

SYNOD COUNCIL MEMBERS

Present

The Rev. Albert Ahlstrom
Mr. William Anderson
The Rev. Edward Barnett
The Rev. William Baum
Ms. Hope Card
Mr. Alan Chen
Mr. Robert Buescher, Treasurer
Ms. Christine Connell, DM
Mr. Gerald Erikson
Dcn Charles Germain
Mr. Gene Hiigel
Ms. Elizabeth Hoffmann
The Rev. Kathleen Koran
The Rev. James Krauser
The Rev. Fred McElderry
Ms. Minerva Melendez
Bishop David Olson
The Rev. Annemarie Noto, PhD
The Rev. Robert Schoepflin
Ms. Beverly Small
Mr. Hans Vogel
Mr. Jonathan Westerlund

Excused

Ms. Maria del Toro
Dr. Earl Marsan
The Rev. Perry Kirschbaum
Ms. Renee Wicklund

Absent

Mr. Patrick O'Brien

STAFF

The Rev. Dr. Gary Mills
The Rev. Robert Wollenburg
Dcn. Gayle Ruege
Mr. John Litke

GUESTS

The Rev. Craig Settlage, ELCA
Mr. Howard Capell, Esq.
The Rev. Percy Butiku
The Rev. Marva Jenkins
The Rev. Mack Smith
The Rev. William Clark
The Rev. Marcia Parkinson Harrison
The Rev. Brenda Jack
The Rev. Brenda Smith
The Rev. Joy Clarke
The Rev. Duane Ronan
The Rev. Ray Ormond, Our Savior-Manhasset
Ms. Sabrina Horn, Our Savior-Manhasset
Mr. Gene Pesci, Our Savior-Manhasset
Mr. Daniel Nigro, Our Savior-Manhasset

- I. CALL TO ORDER
Mr. Vogel opened the meeting at 5:09 pm
- II. DEVOTIONS The Rev. Albert Ahlstrom
- III. ADOPTION OF AGENDA
Mr. Vogel made an adjustment to the printed agenda, moving the discussion of Holy Trinity, Hollis to a position ahead of the Ministry Audit.
Agenda adopted as amended.
- IV. MINUTES, March 25, 2008, consideration of
The minutes were approved as written.

V. REPORT OF THE BISHOP

A. Bishop Olson reviewed briefly his prepared report (**EXHIBIT A**)

B. Mission Development Board – Mr. Litke

1. St. Stephen's, Brooklyn

Mr. Litke described the struggles of this congregation and its school. School has experienced a financial collapse. This is preliminary information. A plan is being developed and recommendations will be prepared for the July synod council meeting.

C. Calls

1. Dcn. Judith Delgado, TEEM candidate, St. Peter's, Bronx (**EXHIBIT B**)

Approved for ordination, to extend call effective 15 April 2008, without term.

2. Pr. Rose Ann Foege, Ascension, Glendale. Conclusion of call as Vice Pastor as of 31 May 2008 (**EXHIBIT C**)

3. The Rev. Roy Lloyd, resignation of call to American Bible Society effective 9 April 2008 (**EXHIBIT D**)

ACTION SCO8:4/1

RESOLVED, the call of Dcn. Judith Delgado to St. Peter's, Bronx; the conclusion of the call of Rev. Rose Ann Foege as Vice Pastor to Ascension, Glendale; the resignation of call of Rev. Roy Lloyd to the American Bible Society.

ADOPTED en bloc

D. Trexler Grants (**EXHIBIT E**)

Pr. John Havrilla, \$1,000

Pr. Abraham Lu, \$ 700

Pr. Peter Rustico, \$1,000

Pr. Scott Kershner, \$ 750

ACTION SCO8:4/2

RESOLVED, the Synod Council approve the Trexler Grants as recommended by the grant committee.

ADOPTED

E. Staff Reports

- Pr. Mills reported Deacon Charlie Germain being named youth and family volunteer of the year. Bishop Olson celebrated his 70th birthday in the previous week.
- Pr. Mills reported on his visit to Wagner College and Seafarers annual awards dinner
- St. John's Bronx - Mr. Howard Capell (**EXHIBIT F**)
Resolution regarding St. John's Fulton Avenue Bronx. Secretary Krauser read the resolution. Mr. Capell rehearsed briefly a suit in which the synod's authority was upheld in a case in Brooklyn. He then reported on the favorable outcome of a similar suit between the synod and elements at St. John's. In the decision the authority of the synod to act to impose synod administration. He said that this is

the first suit of its kind in New York, and reported that Mr. Phillip Harris, ELCA attorney, reports that it is the first of its kind churchwide. The motion presented this evening is necessary to effectuate and enforce the decision of the court. This will be an important factor in other pending cases.

On the motion:

Total Council Members: 27

Total Council Members present at the Meeting: 22

Total Votes for the Resolution: 21

Total Votes against the Resolution: 0

ACTION SCO8:4/3

RESOLVED, that the Synod Council, for all of the reasons that have been stated above and which are incorporated by reference herein, shall apply synodical administration and take charge and control of the property of St. John's; and it is further

RESOLVED, that the Synod take all steps and actions necessary or desirable to transfer and convey all of the real estate and additional assets of St. John's to the Synod; and it is further

RESOLVED, that the officers of the Synod, acting individually and on behalf of the Synod and St. John's be and hereby are authorized, empowered and directed to sign, verify and to obtain the approval by the Courts of the State of New York and the Attorney General of the State of New York (including the filing of such Petition as may be requested by law) for the transfer of the real property currently titled in the name of St. John's, including, but not limited to the property located at 1343 Fulton Avenue, Bronx NY (County of Bronx, Block 2928, Lots 68 and 70); and, thereafter, to execute, acknowledge and deliver a Deed of Conveyance any and all such other documents required to transfer or otherwise confirm ownership of the real property to the Synod, and to do all such things as may, on advice of Capell, Barnett, Matalon & Schoenfeld LLP, counsel to the Synod, be deemed reasonable, necessary, proper or convenient that said transfer be properly effectuated, and that the officers of the Synod, each and any of them, acting on behalf of the Synod, pay all such customary and/or required costs and fees relating to the transfer of the real property.

ADOPTED

VI. REPORT OF THE TREASURER

A. Mr. Buescher reviewed his reports:

- Summary of Significant Items (**EXHIBIT G**)
- Balance Sheet: T-1 (**EXHIBIT H**)
- Operating Budget Performance: T-2 (**EXHIBIT I**)
- Investment Report: T-6 (**EXHIBIT J**)
- Mission Support Comparison charts: MS-4 (**EXHIBIT K**)

B. The audit has been completed and the Audit Committee has met. Mr. Buescher asked that the Synod Council ratify the appointment of Ms. Cathy Schmidt to the Audit Committee for a three-year term.

No exception taken to appointment

- C. The Audit Committee recommends that the Synod Council approve the Financial Statements and Report for the fiscal year ending 31 January 2008 prepared by Tait, Weller & Baker.

ACTION SCO8:4/4

***RESOLVED*, that the Synod Council adopt the Financial Statements and Report for the year ending January 31, 2008 prepared by Tait, Weller & Baker, certified public accountants, noting that in the opinion of the auditors the financial statements taken as a whole present fairly the financial position of the Metropolitan New York Synod in conformity with generally accepted accounting principles.**

ADOPTED

- D. Mr. Buescher presented a motion on behalf of the Audit Committee recommending that Tait, Weller & Baker be retained as auditors for the coming year.

ACTION SCO8:4/5

***RESOLVED*, that the Metropolitan New York Synod retain the services of Tait, Weller & Baker, certified public accountants for the year ending January 31, 2009.**

ADOPTED

VII. OLD BUSINESS

A. Synod Assembly Update

1. Pr. McElderry presented an agenda to be recommended to the Synod Assembly with one amendment to the printed copy which would exchange the two elections on Friday morning putting the 1st Common Ballot in the earlier position and the 2nd Ballot for bishop in the latter position.

No exception taken

2. Secretary Krauser placed the name of Mr. Robert Buescher in nomination for the position of Treasurer of the synod. Second. Pr. Koran.

ACTION SCO8:4/6

***RESOLVED*, that the Synod Council place the name of Mr. Robert Buescher in nomination for the position of Treasurer of the Metropolitan New York Synod.**

ADOPTED

B. Constitutions

1. Trinity, Brewster
2. St. Matthew's – St. John's, Ozone Park
3. St. JME Brooklyn
 - a. Corrections cited and requested. Report sent 12 Jun 08

C. Holy Trinity Church and School, Hollis

Pr. Wollenburg spoke to the Synod Council regarding the ministry at Holy Trinity Church and School, Hollis. He began by first speaking about the status of the Tanzania Endowment project and then invited the members of the *Black Pastors Group* (who were in attendance as a supportive presence for Holy Trinity Church and School) to introduce themselves. Pr. Wollenburg reminded the council that the goal we have for this ministry is financial independence. When it seemed that it was certain to secure a gift from a donor to ensure the ministry's continuance, a review of the administrative changes necessary to enable the school to go forward was conducted. Pastor Wollenburg asked Ms. Jeannie Roberts-Turner, a retired NYC school principle and member of the Holy Trinity School Board, to address the Council. She thanked the Synod Council for the opportunity to report that the church and the school are working together toward a strategic plan for the growth of this ministry. They plan to implement a 12% tuition increase – make staff adjustments – present a unified budget – reconnect with alumni as a continued means of support – work with Ms. Marlene Lund on an educational planning report. Application for additional grants are in process.

Pr. Wollenburg presented a resolution regarding the Holy Trinity Church and School, Hollis, New York **(EXHIBIT L)**

Whereas, the Ministry at Holy Trinity, Hollis, is seeking to be financially viable, and *Whereas*, a core and expanding leadership group, including the pastor, school board chair and other board members, volunteers, synod staff and the Lutheran Schools Association executive director, has been meeting since December, 2007, to assess and plan for financial viability, and

Whereas, that leadership group has put into place concrete goals and steps to reach a balanced budget for the 2008-2009 school term, and

Whereas, the goals and steps include but are not limited to

1. A tuition increase of some 12% for the next three years and tiered tuition;
2. Cost saving measures identified within the existing expense budget as well as an evaluation of the teacher to student ratio;
3. Administrative changes that include the hiring of a principal as soon as feasible before the next school term, a professional development plan for the principal and an evaluation of all existing teachers and staff prior to the renewal of their contracts in the fall;
4. Increased enrollment up to 156 students;
5. The development of a donor base, community appeals, fundraising events, grant opportunities and partnerships with area Lutheran schools;
6. A dynamic use of the professional "Church and School Planning Process"

Whereas, the goals and steps need to be tested and proven over the next 12 months, therefore be it

RESOLVED, that the Synod Council continue its present efforts to define and establish the benchmarks required for, and conditions, for relinquishing Synodical Administration, as specified in it's resolution of October 24, 2006, and reaffirmed by its resolution of May 19, 2007

Secretary Krauser moved to lay the motion on the table and to continue with the proposal from Our Saviour's, Manhasset. Second. Approved

In consideration of the lateness of the hour and the presence of guests from Our Saviour, Manhasset, Mr. Vogel asked Mr. Litke to present the Mission

Reinvestment Proposal from Our Saviour, Manhasset.

a. Our Saviour, Manhasset

Mr. Litke introduced the proposal from Our Saviour, Manhasset. **(EXHIBIT L)**
Pr. McElderry moved the proposal's resolution. Second. Approved

Whereas, the Metropolitan New York Synod (MNYS) has offered to award mission support grants on a competitive basis to proposals of merit and
Whereas, the Church of Our Saviour Lutheran, Manhasset (COSL) has submitted a proposal that is acceptable to the Metropolitan New York Synod in whole or in part; therefore be it

RESOLVED, That the Metropolitan New York Synod award a matching funds monetary grant to COSL from the Mission Reinvestment Fund, and not to exceed \$250,000 during the interval from August 2008 to July 2011 and be it further

RESOLVED, That the Metropolitan New York Synod intends that that this award will partially support outreach to youth and partially support building renovations and be it further

RESOLVED, That the award is subject to the following terms and conditions being accepted in writing by Church of Our Saviour Lutheran:

COSL affirms that the purpose of the grant is to support outreach to youth and building rehabilitation; and The grant will be paid by check to COSL in quarterly installments that, in aggregate, match received or irrevocably granted funds for the stated purposes of this proposal, up to a maximum of \$250,000. The MNYS Treasurer and COSL representatives will determine appropriate document justification for each quarterly request for matching funds; and COSL representatives will meet annually with the MNYS Mission Director to discuss the project progress and an assessment of risks to the project's successful completion; and COSL will provide a written annual report for each MNYS fiscal year during which matching funds are granted to the MNYS Mission Director by March 1, of the succeeding fiscal year. This report will include a statement of the proposed goals and a narrative of what was accomplished. It will include a balance sheet and revenue and expense report for the congregation's most recently completed fiscal year; and COSL will nominate at least one person to participate in the MNYS mission interpreter program; and COSL will register at least one person for a MNYS-sponsored training event each year of the grant; and be it further

RESOLVED, That the Mission Director and the Bishop are authorized to make administrative adjustments to the terms and conditions of this award. Any such adjustments must be reported in writing to the next meeting of the Synod Council after the adjustments are made.

- **Pr. Raymond Ormand** rose to give background to the report. He described the difficulties of 2006 and 2007 – but, that there has been an influx of new people. These were members of the former Good Shepherd, Bayside congregation. Thirty-three (33) members joined the congregation of Our Saviour. This influx brought a new vigor and a reexamination of their needs and possibilities. An initial pledge drive which identified \$85,000 has now grown to \$100,000.

- **Mr. Gene Pesci** described his experience in the congregation and the need for expanded youth ministry. He also recognized a need to revitalize the facility itself.
- **Mr. Dan Nigro**, a former member of Good Sheperd, reported how their congregation came to the decision that their assets could be put to better use. Having become members of OSL they have found a new home.
- **Ms. Sabrina Horn**, a five year resident, originally from San Francisco, came to congregation through the Nursery School. She had drifted from her Lutheran background to Unitarian church; after meeting Pastor Ormand and experiencing a renewal of her faith, she had her two daughters baptized. Looks forward to a youth program for her growing family.

Secretary Krauser moved to lay the motion on the table. Second Approved.

b. MNYS Ministry Review

Pastor Craig Settlage was invited to discuss the report on the Ministry Audit which was compiled through his office in the ELCA. This document was prepared to assist voting members in their deliberations during this time of the election of a new bishop. The research team believes that the 140 persons that participated in the listening posts were a good sample to provide an accurate profile for the ministry review. This will become a valuable resource to the newly elected bishop. Pr. Settlage will be the churchwide representative at the assembly and will be conducting the election for bishop.

Motion to accept the report (with thanks). Second. Approved

Motion move into executive session. Second. Approved

Motion to resume regular session. Second. Adopted.

When the meeting returned to regular session – the amended version of the Hollis resolution was put to a vote (**EXHIBIT M**):

ACTION SCO8:4/7

RESOLVED, that the Synod Council grants continued operation for the 2008-2009 School Year, subject to the following conditions and performance.

1. **That a 12% tuition increase for all billable enrollees be initiated for the 2008-2009 year over the rates applicable to the 2007-2008 year.**
2. **That contract negotiations to increase the payment for UPK enrollment begin before September 1, 2008, with a view to increasing such payments both now and on expiration of the current contract.**
3. **That Holy Trinity Ministry abide by the terms of the Management Agreement, executed on/about January 2007.**
4. **That the usual monthly reports of school enrollment and outstanding tuition, and reports of church attendance and official acts be promptly sent to the Synod Treasurer at month end.**

5. That if an enrollment of the billable K-8 students does not exceed 115 (140 including UPK students) by December 1, 2008 the Ministry will promptly announce its closing on or before June 30, 2009; and be it *RESOLVED*, that the Synod Council continue its present efforts to define and establish the benchmarks required for, and conditions, for relinquishing synodical administration, as specified in it's resolution of October 24, 2006, and reaffirmed by its resolution of May 19, 2007
ADOPTED AS AMENDED

CI. NEW BUSINESS

a. Ahlstrom resolution

Pr. Ahlstrom offered the following resolution based on a number of conversations throughout the synod he heard which expressed interest in a different process for identifying candidates for bishop.

RESOLVED, That the Metropolitan New York Synod establish an *ad hoc* commission on the use of the ecclesiastical ballot as described in the governing documents of the synod for the election of the bishop of the synod; and that

- This commission consist of five persons chosen by the Synod Council and chaired by the Secretary of the Synod, that none of these members be members of the Synod Council, and that three be lay members.
- This commission study alternatives to and modifications of the ecclesiastical ballot within the parameters of mandatory constitutional provisions for synods; and
- This commission report no later than the 2010 Synod Assembly, accompanied by recommended changes, if any, in governing documents to be acted upon in that or subsequent years.

There was some discussion about the merits of raising this subject this year.

Motion to forward to Reference & Counsel for consideration and comment for this assembly. Second.

Adopted

CII. DEANS REPORT: No report

CIII. YOUTH REPORT

Mr. Westerlund reported on recent and upcoming events:

- LYO Assembly May 9-10.
- Youth needed for summer positions at Koinonia, and program brochure for Pinecrest is out.
- Youth Worship at Cross of Christ, Babylon: Pr. Mack Smith, preacher and Q&A with Bishop Olson
- Jr. High dance at Gustavus Adolphus

Dcn. Germain reported:

- Children, Youth and Family Ministry presentations *Heart of Ministry* award are being presented to Grace & St. Paul, NYC this week and Gloria Dei,

Huntington Station next week.

- Attended Youth workers conference at Messiah College.

CIV. AUXILLIARY ORGANIZATIONS: No reports

CV. OTHER

CVI. CLOSING PRAYER AND ADJOURNMENT

Motion to adjourn at 8:33 pm. Second. Approved

Bishop Olson closed in prayer.

Gayle E. Ruege

Administrative Assistant to the Bishop