

SYNOD COUNCIL MEMBERS

Present

The Rev. William Baum
The Rev. Christine Bohr
The Rev. Dr. Stephen P. Bouman, Bishop
Ms. Rene Chapman
Mr. Alan Chen
The Rev. Amandus Derr
Ms. Elizabeth Hoffmann
Mr. Paul Jensen, Treasurer
The Rev. James G. Krauser, Secretary
Mr. John Litke, Vice President
The Rev. Barbara Lundblad
Dcn. Paul Lumpkin
Ms. Joanne Means
Mr. Kamy Moghbeli
Ms. Joanne P. Means
Dcn. Gayle Ruege
Dcn. Edward Tatlian

Excused

The Rev. Paul Johnsen
The Rev. Abraham Lu
Dcn. Carol Straub

Absent

Mr. Matthew Geiser
The Rev. Stephen Marsh

AUXILIARY REPRESENTATIVES

Ms. Delores Gray, WELCA
Mr. Charles Kalhorn, LMM

STAFF

The Rev. Cherlyne Beck
The Rev. Dr. William Hurst
Ms. Joanne Strunck

I. CALL TO ORDER Mr. John Litke

The meeting was called to order at 5:00 p.m. by the chair, Vice-president Litke.

II. DEVOTIONS The Rev. Amandus Derr

III. ADOPTION OF AGENDA

The agenda was electronically mailed to all members in advance of the meeting.

ACTION: That the agenda be accepted as prepared, with minor adjustments.
ADOPTED

IV. MINUTES, 2002 November 19, consideration of

The minutes were electronically mailed to all members in advance of the meeting.

ACTION: That the minutes of the November 19, 2002 Synod Council meeting be approved.
ADOPTED

V. SPECIAL PRESENTATION - The Rev. Judith Spindt, Region 7 Coordinator

Pr. Judith Spindt shared with Synod Council the ministries and structure of Region 7, including:

- Urban Ministry Guild.
- Institute for Congregational Ministries for first call pastors.
- Reconciling in Christ Roundtable
- Youth Leadership events and theological education

- Retreat for synod staff about every 18 months; vice-president Litke will be a presenter for an upcoming event.
- Retreat for bishops and spouses
- Assignments of first call pastors
- Resource to Latino ministry
- Council for Mission Development

With her ministerial experience in Puerto Rico, Pr. Spindt is able to provide assistance to emerging Hispanic ministries. Bishop Bouman commended Pr. Spindt for her work on behalf of Region 7.

VI. REPORT OF THE BISHOP

A. Remarks

- Lutheran Medical Center (LMC) has just settled a sexual harassment suit for \$5.4 million; eighteen women were victims. The employee health physician in question was suspended but is practicing again elsewhere. This situation will be public in two weeks. Robert Walsh is the information officer at LMC on this matter. It is important to refer people to LMC for accurate information. It was suggested that some appropriate information be shared with pastors and congregations if and when the abuse story hits the media.
- Lutheran Church Missouri Synod (LCMS). President David Benke's two-day appeal is over; a decision will be rendered in 60-90 days, although another round of appeals is possible. LCMS has withheld over \$2 million in disaster funds promised for LDRNY. Their stated reasons are related to the Benke situation.
- Berlin Film Festival. Bishop Bouman has been invited to be a part of an international panel on faith and values in the arts at the Berlin Film Festival. A film on Luther is being sponsored by Thrivent at the Festival.
- Carole Walley, wife of Pr. Paul Walley, died in Christ this past week. The funeral was a wonderful example of the church, with people from many different worlds coming together.
- Pr. Ron Klose (Our Redeemer, Seaford), who is a chaplain in the US Army Reserves, has been called up to a year's service in Djibouti, Africa. Bishop Bouman asked for prayers for Pr. Klose, his family and congregation, and for Pr. Martin Nale who will be assuming some of the responsibilities at Our Redeemer.
- Bp. Mark Hanson has asked Bishop Bouman to accompany him and a small delegation going to the Holy Land in May to visit with religious and political leaders. More details will follow.
- Bishop Bouman distributed his Sabbatical Report (**Attachment A**). It includes a report on one-on-one conversations with 20 immigrants in our synod and how we are going to be changed by these different spiritualities. He said this is the matrix in which the new Lutheran church will be disclosed.
- Dr. John Scibilia has resigned his position as assistant to the bishop so that he can return his full focus to Lutheran Disaster Response of New York. **Attachment B** introduces Dr. Scibilia's "Operation and Organization", which moves us forward with some important elements of our strategic plan:
 - The development of a business office (**Attachment C**). Mr. Robert Parker has been hired as the synod's business manager/comptroller. Mr. Parker received a BA from John Hopkins and his MBA from Loyola. He will be working closely with Pr. Bob Wollenburg.
 - The establishment of Pr. Cherlyne Beck as Executive Assistant to the Bishop. **Attachment D** describes her role and responsibilities. Her

- assuming these added responsibilities will enable Bishop Bouman to be out in the “arena” more with public witness and evangelism.
- Synod administration of congregations and related property. (**Attachment E**) John will continue to help us set up synodical administration.
 - Administrative costs/charges. (See Executive Committee Recommendations)

Dr. Scibilia also prepared a “Travel and Expense Reimbursement Guidelines” document for the Metropolitan New York Synod (**Attachment F**)

Bishop Bouman commended Dr. Scibilia for his excellent work and for all he has done to move our office along according to our strategic plan. Mr. Litke noted that synod council will, in the future, be considering these proposals set forth by Dr. Scibilia, looking toward making them policies.

B. Prince of Peace, Brentwood

Bishop Bouman reviewed the circumstances at Prince of Peace around their intention to install a pastor who is not on the ELCA roster. The bishop has been in communication with Mr. Phillip Harris, General Counsel of the ELCA, and the synod attorney, Mr. Howard Capell, seeking guidance as to how to proceed. He has also received information from the ELCA concerning the circumstances of the pastor’s removal from the roster. Bishop Bouman has sent a letter to the president of Prince of Peace, outlining what he has learned, asking them to explore this pastor’s background themselves, and expressing our love and care for them. Bishop Bouman’s concerns are for the people of Prince of Peace first and foremost, as well as for upholding the constitution of the ELCA. Another concern is that one of our MNYS pastors, the Rev. Kris Baudler, is supporting the installation of this pastor and has circulated a letter expressing this support. The following motion is premised on the installation on February 2 going forward.

ACTION: (SC03:1/1) RESOLVED that since it is clear the congregation known as Prince of Peace Lutheran Church in Brentwood, NY, has violated the constitutions and governing documents of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) in extending a call to someone not on the roster of the ELCA and has scheduled the installation of that pastor for February 2, with deep regret, the Synod Council of Metropolitan New York Synod joins the bishop in initiating a process of discipline against the congregation to determine why they should not be removed from the roster of the ELCA.
ADOPTED

Synod Council was asked not to discuss this situation and to refer questions to the bishop’s office. Bishop Bouman will write another letter to the congregation and, if the installation does take place, will write a letter of censure to Pr. Kris Baudler. Synod Council will be kept apprised of how things proceed.

C. Bishop Bouman announced the following committee appointments.

1. Worship Committee: the Rev Betsy Diver, the Rev. Perucy Butiku, the Rev. Ed Barnett, and the Rev. Michael Wilker, all effective 1/03.
2. Candidacy Committee: Ms. Connie Duever, effective 1/02; the Rev. Peggy Wuertele and the Rev. Jim O'Hanlon, both effective 1/03
3. Synodically Rostered Deacons' Council: Deacon Gayle Ruege, effective 1/03 and the Rev. Patt Margolis, effective 6/02

D. Calls

1. Dr. Annemarie Noto

**ACTION: (SC03:1/2) RESOLVED That Synod Council call Dr. Annemarie Noto to serve as vice-pastor at King of Kings Lutheran Church in Melville, NY, effective March 1, 2003. This is a call without terminus. This call is issued under ELCA continuing resolution 7.44.A96.b.1.5.
ADOPTED**

2. Ms. Rosalind Brathwaite

**ACTION: (SC03:1/3) RESOLVED that Synod Council call Ms. Rosalind Brathwaite to serve as vice-pastor at Augustana Lutheran Church in East Elmhurst. This is a half-time call, without terminus, effective March 1, 2003. This call is issued under ELCA continuing resolution 7.44.A96.b.1.5.
ADOPTED**

E. Staff reports

1. Congregations at Risk – The Rev. Dr. William Hurst

Pr. Hurst presented information on the ELCA definition of *Congregations at Risk*: those congregations that worship fewer than 50 per week, on average, and give less than \$50,000 annually. He said that by conservative estimates we have 50 congregations at risk in our synod. All but 8 are in the five boroughs, the overwhelming majority in Brooklyn and Queens. (**Attachment G**) These at-risk congregations are near viable congregations. The bishop asked Pr. Hurst to convene a consultation which will take place on January 28. A second meeting on February 24 will emphasize a strategic approach to discuss options. Some congregations may just need a re-direction of their ministry; some may need to join with others; some may need to close. Pr. Hurst added that we also have to look at the areas where we are not serving. This is going to be a mission driven process. It will not be driven by the bishop or staff, but by teams in different areas. These teams should include the expertise of pastors, realtors, lawyers, architects, and engineers since so many things will factor in to making decisions.

2. The Rev. Cherlyne Beck
 - a. Candidacy:

Endorsed:

Romeo Dabee, Our Savior's Jamaica

- Approved for Ordination: RoseAnn Foege, St. Luke's New Rochelle
Jack Malfatti, Christ, Wantagh
June Wilkins, Trinity, 100th St, New York City
- b. Worship Day – February 8 at Saint Peter's, Manhattan. The Rev. Michael Burke, ELCA Director of Worship and Music, will be keynote speaker
 - c. Setting apart of synodically rostered deacons – January 25.
3. Dr. John Scibilia

ACTION: (SC03:1/4) RESOLVED that Synod Council expresses its deep appreciation to Dr. John Scibilia for his service as Assistant to the Bishop above and beyond the hours allotted to mere mortals. We are grateful for his efforts to help us reorganize and strengthen our business affairs.
ADOPTED

VII. REPORT OF THE TREASURER

Mr. Paul Jensen

Mr Jensen reported a great improvement of receipts at year's end so that we are now essentially at par with last year at Dec. 31. (See **Attachment H** for Report on Comparison of Partnership Offerings.)

Mr. Jensen reported that we are within a week of being able to generate a financial statement for the first time this fiscal year. It will be sent to Synod Council members prior to the next meeting.

VIII. EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION

Administrative costs/charges. Many actions consume staff time and resources. Dr. Scibilia has developed a formula for capturing those expenses so we have a source of income to our operating budget. He identified some of these and attached an administrative cost. (See **Attachment I**)

ACTION: (SC03:1/5) RESOLVED that for the fiscal year beginning February 1, 2003 the Synod Council approves the application of charges for administrative services and costs based upon the attached schedule. The schedule of charges shall be reviewed annually at the November meeting of the Synod Council.
ADOPTED

These charges provide reimbursement for service rendered and will eventually be incorporated into the budget process.

IX. OLD BUSINESS

- A. Sale of St. Paul, Kingston. The sale has been approved; we are awaiting the documents. Pr. Jay Longan remains interested in the organ.
- B. Policy Statement for Employing Rostered Persons under Call

Postponed until the March Synod Council meeting.

- C. Congregations under synodical administration: Hope Lutheran Church, Scarsdale; Christ Lutheran Church, Yonkers; Holy Trinity, Hollis

Bishop Bouman asked Council members to review the information on Attachment E (Synod Administration of Congregations and Related Property); we will talk about this at the March meeting.

- D. Constitutions Mr. Paul Jensen for Mr. Ed Saunders

Constitution, bylaws, and condensing resolutions submitted (2001) – Approved

Christ Evangelical Lutheran Church of Floral Park

Trinity Lutheran Church, Long Island City

Constitution and bylaws submitted (2001) – Approved

Immanuel Lutheran Church, Staten Island

Proposed Constitution and bylaws submitted (2001) – Corrections

Our Saviour's Lutheran Church, Staten Island

St. John's Evangelical Lutheran Church, Poughkeepsie

St. Luke's Lutheran Church, Manhattan

Congregations have been notified.

- E. Congregation Visitations

The Rev. Dr. Rip Hoffman provided a written report to the Synod Council on the Congregation visitations (**Attachment J**). Pr. Beck pointed out that we have 17 visitors who have not reported on a total of 52 visits. Some of these have chosen not to do the visits they were assigned.

- F. Center for Public Theology (CPT)

A retreat is planned for January 22-23 on CPT. Bishop Bouman will have a report in March

- G. Synod Assembly 2003 Vice-president John Litke

1. The registration fee has been set at \$110. The actual cost may be more; this is a real concern.

2. Vice-president Litke reminded Council members that they have voice and vote at the Synod Assembly and should make every effort to be there. Costs for non-rostered persons will be covered by the synod.

X. NEW BUSINESS

- A. Election of Youth Representative to Synod Council

ACTION: (SC03:1/6) Elizabeth Hurst was elected as youth representative to Synod Council over Sara Manning.

- B. Election to the Discipline Committee

ACTION: (SC03:1/7) Mr. Alan Chen was elected over Mr. Wayman Young

and Deacon Kamy Moghbeli to serve on the Discipline Committee , to finish the term of Ms. Maria Prudencio, who has moved from the synod.

ACTION: (SC03:1/8) The Rev. Joanne Bond was elected to serve on the Discipline Committee to finish the term of the Rev. Lauren Kirsh-Carr, who moved from the synod.

C. Churchwide Elections

Secretary Krauser noted for Council members that nomination forms for Churchwide Boards and Commissions etc. are in the hands of voting members and the synod's officers. Those who might be interested in any of the positions, or who may know of qualified individuals, should contact voting members or synod officers. Forms must be in by the end of February.

D. Preliminary report from the Elections Process Committee

Mr. Litke commended the preliminary report of the elections committee (**Attachment K**) which had been emailed to Council members. The work of the Elections Process Committee is being done in parallel with the Constitution Committee. A clarification was sought on the nominations procedure. Mr. Litke explained that the committee is suggesting nominations not be permitted physically on the floor provides a more equitable process so the qualifications of all nominees can be studied equally. The proposal provides that nominations from Assembly Members ('floor nominations') be made in writing no later than one week before the opening session of the Assembly. Then the complete biographies of all nominees, both from the Nominating Committee and from Assembly Members, will be printed together and presented to the Assembly members when they register.

There may be an open hearing on the Elections process before the Assembly. Vice-president Litke asked that Council be prepared to vote on a recommendation to the assembly at the next council meeting.

Mr. Litke clarified that a voting member of the Synod Assembly is a voting member until his/her successor is elected.

E. Housing Allowances

Mr. Paul Jensen

Section 107 of the Internal Revenue Code permits a minister of the gospel to exclude from gross income (in computing federal income taxes) a church-designated allowance paid as part of compensation to the extent used for actual expenses in owning or renting a home

The following persons are compensated by the Metropolitan New York Synod exclusively for services as ministers of the gospel:

ACTION: (SC03:1/9) RESOLVED that Synod Council approve the housing allowances requested by the following ordained staff:

Bishop Stephen P. Bouman

\$37,560

Pastor Cherlyne V. Beck	\$19,600
Pastor A. David Anglada	\$25,940
Pastor Robert Wollenburg	\$65,582
Pastor Michael Thomas	\$16,751
Pastor Carla Meier	\$45,520
Pastor Gary Mills	\$30,000
ADOPTED	

Bishop Bouman clarified that these housing allowances are a part of these pastors' salaries and not above and beyond them.

XI. DEANS REPORT The Rev. Terrence Weber, STS

Please refer to **Attachment L** for Pr. Weber's written report expressing the Deans' concern over the situation at Prince of Peace, Brentwood.

XII. YOUTH REPORT

No report

XIII. AUXILLIARY ORGANIZATIONS

A. Women of the ELCA Ms. Delores Gray

Ms. Gray distributed information on the Region 7 Spiritual Gathering at Mount St. Alphonsus in Esopus, NY on March 7-9

B. Lutheran Men in Mission (LMM) Mr. Charles Kalhorn

- Mr. Kalhorn reported that men's ministry in the synod and region is healthy.
- A grant has been awarded to LMM to support the initiation of 15 Bible studies. Five "Master Builders Bible for Men" study bibles will be made available to each participating congregation. Two congregations are already enrolled. Another grant will provide for a study of men 18-34 to address the needs of men's ministry. Mr. Kalhorn expressed hope that target populations in our region would be included in this study.
- Mr. Kalhorn distributed fliers with information on the annual meeting of LMM at St. Paul's Lutheran Church in East Northport on March 29, 2003. The program will focus on the ministry of mentoring.
- He reported briefly on the survey completed in November and December and asked Synod Council members to take a few minutes to fill it out
- An overnight retreat is being planned at Koinonia.
- On April 12 there will be a Region 7 event at Bear Creek Camp in Pennsylvania
- Nominees are being sought for a new secretary and a treasurer.

XIV. Other

- A. Secretary Krauser announced that he would be a minute-taker at the upcoming Churchwide Assembly.
- B. Ms. Elizabeth Hoffmann asked if other congregations experienced a substantial jump in their liability insurance, and if the synod might have information on lower options.

XV. CLOSING PRAYER AND ADJOURNMENT

The next Synod Council meeting is on March 18, 2003. Executive Committee will meet on February 25 at 3:00 pm.

Bishop Bouman closed the meeting with prayer for peace at 7:45 pm.

Submitted by,

Joanne Strunck
Administrative Assistant to the Bishop