may serve two consecutive terms if eligible. Those nominated for the young adult representative positions and not elected shall be added to the nominees for the Synod Council “at large” positions.

Mr. Bob Hensil observed that the wording at the beginning of the second sentence, “At least one of the youth *and* young adult representatives” could be interpreted to mean that we need a person of color and/or a person whose language is other than English for both categories. He proposed that we change the word “and” to “or.” This change was adopted.

The Synod Council unanimously adopted the amended version of CR S6.04.D10.

7. AMENDING BYLAWS CONCERNING REPRESENTATION ON SYNOD COUNCIL

Secretary Richard noted that the reduction of the number of Conferences in 2016 requires that we also amend our bylaws to reflect the number of people serving on Synod Council. He compared the process of

updating these bylaws to repainting one wall in a room: you start to notice other things that need to be fixed as well. The ad hoc committee addressed the following additional issues in its proposed revision:

- Move all items pertaining to composition and term limits of the Synod Council to S10.01.
 - Change S6.04.D10 from a continuing resolution to a bylaw, in accordance with S10.01.a, which specifies that the process for election and term of office for all members of the Synod Council “shall be specified in the bylaws”.
- Move all items pertaining to the process for nominations and elections to the Synod Council to S9.08.
- When referring to a Synod Council member, always use the word “member” (consistent with language throughout Chapter 10). When referring to the position on Synod Council someone might fill, always use the word “position” (consistent with S10.06). Remove all language pertaining to “seats.”

S.C. 17.02.12. THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod Council recommends the Synod Assembly amend the *Constitution, Bylaws and Continuing Resolutions of the Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod* as follows: (suggested additions are underlined, suggested deletions are ~~struck through~~, (notes are in red)):

~~S6.04.D10.~~ (moved to S10.01.02)

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~~ members of the Synod Council shall proceed in a manner that will ensure the composition of the Synod Council meets the requirements set forth in Chapter 10 of this constitution. ~~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, (moved to S10.01.01.c) nine of the 24 elected members shall be ordained ministers and 15 shall be lay persons. (moved to S10.01.01.a) Terms for members other than the youth member shall be for three years (moved to S10.01.02) and shall be arranged so that the terms of three ordained ministers, three conferences and two at-large lay members expire each year. (moved to S10.01.01.b) None of the 24 elected members shall be eligible to serve for more than two terms consecutively. (moved to S10.01.01.b) Terms of office for the youth members shall be two years, (moved to S10.01.02) and for the young adult members, three years, subject to a two-term limitation. (moved to in S10.01.02)~~

b. ~~Representatives of congregations in~~ Each conference whose lay position is up for election shall meet prior to the Synod Assembly and shall nominate at least one layperson from their conference for the Synod Council position, one nominee per conference to be elected by the assembly at the annual meeting. Every conference may nominate laypeople for the at-large lay positions. (new) Normally, these nominations will take place at a full assembly of the conference. (new, language borrowed from S7.24 and S12.01.05) These lay seats assigned to conferences shall alternate every six years (or two terms) between male and female Council members. (moved to S10.01.01.b) The Nominating Committee shall receive these nominations from the conferences to include in its report. 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. Additional nominations may be made from the floor.~~ (new, language borrowed from S9.05 thru S9.07)

c. The Nominating Committee shall nominate at least one person for each minister of Word and Sacrament and lay at-large position up for election. (new, removes implied need to nominate people for positions not up for election) 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;~~ (moved to S9.08.01.e) ~~each year a male and female at-large lay representative shall be elected.~~ (moved to S10.01.01.b) Additional nominations may be made from the floor. (new, language borrowed from S9.05 thru S9.07)

d. The Nominating Committee shall nominate at least one person for each youth and young adult position up for election. (new, repeats pattern from previous provision) Additional nominations may be made from the floor. (new, language borrowed from S9.05 thru S9.07)

e. ~~Balloting for the~~ The election of conference lay positions shall be completed before balloting for at-large positions begins. Nominees not elected to represent conferences lay positions shall be added to the at-large ballots. The election of young adult positions shall be completed before balloting for at-large positions begins. (new, repeats pattern from previous sentences) Nominees not elected to the young adult positions shall be added to the at-large ballots. (moved here from S6.04.D10, language changed to match previous sentences) Balloting for at-large lay positions shall be by male and female panels. (moved here from S9.08.01.c).

~~d f. 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.~~ (moved to S10.01.01.d) If a nominee is ineligible or becomes ineligible for a position on the Synod Council, as defined in †S10.01 and related bylaws, that nominee shall be removed from the ballot.

S10.01.01. General Membership (new, best term we could find to describe the “other members”, as listed in †S10.01)

a. With the exception of the officers, the youth members, and the young adult members, the general membership of 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), (already defined in †S10.01) and 24 other members (nine ministers of Word and Sacrament, and 15 lay members). one

layperson from each conference of this synod, and six at-large laypersons, three male and three female. (more clearly spells out the conference and at-large positions than was previously stated) ~~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.~~ (moved to S10.01.01.d)

b. ~~The terms for the general membership other than the youth member shall be for three years and of the Synod Council shall be arranged staggered~~ (language borrowed from †S11.05) so that the terms of three ministers of Word and Sacrament, three conferences approximately one-third of conference lay positions, and two at-large lay members positions, one male and one female, (moved here from S9.08.01.c) expire each year. None of the 24 general membership of the Synod Council shall be eligible to serve for more than two terms consecutively consecutive terms. (moved here from S9.08.01.a) ~~These lay seats The lay position assigned to each conferences shall alternate every six years or two terms between male and female Council members.~~ (moved here from S9.08.01.b)

c. At least three members of the general membership so elected of the Synod Council will shall be persons of color and/or persons whose primary language is other than English. (moved here from S9.08.01.a)

d. The general membership of 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. (moved here from S9.08.01.d; simplified based on the whole section only referring to the general membership) ~~The Synod Council may make exceptions to this requirement in order to promote greater diversity and/or inclusivity~~ Exceptions may be made to this requirement only if necessary to meet the requirements of S10.01.01.c. (moved here from S9.08.01.d)

S10.01.02. The Synod Assembly Council shall elect include two Synod Council youth representatives members, one male and one female, and two Synod Council young adult representatives members, one male and one female. At least one of the youth or young adult representative members shall be a person of color and/or person whose primary language is other than English. The terms of the two youth representatives members shall be two years and shall expire at the same time. The youth representatives members may serve two consecutive terms if eligible. The terms of the young adult representatives members shall be three years and shall expire at the same time. (new, describes current practice) The young adult representatives members may serve two consecutive terms if eligible. (moved here from S6.04.D10) ~~Those nominated for the young adult representative positions and not elected shall be added to the nominees for the Synod Council “at large” positions.~~ (moved to S9.08.01.e)

Final Result

S9.08.01. Synod Council

- a. The nominating and election process for the members of the Synod Council shall proceed in a manner that will ensure the composition of the Synod Council meets the requirements set forth in Chapter 10 of this constitution.
- b. Each conference whose lay position is up for election shall nominate at least one layperson from their conference for the position. Every conference may nominate laypeople for the at-large lay positions. Normally, these nominations will take place at a full assembly of the conference. The Nominating Committee shall receive these nominations from the conferences to include in its report. Additional nominations may be made from the floor.
- c. The Nominating Committee shall nominate at least one person for each minister of Word and Sacrament and lay at-large position up for election. 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. Additional nominations may be made from the floor.
- d. The Nominating Committee shall nominate at least one person for each youth and young adult position up for election. Additional nominations may be made from the floor.
- e. The election of conference lay positions shall be completed before balloting for at-large positions begins. Nominees not elected to conference lay positions shall be added to the at-large ballots. The election of young adult positions shall be completed before balloting for at-large positions begins. Nominees not elected to the young adult positions shall be added to the at-large ballots. Balloting for at-large lay positions shall be by male and female panels.
- f. If a nominee is ineligible or becomes ineligible for a position on the Synod Council, as defined in †S10.01 and related bylaws, that nominee shall be removed from the ballot.

S10.01.01. General Membership

- a. With the exception of the officers, the youth members, and the young adult members, the general membership of the Synod Council shall consist of nine ministers of Word and Sacrament, one layperson from each conference of this synod, and six at-large laypersons, three male and three female.
- b. The terms for the general membership of the Synod Council shall be staggered so that the terms of three ministers of Word and Sacrament, approximately one-third of conference lay positions, and two at-large lay positions, one male and one female, expire each year. None of the general membership of the Synod Council shall be eligible to serve for more than two consecutive terms. The lay position assigned to each conference shall alternate every two terms between male and female.
- c. At least three members of the general membership of the Synod Council shall be persons of color and/or persons whose primary language is other than English.

d. The general membership of the Synod Council shall consist of no more than one member of the same congregation at the same time. Exceptions may be made to this requirement only if necessary to meet the requirements of S10.01.01.c.

S10.01.02. The Synod Council shall include two youth members, one male and one female, and two young adult members, one male and one female. At least one of the youth or young adult members shall be a person of color and/or person whose primary language is other than English. The terms of the youth members shall be two years and shall expire at the same time. The youth members may serve two consecutive terms if eligible. The terms of the young adult members shall be three years and shall expire at the same time. The young adult members may serve two consecutive terms if eligible.

The Synod Council voted unanimously to recommend the proposed revisions to the Synod Assembly for adoption.

8. ADDITIONAL UPDATES TO ALIGN CONSTITUTION WITH THE MODEL

Finally, Secretary Richard noted updates to the Model Constitution for Synods that will be brought to this year's Synod Assembly for adoption. Since these come from the model constitution, a vote of the Synod Council was not necessary.

S8.42.f. ~~Giving of corporate surety in the amount determined by the Synod Council, which shall be in the custody of the secretary, and the premium therefore shall be paid by this synod.~~ Obtaining a fidelity bond in the amount determined by the Synod Council for persons handling synod funds, which bond shall be in the custody of the secretary. The premium for the bond shall be paid by this synod. Fidelity coverage provided by the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America shall be deemed a fulfillment of this requirement.

†S10.02. The Synod Council shall be the board of directors of this synod and shall serve as its interim legislative authority between meetings of the Synod Assembly. It may make decisions that are not in conflict with actions taken by the Synod Assembly or that are not precluded by provisions of this constitution or the constitution and bylaws of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

Need to add, as these are not in our constitution, yet we have Synodically Authorized Worshipping Communities

S13.40. Synodically Authorized Worshipping Communities

S13.41. Authorized worshipping 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.

Need to delete S14.29., as the new S14.30. supersedes it.

~~**S14.29. — The provisions in the churchwide documents and such provisions as may be developed by the appropriate churchwide unit governing associates in ministry shall apply in this synod.**~~

Secretary Richard said that he will post a revised version of our Synod's constitution reflecting the changes to required sections of the model constitution (which were in effect immediately following the Churchwide Assembly) and the continuing resolutions adopted at this meeting.

TREASURER AND FINANCE COMMITTEE REPORT

Ms Sue Massey, chair of Finance Committee and Mr. Martin Schwab, the Synod's Senior Accountant, were recognized to present the financial reports and the proposed budget.

The fiscal year ended (1/31/17) with an overall surplus of \$18,842. There was no need to draw from Fund for Mission.

We have two more years of prepaid rent to the Seminary.

Ms Susan Pursch asked who discusses this issue, and do we need to do something proactive to address it.

Mr. Schwab indicated the Finance Committee discusses this concern at its meetings.

Bishop Burkat stated the Executive Committee has decided that we need to wait see what the Seminary does to see our options. We may be able to renegotiate rent. There is no "drop dead" date for a decision from the school's perspective.

Ms Pursch asked if we should get an extension now that would hold through transition.

Bishop Burkat noted that it is premature to deal with this before we know what the Seminary plans to do, but that steps would be taken to address this before our prepaid lease is completed.

Due to reduced Partnership Support, the 2017 spending plan has been reduced to anticipate no increase over 2016. The number anticipated for Partnership Support for 2017 and the 2018 Budget remains at the actual level given in 2016.

Each of the four areas of the budget are anticipating less income than in 2017, and the expenses have been adjusted to reflect this.

S.C. 17.02.13. THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod Council approves the 2018 budget, and presents the same to the Synod Assembly for adoption.

The Synod Council unanimously adopted the resolution.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Forward Together in Faith

Vice President Beasley welcomed Ms Ellen Daneke to present on the status of the Forward Together in Faith Campaign

2016 was the year of the “ask.” As we enter 2017 we will still ask, but will also gather gifts and recognize both the response and the work we are doing.

Bishop’s Advancement Team has strategies and procedures for prospective (major) donors.

Ambassadors are going out to make the “ask.”

There are new videos on the Forward Together in Faith website. One of the videos has an ask, one is about Christ the King Deaf Church. These are available for congregations to use to promote the campaign.

Navigators have been out working with MAP congregations. Six congregations have completed a mission plan and submitted them to Pr. Bryan Penman.

The Communication Audit Team plans to be able to launch by the end of March or the beginning of April.

Obstacles to the Campaign: many churches are in transition, others in decline; some are short-staffed and are low in volunteers for this process; several congregations are in the midst of their own capital campaigns.

A challenge from the Campaign team: We still don’t have 100% response from leadership or congregations of leadership. What is keeping leadership congregations from getting on board?

We still have \$2 million to raise by the end of 2018.

Investment Committee

Mr. Rod Rothermel, chair of the committee, shared that the investments are doing well. However, the portion allocated to T. Rowe Price was delayed as they wanted approval from our governing body since we were a new account. During this delay the market increased strongly, and we are investing with T. Rowe Price on a gradual basis.

Nominating Committee

Vice President Beasley encouraged all members of Synod Council who are eligible to serve again to please consider this and submit your form to the Synod Office.

OLD BUSINESS

None

NEW BUSINESS

None

The meeting adjourned at 7:01 p.m.

The next meeting of the Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod Council will be April 6, 2017, 4:00 p.m. at St. John Lutheran Church, Blue Bell, PA

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

Approved by Synod Council April 6, 2017