

***MINUTES OF THE
TWENTY-FIRST REGULAR SYNOD ASSEMBLY OF THE
METROPOLITAN NEW YORK SYNOD OF THE
EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN AMERICA***

**May 17-19, 2012
Westchester Marriott Hotel, Tarrytown, New York**

Assembly began with the opening Eucharist at 1:00 pm, with Bishop Robert Alan Rimbo preaching and presiding.
At the conclusion of the Eucharist, Bishop Rimbo led the assembled in the rite for the Opening of an Assembly.

THURSDAY, MAY 16, 2012

PLENARY SESSION I

At 2:15 pm Bishop Rimbo called to order the first plenary session of the Assembly at 2:15pm.

Bishop Rimbo welcomed the voting members, spoke about the work of the assembly, and defined for the assembly the term “voting member” as it applies to the members of the assembly. He then introduced Ms. Kathy Schmidt and Ms. Leila Johnson as the hosts for the plenary session, and Pr. Kristina Ahlman as Assembly Chaplain.

Report of the Committee on Registration

Ms. Minerva Melendez gave the registration report.

Clergy	117
Lay Voting Members	160
AiMs	8
Total Voting members	<u>285</u>
Visitors	<u>15</u>
Total Attendance	300

Bishop Rimbo introduced Pr. Diana Austin as the Parliamentarian for the assembly. Pr. Austin has been a Presbyterian pastor for 32 years and serves as the Moderator of the Permanent Judicial Commission in the Presbytery of Long Island and as the Stated Clerk and the Parliamentarian for the Presbytery of New York City. Bishop Rimbo stated that as presiding officer of the Assembly, he will confer privately with the Parliamentarian on matters of procedure and that questions from the floor will be directed to the Parliamentarian directly on by point of order.

Bishop Rimbo noted that the Assembly Planning Committee Chair, Ms. Elizabeth Hoffman, is attending a funeral and will be arriving at the Assembly later in the day. Bishop then called Pr. Gary Mills to the podium. Pr. Mills introduced Pr. Mark Herbst and Pr. Scott

Paradise as the hotel liaisons for the Assembly, and also spoke about the voting machines that would be used by the voting members on Friday and Saturday.

Bishop Rimbo then introduced Mr. Thomas Massey, consultant for the strategic plan, who will be leading a forum in the evening on the strategic planning process.

Adoption of Agenda

The agenda for the assembly was adopted as presented.

Bishop Rimbo asked those speaking in favor of or against a matter before the assembly to do so at the appropriate microphone and noted that they will be limited to three minutes. He announced that four (4) resolutions will be considered under a Consent Agenda.

Metropolitan New York Synod Provisional Agenda Thursday, May 17 – Saturday, May 19, 2012

Thursday, May 17, 2012

10:00 Registration
1:00 Eucharist (Ascension Day) and Opening of an Assembly

PLENARY SESSION I

HOSTS: Leila Johnson/Kathy Schmidt

2:15 Welcome the Voting Members
 Bp. Robert Rimbo
2:20 Welcome and Introduction of Assembly Chaplain/Pr. Kristina Ahlman
 Bp. Rimbo
2:22 Registration and Attendance Report
 Mrs. Minerva Melendez
2:25 Introduction of the Parliamentarian/Pr. Diana Austin
 Bp. Rimbo
2:27 Introduction of the APC Chair and Housekeeping Announcements
 Ms. Elizabeth Hoffmann
2:32 Adoption of the Agenda
 Bp. Rimbo
2:35 Rules and Procedures
 Bp. Rimbo
2:40 Report of the Elections Committee and Nominations
 Ms. Christine Connell, DM (Nomination Forms due by 5:00pm)
2:55 Introduction of Chair of the Committee on Reference and Counsel
 Ms. Renée Wicklund, Esq.
3:00 Introduction of the ELCA Representative
 Bp. Rimbo
3:05 Bible Study
 Bp. Rimbo
3:45 **Break**
 (Announcement that Nomination Forms are due by 5:00pm)
4:15 Introduction of Synod Officers and Synod Council

Bp. Rimbo
 Synod Council Report
 Ms. Maria Del Toro
 4:25 Report of the Treasurer
 Mr. Robert Buescher
 4:35 Presentation of the Proposed 2012 Revised Budget
 Mr. Buescher
 4:40 Presentation of the 2013 Budget (Discussion at Budget B'fast; Adoption on
 Saturday)
 Mr. Buescher
 4:45 Treasurer Candidates – 5 minute speeches
 Ms. Del Toro
 5:00 Reference and Counsel I
 Ms. Wicklund
 5:45 Registration and Attendance Report
 Ms. Melendez
 5:50 Announcements
 Ms. Hoffmann
 5:55 Prayer
 Pr. Ahlman

 6:00 Dinner
 7:30 Forums
 9:00 Compline/Worship at the Close of the Day
 Worship Committee

Friday, May 18, 2012

6:30-8:00 Breakfast
 7:45 Morning Prayer

PLENARY SESSION II

HOSTS: Leila Johnson/Jack Horner

8:15 Call to Order
 Bp. Rimbo
 8:17 Registration and Attendance Report
 Ms. Melendez
 8:20 Prayer
 Pr. Ahlman
 8:25 Elections (First Ballot; paper ballot)
 Ms. Connell
 8:45 ELCA Report
 Pr. Ruben Duran
 9:15 Qwizdom Voting Machine Explanation
 Ms. Jean Knight
 9:30 Consent Agenda: Congregational Viability Report and Action
 Pr. William Baum
 11:05 Child, Youth and Family/Heart of Ministry Award of Distinction
 Dcn. Charlie Germain
 11:20 Distinguished Disciple Award

11:35 Bp. Rimbo
 Lutheran Social Services Presentation
 Mr. Ron Drews
 11:40 Candidacy Report
 Pr. Jeff Kolbo
 11:50 Registration and Attendance Report
 Ms. Melendez
 11:52 Announcements
 Ms. Hoffmann
 11:55 Prayer
 Chaplain
 12:00 Lunch

PLENARY SESSION III

HOSTS: Leila Johnson/Jonathan Linman

1:30 Call to Order
 Bp. Rimbo
 1:35 Consent Agenda: Strategic Plan Presentation
 Synod Council
 3:10 Project Connect Presentation/Anniversaries
 Pr. J. Elise Brown/Pr. Jonathan Linman
 3:30 Congregational Anniversaries
 Bp. Rimbo/Pr. Kathleen Koran
 3:35 Introduction of the Deans
 Bp. Rimbo/Pr. Koran
 3:40 Stretch/Break
 3:50 Lutheran School of Theology/Philadelphia
 Pr. John Puotinen / Pr. Danielle Miller
 4:05 Consent Agenda: Preaching and Sacramental Practices Resolution
 Pr. Linman
 4:35 Elections Report and Second Ballot
 Ms. Connell
 5:00 Hunger Committee
 Dcn. Karen Nurmi
 5:15 Ecumenical Greetings
 Bp. Rimbo
 5:35 Announcements
 Ms. Hoffmann
 5:40 Prayer
 Chaplain
 5:45 Dinner
 7:30 Festival Eucharist

Saturday, May 19, 2012

6:30-8:00 Breakfast
 7:00 Budget Breakfast
 8:00 Morning Prayer

PLENARY SESSION IV

HOSTS: Marion Steadman/Kathleen Koran

- 8:25 Call to Order
Bp. Rimbo
- 8:30 Elections Committee Results
Ms. Connell
- 8:45 Companion Synod Reports
Mr. Sheldon Erb/Pr. Leigh Pezet
- 9:05 Malaria Presentation
Pr. J. Elise Brown
- 9:12 ELCA Malaria Video
(Bp. to introduce)
- 9:15 Malaria/Kilimanjaro Mission Moment
Pr. Carol Fryer/Pr. Jack Horner
- 9:20 Trinity/Ascension/Queens
Pr. Jack Horner/Pr. Jay Longan
- 9:30 Environmental Stewardship Committee Report
Mr. Gerard Falco
- 9:45 Financial Presentation
Ms. Kathleen Schmidt
- 10:15 Constitutional Change (1st Reading; no discussion, amendments etc)
Pr. Robert Schoepflin
- 10:30 Lutheran Schools Association
Ms. Linda Mitchell
- 10:45 Senior Housing Ministry/Amagansett
Pr. Katrina Foster
- 10:55 Seafarer's Presentation
Pr. Marsh Drege
- 11:05 Consent Agenda: Report on the Election of the Bishop
Pr. Schoepflin
- 11:35 Koinonia/New Staff Introductions
Ms. Eleanore Sudbrock
- 11:50 Announcements
Ms. Hoffmann
- 11:55 Prayer
Chaplain
- 12:00 Lunch

PLENARY SESSION V

HOSTS: Marion Steadman

- 1:30 Worship with Holy Communion
Worship Committee
- 2:40 Questions and Adoption of the Budget
Mr. Buescher
- 2:50 Reference & Counsel II
Ms. Wicklund
- 3:45 Closing of an Assembly

Bp. Rimbo

Adoption of Rules of Procedure

The Rules of Procedure were adopted.

Bishop Rimbo drew the Assembly's attention to the four (4) items that will be considered under a Consent Agenda:

1. The Congregational Viability Norms Resolution
2. The Synod Strategic Plan
3. The Preaching and Sacramental Practices for Congregations and Ministries in the Absence of a Regularly Called Ordained Minister
4. The Process for the Election of a Synodical Bishop.

Bishop Rimbo explained that the Synod Council approved consideration of these items under a Consent Agenda because in each there has been a comprehensive discernment process, because they are not controversial and three of them were mandated by resolutions of the Synod Assembly, and because this is a means to process business expeditiously. He further explained that under Consent Agenda process there will be time for questions and discussion, but amendments will not be entertained unless the Assembly votes to *remove* an item from the Consent Agenda. A motion to remove an item from the Consent Agenda is to be made at the time the item is raised for discussion and requires a simple majority vote in favor of removal.

Nominations Committee Report

Ms. Christine Connell, Nominations Committee chair reported that elections will be held for:

- A. thirteen (13) seats on the Synod Council:
 1. Southwest Queens, Clergy – nomination still open
 2. Northwest Queens, Clergy – nomination still open
 3. South Shore Brooklyn, Clergy – nomination closed
 4. Hudson, Lay Female – nomination closed
 5. Tappan Zee, Lay Female – nomination closed
 6. Western Nassau, Lay Female – nomination closed
 7. Peconic, Lay Male – nomination closed
 8. Manhattan, Lay Male – nomination closed
 9. Staten Island, Lay Male – nomination still open
 10. At Large Clergy – nomination still open
 11. At Large Multicultural Female – nomination still open
 12. At Large Young Adult – nomination still open
 13. At Large Youth – nomination still open.
- B. four (4) seats on the Consultation Committee – all nominations still open
 1. 2 Clergy Male
 2. 2 Clergy Female
- C. four (4) seats on the Discipline Committee – all nominations still open
 1. 1 Clergy Female
 2. 1 Clergy Male
 3. 1 Lay Female

4. 1 Lay Male
- D. fourteen (14) voting members for Churchwide Assembly – all nominations still open
 1. 2 Clergy Male
 2. 2 Clergy Female
 3. 1 Clergy Multicultural
 4. 4 Lay Female
 5. 4 Lay Male
 6. 1 Young Adult.

She noted that nomination forms were included in the assembly packets and are also available at the back table.

Bishop Rimbo then introduced Ms. Renee Wicklund, Chairperson of the Committee on Reference and Counsel. The Report of the Committee will be given at a later point in this plenary session.

Bishop Rimbo next introduced The Rev. Ruben Duran, Director for New Evangelizing Congregations in the Congregational and Synodical Mission Unit of the ELCA. Pr. Duran is the ELCA representative to the Assembly and will present a report later in the Assembly.

Bishop Rimbo next introduced the members of the Synod Staff, giving special recognition to Pr. Gary Mills, Mr. John Litke and Ms. Kim Grate who are ending their service to synod. The Assembly rose to thank them with applause.

For the next forty (40) minutes of the session, Bishop Rimbo led the Assembly members in a Bible study on 1 Peter, focusing on “Claimed, Gathered, and Sent.” Bishop chose to lead a Bible study rather than presenting a verbal report to the Assembly. What follows is the report of the Bishop that was distributed in written form to the members of the Assembly.

Bishop’s Report to the Synod Assembly

17-19 May 2012

I had a choice, dear friends. It became clear to the Assembly Planning Committee that we needed to have *either* Bible Study led by the bishop *or* an oral report presented by the bishop. What you are reading now is the oral report! I had a choice, and chose to lead Bible Study.

In fact, all of the material in the pre-assembly bulletin which I trust you have reviewed and the documents that have been and will be distributed during our time together is a kind of report of the bishop. Or at least I have seen the activities and ideas represented in them and, in some cases, have officially endorsed them.

Let me say very clearly as we gather: I am wholeheartedly in support of what I have called the four “turning-point” resolutions before us in these days, and in the years to come, specifically, the Strategic Plan, the Resolution on Congregational Viability Norms, the statement on Preaching and Sacramental Practices and the Process for the Election of a Synodical Bishop. I hope that the Assembly will concur with the Synod Council’s recommendations that we adopt each of these

resolutions using the “consent agenda” process. For the first two of these, there will be presentations and “quasi committee of the whole” conversations in addition to the conversations that have already occurred in various places throughout our synod in preparation for this Assembly. I also want you to know in advance that I support the recommendations of our Committee on Reference and Counsel which will be presented to you.

We have tried to be faithful stewards of creation by offering much of our assembly material in electronic form; as I mentioned above, I hope that you have read the pre-assembly report. Much has already been reported to you and much will be shared as we gather here these days, but I wanted to specifically mention a few items in this written Report.

Our synod staff has done extraordinary work on behalf of all of us over the past year. I am deeply grateful to

Pr. Perucy Butiku, Assistant to the Bishop for African Descent Ministries
Mr. Branden Dicks, Administrative Assistant
Ms. Sarah Gioe, Director of Communication and Interpretation
Ms. Kim Grate, Administrative Assistant
Pr. Jack Horner, Assistant to the Bishop for Evangelical Mission
Pr. Jeffrey Kolbo, Candidacy Coordinator
Pr. Kathleen Koran, Assistant to the Bishop for Congregations
Pr. Jonathan Linman, Assistant to the Bishop for Formation
Mr. John Litke, Director for Synod Administration
Pr. Gary Mills, Assistant to the Bishop for Global and Multicultural Mission
Deacon Gayle Ruege, Executive Assistant to the Bishop
Ms. Kathleen Schmidt, Assistant to the Bishop for Administration and Finance
Ms. Mary Tennermann, Administrative Assistant

While Sarah Gioe is on family leave, following the birth of Zachary Elliot Gioe Neel, we are pleased to have Ms. Rebekah Wedge helping us with our communications.

I also thank Ms. Ardath Heard, Ms. Joan Schwarz and Ms. Lois Ann Lawless who have been tireless volunteers in our office.

As we acknowledge these servants of the church, I hope you will join me in giving thanks to Ms. Kim Grate, Mr. John Litke, and Pr. Gary Mills who are leaving our staff in June. We are grateful to them.

I also want to give thanks to our Synod Council for their fine work this year and especially to the Executive Committee who have done so much to facilitate our strategic planning process and to lead this synod with grace and courage. I especially want to thank our remarkable Vice-President, Maria del Toro, who has been fearless in her leadership. I look forward to your having the opportunity to hear Maria at this Assembly and to thank her in particular for her service.

Pr. Albert Ahlstrom
Mr. William Anderson
Pr. William Baum, also serving on the Executive Committee
Pr. Rosalind Brathwaite
Ms. Kelsey Brown

Mr. Robert Buescher, Treasurer
Diaconal Minister Christine Connell
Ms. Maria Del Toro, Vice-President
Deacon Charles Germain
Ms. Hazel Goldstein
Ms. Barbara Hansen
Mr. F. Eugene Hiigel
Ms. Barbara Holm
Pr. Brenda Jack
Ms. Barbara Johnson, also serving on the Executive Committee
Pr. Perry Kirschbaum
Dr. Carlos Lopez
Deacon John Malone
Ms. Minerva Melendez, also serving on the Executive Committee
Pr. Paul Milholland, also serving on the Executive Committee
Pr. Craig Miller
Deacon Roberta "Bobbi" Paulik
Mr. Brian Reardon
Pr. Kit Robison
Pr. Robert Schoepflin, Secretary
Mr. Jonathan Westerlund

I also want to thank Mr. Robert Buescher who has served as Treasurer of this Synod for eight years and is not seeking re-election. We will honor Bob with the Distinguished Disciple Award at this Assembly, but this is my opportunity to say a word of gratitude.

As we gather in assembly, other synods are doing the same; I ask your prayers for these synods: Southeast Michigan, North/West Lower Michigan, Sierra Pacific, Southwestern Washington, Saint Paul Area, Northwestern Ohio, Northwest Washington, Pacifica, Southwestern Texas and Northern Great Lakes. As I think of partners, I give thanks for the relationship we have with the Arkansas/Oklahoma Synod, the North Western Diocese of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Tanzania and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Romania. We also give thanks for those from our synod who are serving in our companion synods: Aaron and Alison Schutte, Stephanie Schmiede, Pastor Terri Church and Pastor Michael Church.

I am delighted that you will be able to meet and receive greetings from two of our Full Communion partners on Friday afternoon: The Reverend Doctor Rita M. Root, Interim Conference Minister of the New York Conference, United Church of Christ, and The Right Reverend Lawrence Provenzano, Bishop of the Episcopal Diocese of Long Island.

This past year was filled with opportunities for me on the ecumenical level. I was delighted to be a co-consecrator for the Ordination of Bishop Andrew Dietsche, bishop-coadjutor and soon-to-be-diocesan bishop of the Episcopal Diocese of New York. I was also delighted to participate in the ecumenical Morning Prayer marking the elevation of Cardinal Archbishop Timothy Dolan.

I am also happy to welcome our friend, Pastor Ruben Duran, who is serving us as ELCA representative, whom you will hear both in his report and in his preaching on Saturday. Pastor Duran has helped us in our synod in countless ways, and I am grateful to him.

Since the last Synod Assembly, we have welcomed new leaders in many places. I am pleased to mention these servants of the church and I hope you will welcome them as you have opportunity:

Ms. Julie Hagen, *Associate in Ministry, Advent, Manhattan*
The Rev. Rebecca Pollicino, *Grace, Uniondale*
The Rev. Johanna Andritz, *St. Paul, Liberty*
The Rev. Robert Rainis, *Epiphany, Bronx*
The Rev. Benjamin McKelahan, *Mission Developer, Brooklyn*
The Rev. James Smith, *Wagner College, Staten Island*
The Rev. Omar Ortiz, *Trinity, 18th Avenue, Brooklyn*
The Rev. Stephanie Kershner, *Grace, Scarsdale*
The Rev. Dan Ruth, *Lutheran World Relief*
The Rev. Donald Lemke *Christ, Ozone Park*
The Rev. Harry Schenkel, *Transfiguration, Harlem*

The Rev. Daphne Burt, *Interim, Trinity, Staten Island*
The Rev. Vanessa Cardinale, *Trinity, 46th Street, Brooklyn*
Deacon Ursil Silcott, *Prince of Peace, Cambria Heights*
Deacon Gloria Taylor, *St. John's, Poughkeepsie*

I continue to work at building relationships with and among the people of our Synod. Conference Visitations continue to be very well-received, and now staff members accompany me to preach and to listen to the people of our synod. I have identified our task in those gatherings as an opportunity to “take the pulse” of our congregations, not to offer a “dog and pony show” for what our Staff is doing. Likewise, I have been pleased to host conversations with our retired pastors and with our pastors in specialized ministries, both groups most recently addressing the proposed strategic plan.

I invite you to read carefully the reports from our Synod Council, our Synod Staff, our Conference Deans, and our Committees; they may be found in Section B of the Bulletin of Reports. Many of our partners in ministry have written reports in that same section and I also urge you to be attentive as some of these partners offer words of greeting at this Assembly.

When people ask if I am enjoying my ministry, I customarily reply, “75% of the time – the remaining 25% is like being in a pit.” I think that this is a fairly good ratio, actually. Now people are beginning to ask if I am willing to serve another term, and I customarily reply “I’m discerning that right now.” This is a serious question for me, and I am seeking help in my discernment from trusted friends, my spiritual director and my family. When I have some clarity, I will share that with the synod.

I am very thankful for the loving support of my spouse, Lois, and for our children, grandchildren and extended family. This past fall and early winter were difficult times for me as I struggled with muscular pain in my hips, experienced physical therapy which was very helpful, and ultimately had my perforated appendix removed. I am now feeling quite well most of the time.

I invite your continuing prayers for the work of our Synod, especially as (I hope) we enter into implementing our Strategic Plan. I also invite your prayers for the entire Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. Our partnership in the Gospel of Christ propels us into a bright future and I am thankful for your company as we journey together as the people of God who are claimed, gathered and sent!

The Rev. Dr. Robert Alan Rimbo
Bishop

Bishop Rimbo recessed the session at 3:22pm, with a reminder that nomination forms were due by 5pm.

The first plenary session was reconvened at 3:50pm.

Bishop Rimbo invited Ms. Maria Del Toro, Vice President of the Synod Council to the podium to present her report to the Assembly.

Report of the Vice President

Good Afternoon!

It is a pleasure to address you today and tell you about the hard work of the Metropolitan New York Synod this past year. I am not going to report on everything we have done, you have a report of all the actions taken in your packets.

It has been an extraordinary year for the Synod Council as the agenda for this Assembly demonstrates. I would like to thank the members of the Synod Council for all their hard work. We have worked hard at developing a team focused on the work of OUR Synod. Let me assure you that this is NO rubber stamp council. **Will the members of the Synod Council please stand so that you can be recognized?**

But I do want to talk briefly about three important action items that the Synod Council voted unanimously to recommend for approval by this Assembly:

- 1. A resolution from the Commission to Examine our Process to elect a synodical bishop;**
- 2. A resolution by the Committee for Congregational Viability Norms; and**
- 3. The Synod Strategic Plan.**

I think it is not an exaggeration to say that this Assembly will have the opportunity to adopt plans and processes that will have ramifications for the Metropolitan New York Synod for the next twenty or thirty years.

COMMISSION TO EXAMINE OUR PROCESS TO ELECT A SYNODICAL BISHOP.

Let me start with the Commission to Examine our Process to elect a synodical bishop.

The Commission was comprised of :

- Ms. Christine Connell
- Mr. David Ehlers
- Mr. Dan Nigro
- Ms. Renee Wicklund
- Ms. Cassandra Wilson

- Mr. Dan Wingard
- Pastor Amandus Derr
- Pastor Brenda Jack
- Pastor Paul Milholland
- Pastor Daniel Ward
- and chaired by Pastor Robert Schoepflin.

Having been charged by the 2008 Assembly to review our election process – and see if recommendations for change should be made – the Commission looked at the election processes of other synods in the ELCA – and then conducted a survey within our own synod.

Following the lead of many other synods, the commission recommended to the Synod Council that our procedure be modified to allow for the nomination and identification of candidates for the office of bishop prior to the electing assembly. The Commission also recommended the scheduling of informational forums at which voting members of the electing assembly would be able to ask questions of the nominees – and receive helpful biographical background information.

The Synod Council voted unanimously to recommend adoption of this procedure to this assembly. You will hear the full proposal of the commission later in this assembly and I hope you will favorably receive it. We would like to thank the Commission, especially the Chair, Pastor Bob Schoepflin for their diligent work.

COMMITTEE FOR CONGREGATIONAL VIABILITY NORMS

The Committee for Congregational Viability Norms was established in 2010. Its members are:

- Mr. Robert Buescher
- Pastor Robert Schoepflin
- Pastor Gary Schulz
- Pastor Kathleen Koran
- Deacon Ingrid Compton
- Ms. Muriel Davis
- Dr. Carlos Lopez
- Deacon John Malone
- and chaired by Pastor William Baum.

In the resolution adopted by the Synod Council at its June 8, 2010 meeting, it stated that the purpose of the committee was “to further the articulation of norms guiding when congregations should be encouraged to close, merge, or when synod administration should be invoked.” After two years of very hard work, the committee determined that the best way to fulfill its mandate was to “examine markers of a congregation’s capacity for effective self-governance” – and what happens when congregations lose the capacity for effective governance.

On April 28, 2012, the Synod Council unanimously voted to recommend adoption of the norms to this Assembly. Tomorrow the Committee will present to you a resolution identifying those norms and I hope you will adopt it. **The Committee will facilitate a forum on their report, this evening at 7: 30 pm in the Dutchess / Rockland Room.** I encourage you to take advantage of this opportunity to hear from the committee.

STRATEGIC PLAN

Let me discuss briefly the Strategic Plan. We all recognize that as a Synod we are at a crossroads: Too many forces are working together to make a perfect storm. We can expect to see more than 50 congregations close in the next ten years. Membership is down. Mission support is down. Too many church buildings are old and in disrepair – and the congregations do not have the resources to maintain them. Too many congregations cannot afford a full-time pastor. And OUR Synod does not have the financial resources necessary to continue things as they are.

At the same time, according to current research, *“a paradigm shift is taking place in the church – sweeping changes that are reshaping the way people view the institutional church and their role as Christians.”* Research tells us that the “Post – Boomer” generation has little patience with tradition, customs or social acceptability. They must sense the relevance of something, or they will dismiss it. So how can we as a Synod plan for the future in light of these realities? One thing is certain; we cannot continue things as they are. We need to refocus our mission.

For that reason, the Synod Council was ready to take on a strategic planning process. I said that such a plan would need to include as many stakeholders as possible, be transparent and recommend strategies that would be doable. I also said that we thought the process would take about **18** months. The assembly passed a resolution asking the Synod Council to develop a plan in **12** months and submit it at the 2012 Assembly.

The Synod Council started working on the plan last summer. The Council charged the Executive Committee with the task of leading the planning process. The Executive Committee would get input from as many people as possible, but it was responsible for developing the plan.

And so we started our journey – a process of discernment. We prayed. We asked for the Holy Spirit to guide us. Initially, many of us felt that it would be impossible to develop the plan in time to present it to this Assembly.

The first thing we did was to engage the services of a consultant with the appropriate expertise to work with us.

We chose Tom Massey, Vice President of Daxko T2 Consulting, because we immediately saw that he could work with us – and, above all – HE GOT IT! Tom understood why we needed to do it and he would keep the process to our timeline.

For eight months, together with Tom, we worked every week, sometimes for full days and into the night, in Executive Committee meetings, Synod Council meetings and retreats, meetings with different Synod committees, Deans, and interviews with individuals. We reviewed the data collected in the past.

We could have started by focusing on the finances. But that seemed too simple. Our plan would have to be driven by Mission. Our consultant Tom Massey, encouraged us to be bold – to think outside the box. And we took comfort in Jesus’ words. **“Take courage, it is I; do not be afraid.”** So we started with a simple question. What does God want us to do here and now as the Metropolitan New York Synod?

The WHAT would be the Strategic Plan. The Plan would be a roadmap that would set the parameters for the future and would inform any decision-making, including the stewardship of our resources. I am not going into detail now because we will have time to do that tomorrow.

Some may respond by arguing that we are not giving an implementation plan. But the plan does provide a framework for its implementation. Immediately upon its approval by you, we will begin the implementation, including convening the committees that will work on the Key Strategies identified.

On Saturday, April 28th, 2012, the Synod Council voted unanimously to recommend adoption of the Strategic Plan to this Assembly – and tomorrow – the Synod Council’s Executive Committee will present the Synod Strategic Plan to this Assembly for adoption. And this is important – as I said last year – this plan, once adopted by this Synod Assembly, is to be OUR Synod’s plan. This is the plan that we, the synod, should expect future Bishops to embrace and implement.

The Strategic Plan is the result of the hard work of many people, and I want to thank all the members of the Synod Council, the Synod Staff, the Deans and the many different committees that helped shape it.

I want to thank the Executive Committee:

- Mr. Bob Buescher
- Pastor Robert Schoepflin
- Pastor William Baum
- Ms. Minerva Melendez
- Ms. Barbara Johnson
- Pastor Paul Milholland
- And special thanks to our consultant, Mr. Tom Massey, who spent so much time with us that I am glad we did not have to pay him by the hour.

But above all, I want to acknowledge the Bishop’s leadership. Without his encouragement and support – his wisdom and trust – the Synod Council would not have had the courage to embark on this journey. He encouraged us to be bold, to be courageous. On behalf of the Synod Council, thank you Bishop.

Our consultant, Tom Massey will lead informal discussions on the Strategic Plan this afternoon from 2 – 5 and again tonight from 7:30 – 8:45 in the Irvington Room, next to the business center. Please take advantage of these discussions in preparation for tomorrow’s presentation and vote.

You will have the opportunity to vote on the three actions I have briefly described. I hope you will support them. All three actions have enormous promise for the future of OUR Synod and how we do our work.

You and I – all of us here – are the Metropolitan New York Synod!
Thank you for your support and, above all, your prayers. THANK YOU!

Bishop Rimbo invited Mr. Robert Buescher to the podium to give the report of the Treasurer.

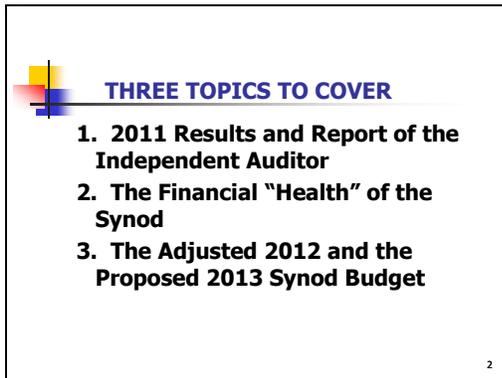
Report of the Treasurer

TREASURER’S REPORT May 17-19, 2012

Chart #1 (Title)

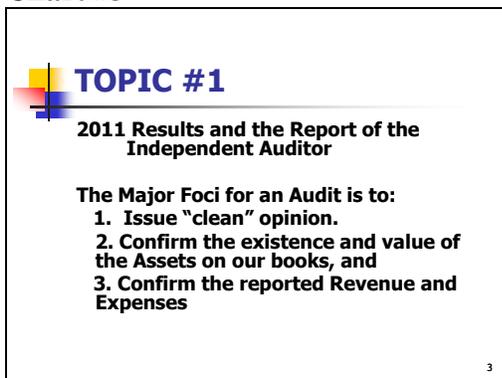


Chart #2



It is my pleasure to cover three topics today: The 2011 auditor's report, our financial health, and present the proposed adjusted 2012, and 2013 budgets.

Chart #3



The Independent Auditor has completed its work and issued its opinion.

There are three major elements that we expected the audit to confirm. One is that our books fairly represent that our assets exist and are accurately stated, and another is that the books show that our revenue and expenses are correctly stated in our books.

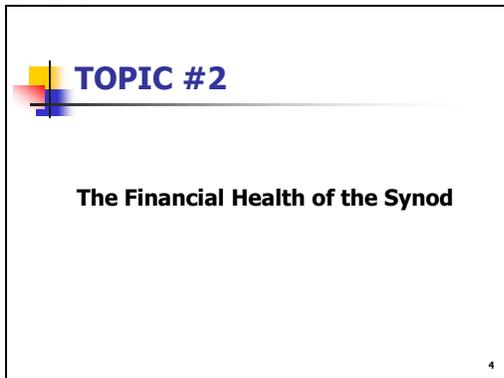
Again our Auditors have given us a “clean” judgment, and confirm that our assets we report are stated correctly, and that the operational revenue and expense is recorded properly on our books.

You do have a complete and final copy of their report in your material, and I am not going to read it to you. However if you do so, you will be exposed to the myriad facets of our operations.

But the report of the Independent Auditor does not tell us very much about the Financial status, trends, or prognosis of our Synod, which I think is a much more important use of the time you have given me to report.

So let’s talk about our Financial Health, my second topic.

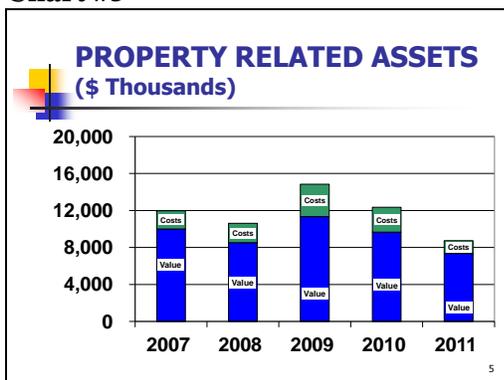
Chart #4



This subject does not lend itself to a simple answer.

So, I thought I would share with you some of the “measurement criteria” for determining our financial health and a more complete understanding of my diagnosis.

Chart #5



One measurement is the size and trend in our amount of assets. They can be divided into two categories.

The first are those related to property. The top of each column is the total assessed value of the properties we own. You can see that we have had a drop off in the past two years, with about \$3.6 million reduction in 2011.

2011: Sold: Holy Trinity - Hollis (\$2,200); St. John's - Bronx (\$1,850); removed Grace - North Branch (\$200)/Acq St. Luke's - Bronx (\$650);

The green section of the columns represents funds we have expended on repairs, and maintenance which will result in net proceeds that are less than the appraised values.

In one sense it is a good sign if the property assets become lower – we get no income on such assets from lengthy holding and maintenance.

However, the properties we hold at the end of last year will drop further with a single significant sale in 2012, leaving less than \$1 million in properties owned and held for sale.

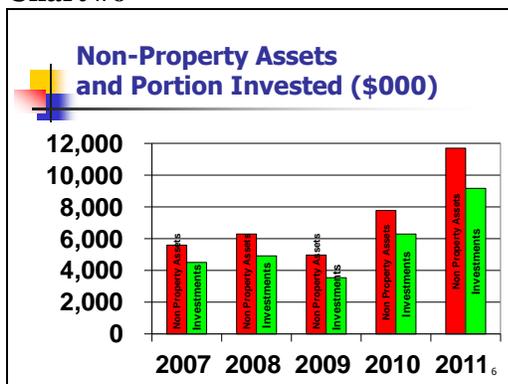
Since it normally takes up to two years for a property to be deeded to us, marketed, sale contract executed, and approval for sale by the State attorney general, it is unlikely that we will have any significant amounts of sales in the next 2 years.

And our budgets have required some proceeds from sales, and funds supplied from prior sales for this purpose are quite small and may not last the drought.

A small amount of real estate for sales is therefore a warning signal that we will not have the luxury of cash flowing in from that source as we have had.

Of course, you could think of that as a trivial problem, since we have growing unprecedented non-property assets as shown in Chart No. 6.

Chart #6



Non-property assets are cash, investments, and receivables. That's the red column. The good news is that it's been growing in the past few years.

Next to each red column, in green, is the cash amount we have invested and hence earning income. Our task is always to get the green as high up the red as we can, and keep our cash working for us. We are doing a good job at that.

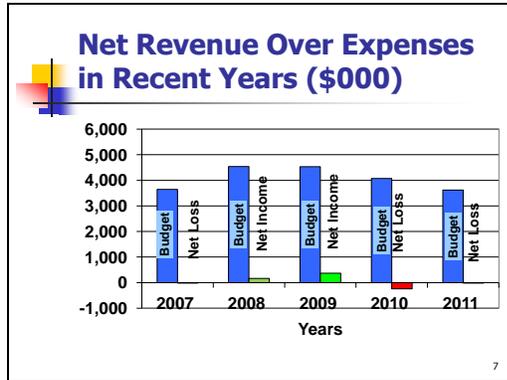
But one must remember that some of our non-property assets are monies owed to us, and not yet available for us to spend.

Only about one-half of the \$9 million we show here in GREEN is available to us to spend, and that's not nearly enough to cover other Synod designated uses, which at year end was nearly \$8 million.

A large amount of it is earmarked for endowments, and narrow specific purposes, and we are not at will to spend it for anything else.

It easy for many to think we are "rich" and can spend at will, but the truth is that for every unplanned spending, or commitment to spend ought be accompanied by a reduction somewhere, or a separate financing source.

Chart #7

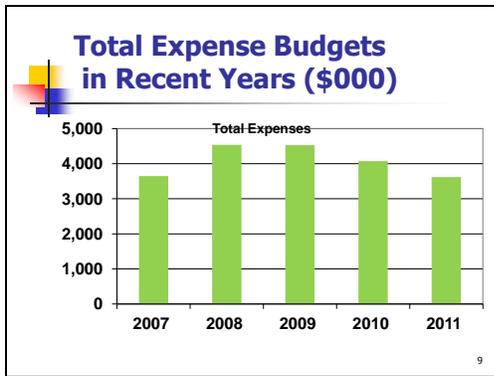


Obviously our financial health is related to our ability to live within our budgets.

Net revenue over expenses (known more commonly by my fellow non accountants - as Net Income) is certainly a strong measure of a healthy life. We are able to predict a balanced budget, the BLUE, and stay within it. GREEN is a net income, red a net loss. You can hardly see the \$5,000 loss in 2011 on this chart, truly not significant.

A tribute to Kathy Schmidt and the staff for holding the line on spending, even in light of shortfalls in revenue.

Chart #8



Looking again at our total budgets, we have been successful in “trimming the fat” in reducing the operating budget, and finding more efficient ways to operate.

But I must say, it’s been, for the most part, only a narrow, albeit valuable work, of reducing the cost of the individual items on our list.

So the diagnosis here is also a warning signal, in that we have been diligent and successful at “nibbling at costs” and perhaps not very bold in addressing the big picture.

Of course, looking only at how we are spending is not sufficient for a complete diagnosis.

We also ought to examine measurement criteria in income.

Our largest single source of direct gifts - Mission Support.

Chart #9



You can see that the receipts in 2012, the last GREEN column is less than the budget, the BLUE column. The difference is about \$70,000.

The good news is that receipts in 2011 of \$1.18 million is \$40,000 higher than in 2010, which was only \$1.14 million, the first “uptick” in several years. You can see that difference in the two most right side GREEN columns.

We hope that this is an indication of future growths, and a light at the end of the tunnel. However, we are well aware that sometimes the light at the end of the tunnel is another train coming toward us; or perhaps the light at the end of the tunnel is only New Jersey.

As to an indication of financial health, the long term decline is significant, especially when you realize that each year's results are shown as actual collars not adjusted for subsequent inflation.

In addition, declines in income from undesignated grants, and uses of other funds have tapered off to where we essentially only have Mission Support and Sale Proceeds to support us.

So lets look at proceeds from the sale of properties.

We have operated for over a decade with always enough money in our pockets to fund essentially what we wanted to, in a management manner we were satisfied with. We were plush with proceeds from sales. And there were always compassionate reasons to justify financial support of our existing projects and style.

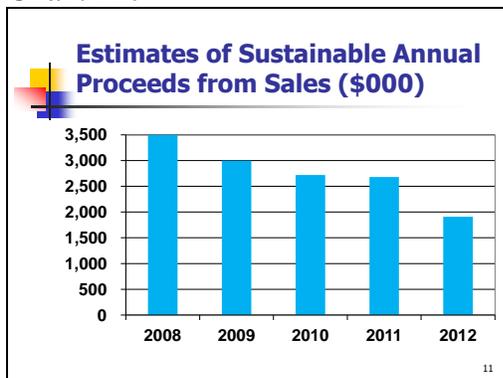
In recent years, we have grown our dependence on proceeds from sales for our operational budget to about \$1 million a year.

Until recently, that has been less than the 30% of projected sale proceeds, which is the amount we have been authorized to assign to operational costs.

That has elevated to cause the Treasurer to loose sleep, and voice concern to the Executive Committee and to the Council about our increasing dependence on property sales, with no compensating sufficient decreases in expense, or increases in income.

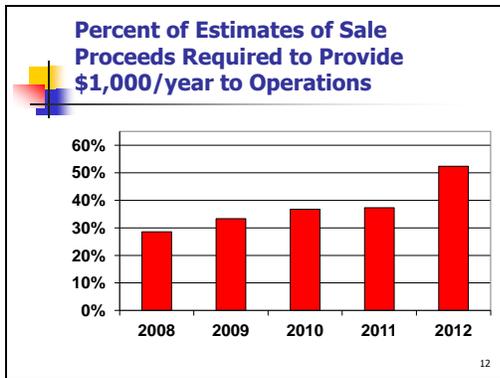
The problem is aggravated by our estimates of the average expected annual sales proceeds, which has been dropping steadily,

Chart #10



Only a few years ago, we could rationally predict an annual proceeds from sales at \$3.5 million. As time has passed, and currently the Financial Management Committee can see a sustainable estimate of only \$1.75 million a year.

Chart #11



This makes us dependant on a higher percentage of the sales proceeds to operate in the manner we do.

You can see that based upon the amount we are spending related to a rational long range estimate of sales, is now at a 52% level.

In summary, our financial health is not any single one of the measurement criteria we have just reviewed, but they must be taken as a whole.

All of the circumstances began to point to a need to ask ourselves a number of serious questions:

One of them is “Are we being the best of stewards with those funds entrusted to our care?”

The short answer is that we can always do better – the problem is that we have been working at that by we still have trouble with the next question:

If we continue in the same mold, is our future sustainable? That’s questionable.

The Financial Management Committee reported that it could not produce a rational 10 year plan this year without some significant commitments to change, which were not articulated.

Last year, the Synod Council felt strongly that we ought have a strategic plan that would sharpen our mission and vision, and lead to a better focus on what we ought be doing within our resources, and perhaps what we are doing that does not best serve that mission.

At the assembly in 2011, when the Council sought your concurrence and authority to develop a strategic plan, you responded with a resounding approval and direction, and in fact, felt it should be completed by this year instead of two years as originally proposed.

I wholeheartedly approve the plan that will be presented for your approval later in this Assembly.

We are blessed with a vibrant Synod, Pastors, congregational leaders, members, Synod Officers, Council Members, Executive and other Committee Members that are driven by an appreciation for God’s hand in all that we do, and should do, in his name.

Your Treasurer sleeps better, knowing that our financial health is God's work here is in your hands.

So we move to my third topic, the presentation of the adjusted budget for 2012, and the proposed budget for 2013.

Chart #12

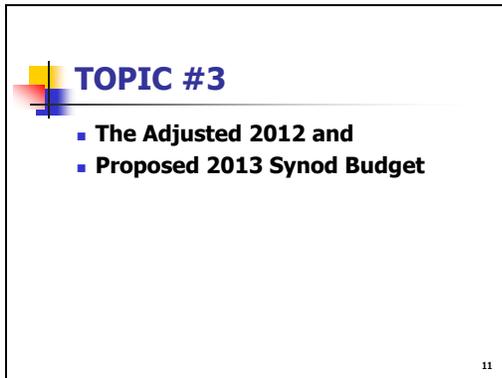
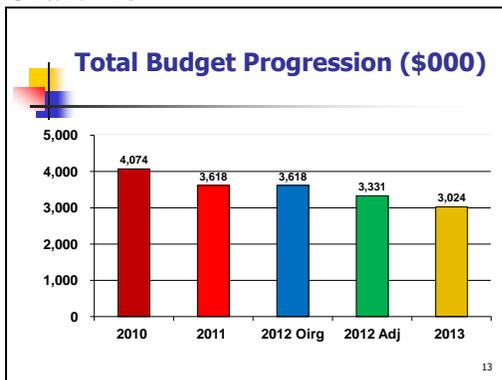


Chart #13



First of all, I would like to remind you again of the significant reductions in the budget in recent years, and continuing into 2013.

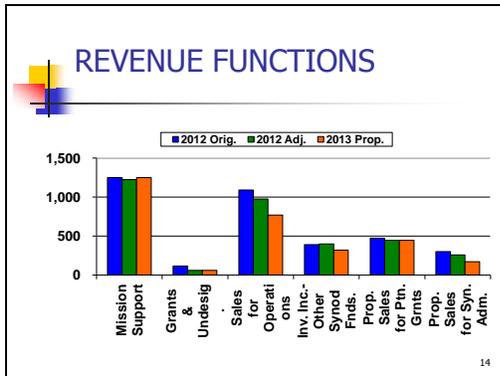
This chart shows the total budgets for two prior years (the two left most columns), and the original 2012 budget in BLUE, its proposed adjustment in GREEN, and the proposed 2013 budget in ORANGE at the right.

That BLUE, GREEN, ORANGE sequence will be consistent in the following more detailed areas of the budget presentations.

You have a complete set of budgets in your delegate material, the budgets you will be asked to approve later in the meeting.

I will not present it by reading line by line. But there are certain characteristics of various grouping that deserve note. Hence the following charts.

Chart #14



The first grouping is Mission Support, the amounts your congregation sends to the churchwide ELCA.

As mentioned before, since the 2011 receipts exceeded those of 2010 by \$40,000, the FMC felt it rational to expect the congregations to exceed 2011 by a similar amount, and the budget reflects \$1.225 million (that’s the green bar. Similarly, the budget for 2013 is proposed for another small increase to \$1.25 million (the orange bar).

Our grants and other undesignated gift expectations have also dropped since we see only a modest probable receipt of bequests, but there is hope that reality might change that.

Transfers from property sales for operations has been trimmed for 2012 to just under \$1,000,000. The FMC sent forward a 2013 proposed budget with only \$525,000 on this line, representing 30% of the estimated average annual sales of \$1.75 million; but this left a deficit of about \$250,000.

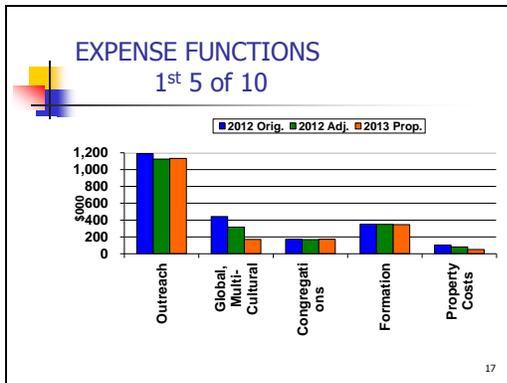
Reductions to cover that amount were not forthcoming, and the Synod Council, recognizing that the implementation of the Strategic Plan may well have an effect by 2013, chose to show a charge to Proceeds from Sales for Operations bringing it to \$774,000, still a salutary reduction from the 2012 budget.

Other income is small, and varies only based on how much our policy allows spending of investment income.

Transfers from sales for Partnership Grants is larger than earlier years, but similar in the three budget columns shown here, about \$450,000 per year.

Sales used for Synod owned properties and Synodical administration shows a drop, related primarily to fewer such properties.

Chart #15



Again breaking down the budget in the same manner as your material you will note little change in every category. Here are the first 5 of 10.

Evangelical Outreach includes what we send to ELCA and Partnership Grants within our Synod.

As you have previously directed, we have been advancing to the ELCA a percentage of the amount we receive from you by ½% each year, and in 2012 it is 49%. In 2013 it is computed at 49.5%. The maximum authorized, at 50%, would be in 2014.

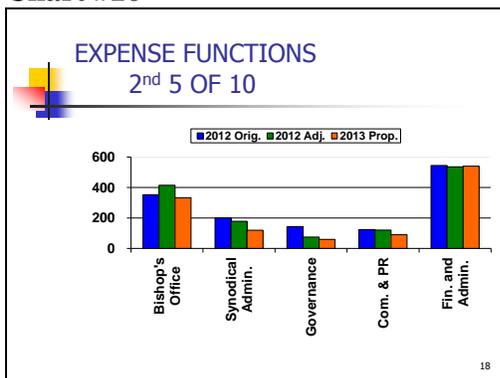
As indicated on the Revenue chart, Partnership Grants are funded from property sales, and show here as an equal expense of about \$450,000 per year.

Reductions in Global and Multi-Cultural Ministries reflect changes in structure announced by the Bishop.

No significant changes are expected in the Congregational Ministry, or in Formation, but Property costs are decreasing with fewer properties on our books.

Therefore, you will be asked to approve an adjusted balanced budgets for 2012 of \$3.3 million (down from \$3.6 million originally approved) and a budget of \$3.0 million for 2013, as detailed in your delegate material.

Chart #16



The changes in the Bishop's office costs reflect changes he has initiated with staff changes.

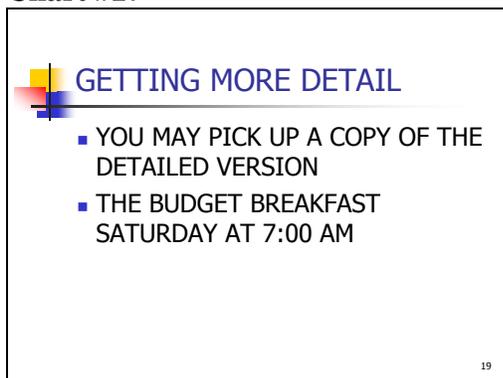
The change in Synodical Administration reflects reduced activity expected, but is almost impossible to predict – so this is an educated guess.

The change in Governance is chiefly the netting of the costs of Assemblies against fees paid, resulting in a plan for lower cost.

The last section, Finance and Administration is not only large, but worthy of comment.

Kathy Schmidt is the staff person responsible for it elements, planning and executing a fine series of work in paring down many of the administrative services, almost as far as they can go without major changes.

Chart #17



GETTING MORE DETAIL

- YOU MAY PICK UP A COPY OF THE DETAILED VERSION
- THE BUDGET BREAKFAST SATURDAY AT 7:00 AM

19

I realize that I have only given you a quick overview of the budgets. But if you wish more detail here is where to get it.

Line by line budget items that lead to the budgets can be picked up at the desk. Each line item has a person associated with it that is responsible for those funds, and performance is reviewed monthly.

The budget breakfast will be hosted by members of the Financial Management Committee, and Kathy Schmidt and I will be present to discuss anything on the budget you wish, and answer any questions. For those of you who have not attended this meeting in other years, you go through the food line, fill your plates and cups and go to the meeting place, which will be announced.

Chart #18



**RESOLUTIONS TO BE
PRESENTED SATURDAY**

- **APPROVE THE ADJUSTED 2012
BUDGET**
- **APPROVE THE PROPOSED 2013
BUDGET**

20

And you will see on the Saturday agenda the time for your comments and vote. Thank you for your interest in our finances and your support.

Bishop Rimbo thanked Mr. Buescher for his report, and then invited him to present the Revised 2012 Budget and the Proposed 2013 Budget.

Presentation of Revised 2012 Budget and Proposed 2013 Budget

Mr. Buescher presented the Revised 2012 Budget and the Proposed 2013 Budget to the Assembly. Voting on these budgets is scheduled for the fifth plenary session on Saturday afternoon.

		2012 BUDGET		2013 BUDGET
		Adopted (May 2011)	Revised (May 2012)	Proposed (May 2012)
FUND 1 BUDGET - OPERATIONS				
Function	REVENUE			
10	CONTRIBUTIONS FROM CONGREGATIONS			
	Undesignated Mission Support	1,250,000	1,225,000	1,250,000
	Total Contributions from Congregations	1,250,000	1,225,000	1,250,000
11	GRANTS, UNDESIGNATED GIFTS, & OTHER CONTRIB.			
	ELCA Grants (Congregational and Synodical Mission)	15,000	10,000	10,000
	Undesignated Gifts	100,000	50,000	50,000
	Sutter Memorial Fund	1,000	1,000	1,000
	Total Grants & Other Contributions	116,000	61,000	61,000
12	TRANSFERS FROM OTHER FUNDS			
	Net Proceeds from Sales - Support of Operations	1,090,000	975,000	773,554
	Mission Redevelopment Fund ("MRF") - Partnership Grants	475,000	445,500	445,500
	Bishop's Mission Fund	-	-	24,340
	Gay and Lesbian Outreach Fund	-	-	5,000
	Youth Ministry Fund	-	-	3,500
	Strategic Planning (MRF)	-	93,000	
	Tanzania Teachers - Other expenses (MRF)	15,000	11,000	
	Urban Empowerment Fund	50,000	50,000	50,000
	Tanzania Endowment Fund	41,390	41,390	25,000
	Wider Church Fund - Companion Synod (Romania)	80,000	75,000	40,000
	Total Transfers from Other Funds	1,751,390	1,690,890	1,366,894
14	OTHER INCOME			
	Investment Income	120,100	120,272	162,383

Mortgage and Loan Interest	6,600	6,600	6,600
Rental Income - Lutheran Counseling Services	4,475	2,400	2,400
Assembly	70,000	-	
Total Other Income	201,175	129,272	171,383
TOTAL REVENUE AND FUND TRANSFERS	3,318,565	3,106,162	2,849,277

Function

EXPENSES

25	EVANGELICAL OUTREACH ELCA Mission Support (2012 - \$600,250 (49.0%); 2013 - \$618,750 (49.5%)); Partnership Grants (\$475,000), Stewardship and Mission Support Table, Mission Resources Table, Mission Strategy Table, Outreach Committee	1,188,192	1,125,095	1,132,852
35	GLOBAL AND MULTICULTURAL MISSION Companion Synod programs, African Descent Ministries, Ethnic ministries, ELCA Global Mission, and other programs	442,189	316,151	# 170,056
45	CONGREGATIONS Assist congregations in all phases of the Call process, work with pastors and other rostered leaders in the Mobility process, provide oversight for Interim Pastors, provide leadership training events for congregations through the use of tools such as Healthy Congregations, and serve as the bishop's liaison with the Deans	171,514	168,334	172,241
55	FORMATION Candidacy process, provides opportunities for rostered and lay leaders to receive spiritual direction, serves as theologian in residence, coordinates child, youth and family ministries, education grants (\$131,090), Horizon internships, retreats (Deans, Bishop's, Candidacy, Staff), and other educational events	350,292	348,376	347,048
70	BISHOP'S OFFICE Pastoral care and oversight for congregations, pastors and deans, participation in ELCA Conference of Bishops and ELCA wider ministries	353,365	414,775	333,403
80	SYNOD GOVERNANCE			

	Synod Assembly, Synod Council, Deans, Archives, synod committees	143,628	74,868	60,000
90	COMMUNICATIONS, PR AND INTERPRETATION Synod website, weekly e-letter, Lutheran New Yorker, public relations, Mission Interpreter Network	124,339	120,981	89,500
91	FINANCE AND ADMINISTRATION Rent, general office services (printing, postage, insurance, telephone, internet, professional services, etc.); work with congregations on clergy compensation and budget issues; track expenses on owned properties and congregations under synodical administration; monitor financial status of congregations receiving partnership grants	545,046	537,582	544,177
	TOTAL EXPENSES - FUND 1	(3,318,565)	(3,106,162)	(2,849,277)
	TOTAL REVENUE AND FUND TRANSFERS - FUND 1	3,318,565	3,106,162	2,849,277
	NET INCOME (LOSS) - FUND 1	0	0	

FUND 7 BUDGET - SYNOD-OWNED PROPERTIES & SYNODICAL ADMIN.

<u>Function</u>	REVENUE			
17	Synod Owned Properties - MRF (Budget Est Only)	100,000	75,000	50,000
	Synodical Admin Properties - MRF (Budget Est Only)	200,000	150,000	125,000
	TOTAL INCOME	300,000	225,000	175,000
	EXPENSES			
75	Synod Administration/Owned Properties - TBD	162,915	167,600	175,000
	Synod Administration/Owned Properties - Staff	137,085	57,400	
	TOTAL EXPENSES - FUND 7	(300,000)	(225,000)	(175,000)
	TOTAL REVENUE AND FUND TRANSFERS - FUND 7	300,000	225,000	175,000
	NET INCOME (LOSS) - FUND 7	0	0	

SUMMARY - FUNDS 1 AND 7

TOTAL EXPENSES - FUNDS 1 and 7	(3,618,565)	(3,331,162)	(3,024,277)
TOTAL REVENUE AND FUND TRANSFERS - FUNDS 1 and 7	<u>3,618,565</u>	<u>3,331,162</u>	<u>3,024,277</u>
NET INCOME (LOSS) - FUNDS 1 and 7	<u><u>0</u></u>	<u><u>0</u></u>	<u><u>0</u></u>

Bishop Rimbo noted that pursuant to Section 7.32.01 of the Synod bylaws, amendments to the budget must be proposed at the time the budget is recommended. He then announced that Grace Lutheran Church, North Branch, had proposed an amendment by mail to the Synod treasurer and to voting members of the Assembly, seeking help from the Synod to purchase property adjacent written proposal as a motion before the Assembly and asked for a second to the motion, which was received.

Discussion of the proposed amendment ensued, with most speakers indicating opposition to the amendment. The question was called and vote was held. The amendment was defeated.

Bishop Rimbo then called for a vote on the revised 2012 budget, and the budget was approved. He reminded the Assembly that the vote on the proposed 2013 budget would be held on Saturday.

**ACTION SA2012.05.01
ADOPTED**

Revised 2012 Budget

Revised budget of \$3,331,162 for fiscal year 2012 was ratified.

VP Maria Del Toro introduced Mr. Frank Suttell, the synod council nominee for Treasurer. Mr. Suttell addressed the Assembly, speaking of his background and qualifications for the office of Treasurer.

Reference and Counsel Report

Ms. Renee Wicklund, chair of the Committee on Reference and Counsel directed the members to the items in their report and introduced the resolutions and memorial received by the Committee on Reference and Counsel.

Resolution No. 1.

A Resolution to Support the ELCA's Malaria Campaign.

WHEREAS, malaria is a disease of poverty that kills more than 800,000 people a year and is a leading cause of death for children under the age of five in Africa; and

WHEREAS, our Lutheran tradition has been to reach out and respond to God's graciousness by working for positive change through helping to bring health, justice, and hope to people who are in need; and

WHEREAS, the Metropolitan New York Synod is in a companion relationship with the North Western Diocese of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Tanzania, and every year 14-18 million new malaria cases are reported in Tanzania, resulting in 120,000 deaths, of which 70,000 are children younger than age five; and

WHEREAS, the 2011 ELCA Churchwide Assembly overwhelmingly approved the ELCA Malaria Campaign, an effort to raise \$15 million by the year 2015 and to work directly with our companion churches in Africa to prevent and treat malaria and to contain the number of deaths in Africa related to malaria, through prayer, advocacy, education, and fundraising; and

WHEREAS, the ELCA Campaign goal was based upon gifts amounting to approximately \$3 per baptized member and the Metropolitan New York Synod has 69,125 baptized members; now therefore be it

RESOLVED, that we commit ourselves as individuals and congregations in the Metropolitan New York Synod to continue as partners in the healing ministry of Jesus by preventing and treating malaria through prayer, advocacy, education, and fundraising; and further be it

RESOLVED, that the congregations of the Metropolitan New York Synod are each challenged to raise a minimum of \$3 per baptized member towards a synodical goal of \$207,375 by the end of fiscal year 2014 for the ELCA Malaria Campaign.

Submitted by:

Rev. Albert Ahlstrom
Avis Alexander
Betsy Armstrong
Rev. Jennifer Boyd
Rev. Elise Brown
Rev. Sarah Brown
Robert Cohen
Joan Cohen
Mary Anne Deik
Meg Donroese
Dcn. Richard Ferolito
Rev. Carol Fryer
Rev. Dr. Jack Horner
Linda Horner

Nicole Johnson
Rev. Charles Miller
Rev. Danielle Miller
Rev. Dr. Gary Mills
Beston Mwakalinga
Karen Nurmi
Djamillah Samad
Rev. James Sudbrock
Eleanore Sudbrock
Blessing Tawengwa
Dcn. Richard Thyden
Gail Wagner
Rev. Daniel Ward
Susan Ward

Ms. Wicklund indicated that the committee on reference and counsel recommended adoption.

Bishop Rimbo called for a vote on the resolution, and it was unanimously adopted.

**ACTION SA2012.05.02 A Resolution to Support the ELCA's Malaria Campaign
ADOPTED**

RESOLVED, that we commit ourselves as individuals and congregations in the Metropolitan New York Synod to continue as partners in the healing ministry of Jesus by preventing and treating malaria through prayer, advocacy, education, and fundraising; and further be it

RESOLVED, that the congregations of the Metropolitan New York Synod are each challenged to raise a minimum of \$3 per baptized member towards a synodical goal of \$207,375 by the end of fiscal year 2014 for the ELCA Malaria Campaign.

Resolution No 2

A Resolution Regarding the LIFT Project

WHEREAS, the 2011 Churchwide Assembly of the ELCA adopted recommendations from the Living Into the Future Together (LIFT) task force designed to strengthen the ELCA in evangelical mission. Those recommendations include the following:

To invited members, congregations, synods, regions, the churchwide organization, colleges and universities, institutions and agencies, networks, and global, ecumenical, and other partners into deep conversation, prayer, and discernment, as, together, this church commits itself to the following actions to implement the report and recommendations:

1. To make support for the work of congregations one of the highest priorities of this church. To request congregations, in collaboration with synods, to begin, develop, review or redefine their unique mission plans by the end of 2012, so that each congregation strengthens its capabilities and resources for witness and mission;

Now therefore be it

RESOLVED, the Metropolitan New York Synod in assembly calls upon each congregation to begin, develop, review or redefine its unique mission plan, including incorporation of ministry with and to diverse populations as appropriate; and

RESOLVED, the Metropolitan New York Synod Assembly encourages ongoing review and redefinition of congregation mission plans.

This resolution was submitted by action of the Synod Council.

Ms. Wicklund indicated that the committee on reference and counsel recommended adoption.

Motion to amend by adding a third resolve was made by Pr. Diane Wildow.

Resolved, that the Metropolitan New York Synod Assembly directs the synod staff and the Synod Council to create, develop and provide opportunities and resources that congregations may use to develop, review or redefine their mission plans, including provision of individual consultation and assistance to congregations as requested.

The amendment was adopted unanimously.

Motion to made to eliminate “as appropriate” from first resolve.

This amendment passed.

Bishop Rimbo called for vote on the amended resolution, and the resolution, as amended, was adopted.

**ACTION SA2012.05.03
ADOPTED**

A Resolution Regarding the Lift Project

RESOLVED, the Metropolitan New York Synod in assembly calls upon each congregation to begin, develop, review or redefine its unique mission plan, including incorporation of ministry with and to diverse populations; and

RESOLVED, the Metropolitan New York Synod Assembly encourages ongoing review and redefinition of congregation mission plans; and

RESOLVED, that the Metropolitan New York Synod Assembly directs the synod staff and the Synod Council to create, develop and provide opportunities and resources that congregations may use to develop, review or redefine their mission plans, including provision of individual consultation and assistance to congregations as requested.

Memorial No 1.

A Memorial in Recognition of LACE, Lutheran Association of Christian Educators, as a Key Organization to Support Christian Education in ELCA Congregations and Synods.

WHEREAS, due to budget cuts over the past few years, materials produced and positions supporting Christian educators in congregations have been removed in the ELCA churchwide offices; and

WHEREAS, a group of Christian educators from ELCA congregations were invited to gather in 2000 with ELCA Partners in Education to move forward in a conversation to develop an organization of Lutheran Christian educators monitored by the then Division of Congregational Ministries; and

WHEREAS, educators gathered several times from 2001 through 2003 and committed to form and organization, officers were selected for the Lutheran Association of Christian Educators (“LACE”) board, and an official drive for membership and chapters nationwide in the ELCA began in January 2004; and

WHEREAS, LACE officially began to establish networks and form an endowment fund to further their mission to support Christian educators by January 2006 and by 2011 had defined their mission as *Connecting and serving those dedicated to Christian faith formation*; and

WHEREAS, LACE has named Colossians 2:2 as a key Scripture verse with the goal to support and build the body of Christ, “*that they may be encouraged in heart and united in love*”; and

WHEREAS, LACE has increased in membership, consists of an Executive Board, Regional Representatives, and Members who meet on a regular schedule, have developed and maintain a website, mail a periodic newsletter, and send a monthly E-news to fulfill their mission; and

WHEREAS, LACE has the networking and system in place to support the restructuring of the ELCA as presented at the 2011 Churchwide assembly and address questions posed by the LIFT, Living Into the Future Together, task force, and LACE would be a major support for congregations and contribute to strengthening synod work; now therefore be it

RESOLVED, that the Metropolitan New York Synod memorializes the 2013 ELCA Churchwide Assembly to recognize LACE, Lutheran Association of Christian Educators, as an organization with a fully vested interest in supporting Christian educators in the ELCA whether rostered or lay (volunteer and/or professionally paid staff); and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Metropolitan New York Synod memorializes the 2013 ELCA Churchwide Assembly to uplift LACE, Lutheran Association of Christian Educators, in ELCA congregations as a key organization to join through memberships so as to strengthen support for congregations and build networking with synods; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Metropolitan New York Synod memorializes the 2013 ELCA Churchwide Assembly to encourage synods to recognize LACE as an organization that provides support, networking and encouragement for Christian educators.

Submitted by:

LACE National Executive Board and Regional Representatives

Ms. Wicklund noted that the committee on reference and counsel made amendments sufficient to convert the submitted resolution into a memorial while preserving the apparent intent of the submission, and that the committee does not recommend adoption of the Memorial.

Upon vote called by Bishop Rimbo, the Memorial was not adopted.

Report of the Committee on Registration

Ms. Minerva Melendez gave the updated registration report.

Clergy	163
Lay Voting Members	211
AiMs	11
Total Voting members	<u>385</u>
Visitors	<u>17</u>
Total Attendance	401

Bishop Rimbo invited Ms. Elizabeth Hoffmann to the podium for announcements.

Bishop Rimbo then invited Pr. Kristina Ahlman to the podium to close the session with prayer.

Voting members and guests of the Assembly attended forums on the Strategic Plan and on Congregational Viability Norms following dinner, and then gathered for Compline/Night Prayer in the ballroom at 9:00pm.

FRIDAY, MAY 18, 2012

PLENARY SESSION

II

The voting members of the Assembly gathered for Morning Prayer at 7:45am.

The second plenary session of the Twenty-first Regular Synod Assembly of the Metropolitan New York Synod was called to order, by Bishop Robert Alan Rimbo at 8:15am. He then introduced Ms. Leila Johnson and Pr. Jack Horner as the hosts for the plenary session.

Report of the Committee on Registration

Ms. Minerva Melendez gave the updated registration report.

Clergy	170
Lay Voting Members	221
AiMs	11
Total Voting members	<u>402</u>
Visitors	<u>20</u>
Total Attendance	422

Bishop Rimbo then invited the Assembly Chaplain, Pr. Kristina Ahlman, to open the session with prayer.

Ms. Christine Connell chair of Elections Committee led the voting members in the first ballot of voting.

Bishop Rimbo next invited Pr. Ruben Duran, ELCA Representative, to speak to the Assembly. Pr. Duran spoke of the work of the ELCA, including the Book of Faith Initiative, the Malaria Campaign, and Lutheran Disaster Response. He noted that 32,400 youth were registered to attend the Gathering in New Orleans. In speaking of the increasingly

multicultural nature of the church and society, he stated that 1 out of every 6 Americans today are Latino.

The members of the Assembly then watched a recorded message from ELCA Presiding Bishop Mark Hanson.

In closing his remarks, Pr. Duran stated that the “ELCA just turned 24. It’s time to get out of the house.”

Bishop Rimbo asked Ms. Jean Knight to instruct the voting members on the use of the Qwizdom Voting Device, and then invited Pr. Kristina Ahlman to lead the Assembly in prayer before presentation of the recommended action on Congregational Viability Norms.

Action on Congregational Viability Norms

Bishop Rimbo said that the proposal to come presently before the Assembly has been approved by the Synod Council under a Consent Agenda because: there has been a comprehensive discernment process; it is not controversial in that the 2010 Assembly proposed a resolution to establish a Committee for Congregational Viability Norms that was deferred to the synod council due to time constraints at that Assembly and the resolution was adopted by the synod council in June 2008; and because this is a means to process business expeditiously. He stated further that under a Consent Agenda process, this proposal will be presented and there will be time for discussion and questions, that 90 minutes have been allotted in the agenda for the presentation, discussion, questions and the vote. He said that discussion will be facilitated by Pr. William Baum and that comments will be limited to 90 seconds per speaker. Bishop also stated that he would prefer that this document not be amended since it has had such wide circulation for input and review, but pulling any item from the Consent Agenda remains a privilege of the assembly. If anyone felt that this proposal deserved discussion or debate beyond that which is scheduled (90 minutes), he or she may request its removal from the Consent Agenda now.

Pr. William Baum then presented the following resolution from the Committee on Congregational Viability Norms, which had been acted upon favorably by the synod council.

WHEREAS, at its June 8, 2010 meeting our Synod Council resolved:

“that a Committee for Congregational Viability Norms be established, and

that the purpose of this committee is to further the articulation of norms guiding when congregations should be encouraged to close or merge, or when synod administration (MNYS Constitution 13.24) should be invoked; and

that this committee report quarterly to the Synod Council and annually to the Synod Assembly; and

that the Synod Assembly debate and vote on whether to establish these norms as the policy of this synod; and

that this committee conclude its work at the Synod Assembly in 2012.” And

WHEREAS, we are call to be faithful stewards of the resources entrusted to us in service of the Gospel of Jesus Christ; and

WHEREAS, our Metropolitan New York Synod Constitution provides that:

“If any congregation of this synod has disbanded, or if the members of a congregation agree that it is no longer possible for it to function as such, or if it is the opinion of the Synod Council that the membership of a congregation has become so scattered or so diminished in numbers as to make it impractical for such a congregation to fulfill the purposes for which it was organized or that it is necessary for this synod to protect the congregation’s property from waster and deterioration, the Synod Council, itself or through trustees appointed by it, may take charge and control of the property of the congregation to hold, manage and convey the same on behalf of this synod. The congregation shall have the right to appeal the decision to the Synod Assembly.”

(Metropolitan New York Synod Constitution, Section S13.24) and

WHEREAS, our Synod Council seeks guidance in discerning when to encourage congregations to close or merge, or to invoke its constitutional responsibility to apply Synod Administration to a congregation; and

WHEREAS, a congregation’s ability to effectively self-govern is a necessary basis enabling it to fulfill the purposes for which it was organized to bear witness to the Gospel of Jesus Christ; therefore be it

RESOLVED, that when a significant number of the norms cited below is lacking, there is good reason to conclude that a congregation has lost the capability for effective self-governance and therefore its mission has concluded and its ministry is complete; and be it

RESOLVED, that our Synod Council see that each congregation be able to demonstrate the ability to:

1. Gather weekly for worship
2. Call a pastor
3. Hold an annual meeting of the congregation
4. Elect congregation council and officers as required by congregational constitution and New York State law: President, Vice-President, Treasurer and Secretary
5. Provide audited financial statements
6. Share in the fellowship of our Synod and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, provide Synod mission support, attend Synod Assembly
7. Submit an annual parochial report to the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
8. Maintain the upkeep and safety of buildings and property
9. Secure adequate insurance for property and persons
10. Keep current with financial obligations.

AND BE IT RESOLVED, that based upon these norms our Synod Council establish a process to regularly review the viability of congregations of our Metropolitan New York Synod and prayerfully discern appropriate action with attendant pastoral care.

Bishop Rimbo entertained a motion to go into committee of the whole. After said motion was seconded, adopted, Pr. Baum resumed the chair and spoke of the work of the committee. Dcn. John Malone, a member of the committee, also spoke.

Pr. Baum invited the voting members to break into small groups to discuss the resolution according to the following format:

CONGREGATIONAL VIABILITY DISCUSSION

Look over the list of the proposed Synod Administration Norms for Synod Council.

Do you think these are reasonable expectations for a congregation?

Do they advance the Church's larger call to faithfully administer resources for the building up of the entire Body of Christ?

When the Assembly returned to the whole, Pr. Amandus Derr proposed the following amendment:

To amend the second resolve to read as follows (change in italics and underlined):

Resolved, that our Synod Council see that each congregation be able to demonstrate the ability to fulfill its purpose as stated in Article C.4.03 of the model constitution for congregations, namely to:

The motion to amend was seconded, and after discussion, was **adopted**.

Pr. Schultz then proposed the following amendment:

That an eleventh norm be added to the second resolve to read as follows:

11. Welcome the community through service and opportunities to experience the Gospel beyond regular worship.

The motion to amend was seconded, and after discussion, was **defeated**.

Pr. Edward Barnett then proposed the following amendment:

Amend second norm to read (change in italics and underlined):

2. Call a pastor according to Synod Compensation Guidelines.

After the motion to amend was seconded, Pr. Jared Stahler moved that the proposed amendment be amended to read: *2. Call a rostered pastor according to Synod Compensation Guidelines.*

After discussion, the motions of Pastors Stahler and Barnett were both **defeated**.

Pr. Splittgerber then moved that the resolution be amended in the following manner:

1. Change the name to “A Resolution on Viability Norms for Congregation Membership in this Synod”

Or

2. Delete items 6 and 7 from second resolve.

3. Delete in the first Resolve the concluding phrase, “...and therefore its mission has concluded and its ministry is complete...”

After discussion, this motion was **defeated**.

Pr. Cummings then moved that the last Resolve be amended to read as follows (change in italics and underlined):

And be it Resolved, that based upon these norms our Synod Council establish a process *by the 2013 Assembly*.....

The motion was seconded and, after discussion, the amendment was **adopted**.

Pr. Diane Wildow then moved to amend the resolution by adding the following Resolves:

And be it further resolved, that as part of the Synod Council assessment, a team of 3 persons, elected by the Synod Council, observe the congregation being reviewed, which will at the least include being present for a Sunday worship and all other Sunday activities, as well as, on any other days on which the congregation engages in ministry outside itself in the community.

And be it further resolved, that should a congregation find itself ready to close, grief counseling be provided it, and that the worshippers be given assistance and encouragement in finding new congregational homes, and that the conference, as a whole, be guided as to how to assist with that process.

After second and discussion, this motion to amend was **defeated**.

Bishop Rimbo then called for a vote on the whole resolution as amended (by the Derr and Cummings amendments). The resolution was overwhelmingly adopted.

**ACTION SA2012.05.04
ADOPTED**

A Resolution on Congregational Viability Norms

RESOLVED, that when a significant number of the norms cited below is lacking, there is good reason to conclude that a congregation has lost the capability for effective self-governance and therefore its mission has concluded and its ministry is complete; and be it

RESOLVED, that our Synod Council see that each congregation be able to demonstrate the ability to fulfill its purpose as stated in Article C4.03 of the Model Constitution for Congregations, namely to:

1. Gather weekly for worship
2. Call a pastor
3. Hold an annual meeting of the congregation
4. Elect congregation council and officers as required by congregational constitution and New York State law: President, Vice-President, Treasurer and Secretary
5. Provide audited financial statements
6. Share in the fellowship of our Synod and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, provide Synod mission support, attend Synod Assembly
7. Submit an annual parochial report to the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
8. Maintain the upkeep and safety of buildings and property
9. Secure adequate insurance for property and persons
10. Keep current with financial obligations.

AND BE IT RESOLVED, that based upon these norms our Synod Council establish a process by the 2013 Synod Assembly to regularly review the viability of congregations of our Metropolitan New York Synod and prayerfully discern appropriate action with attendant pastoral care.

Report of the Committee on Children, Youth and Family Ministry/Heart of Ministry Award of Distinction

Dcn. Charles Germain was invited to the podium to give the report of his committee. As part of his report, the Heart of Ministry Award of Distinction was presented to Cross of Christ Lutheran Church, Babylon, for its excellent work in the area of youth ministry.

Distinguished Disciple Award

Bishop Rimbo stated: "I am pleased to ask Treasurer Robert H. Buescher to come to the podium at this time. The Synod Council, though they have not actually acted on this but will at their next meeting, has decided to confer the Distinguished Disciple Award on Mr. Robert H. Buescher. They have not yet acted on my recommendation because we have tried to keep this a surprise until the very last moment. The Executive Committee told Mr. Buescher about our intention at our last meeting, so it's not a complete shock.

As he comes forward, I invite you to stand and sing “The Lord Is in His Holy Temple,” printed on the sheet distributed to you. This is one of Bob’s favorite choral pieces, so we thought it would be appropriate to sing it together in harmony!

Sing!

Bob has served this Synod ably and wisely for the past eight years as our Treasurer, and as you know, economic realities and having to deal with bishops has made that a massive job. He has likewise served on the President’s Council and the Foundation Board of the Lutheran Theological Seminary in Philadelphia. He has also served as co-chair of the Capital Funds Campaign for the College of Engineering at his alma mater, the University of Missouri.

Bob and his spouse, Janet, have long been supporters of various ministries and institutions and active members of Our Redeemer Lutheran Church, Seaford, where they have sung in the senior choir for decades.

Bob was recently honored by Lutheran Social Services of New York, but was unable to attend that event. At this time, I want to ask Christine Connell of LSSNY, to present the award to Bob.”

After Ms. Connell presented the award, Bishop said:

“We are grateful to you, Bob, and give thanks to God for your leadership as you complete your term. Now, I invite the Assembly to stand and sing the second selection, a portion of the chorale, “Lord, Thee I Love with All My Heart,” from the *St. John Passion*, another favorite of Distinguished Disciple, Robert H. Buescher.”

Lutheran Social Services of New York

Bishop Rimbo invited Pr. Robert Wollenburg, Executive Director for Major and Planned Gifts of LSSNY, to address the Assembly.

Report of the Candidacy Committee

Pr. Jeffrey Kolbo gave the report of the Candidacy Committee.

Candidacy Committee Responsibilities

Persons seeking rostered vocations in the ELCA as ordained pastors, associates in ministry, consecrated deaconesses and diaconal ministers apply for Candidacy through the Candidacy Committee of the synod in which they hold congregational membership. The Synod Candidacy Committee, which acts on behalf of the Metropolitan New York Synod and the ELCA, is responsible for determining the readiness of persons to enter the candidacy process, for endorsing candidates for a specific roster of this church, and in the approval process, for determining an individual’s qualifications and readiness to serve in rostered ministry.

Candidacy Committee Membership

Members of the Candidacy Committee whose terms of office expired in June of 2011 included: Pastor Ray Ormand,

Dr. Ralph Peters, and

Pastor Jeanne Warfield.

New appointments to the Candidacy

Committee in September of 2011 included:

Pastor Rosalind Brathwaite,
Pastor William Eschen, and
Ms.
Janet Siry.

Candidacy Committee membership (September 10, 2011 to present) includes:

Pastor Fabian Arias,
Pastor Rosalind Brathwaite,
Ms. Carolyn Brown,
Pastor Romeo Dabee,
Pastor William Eschen,
Pastor Jeffrey Kolbo (Candidacy Coordinator),
Pastor Jonathan Linman (Assistant to the Bishop),
Pastor Christopher Mietlowski,
Pastor Danielle Miller,
Pastor Daniel Penumaka,
Ms. Janet Siry,
Pastor Jerome Taylor,
Ms. Cassandra Wilson and
Pastor Peggy Wuertele (ELCA Representative).
Professor Paul Rajashekar, serves as ELCA faculty representative to the committee.

Special thanks are extended to Ms. Mary Tennermann, who assisted with the administrative details of the Candidacy Process in 2011, and to Ms. Louise Litke who conducted initial interviews on behalf of the Candidacy Committee.

Candidacy Committee Meetings

The Metropolitan New York Synod Candidacy Committee met six times in 2011. Meetings were held at the Synod Office on the second Saturday of the month, with the exception of the April meeting, which was held on April 30. A Candidacy Retreat was held in October. Members of the Committee traveled to ELCA seminaries for endorsement interviews and other meetings.

Steps in Candidacy

ENTRANCE begins a journey of discernment that explores an individual's potential for rostered ministry and readiness to begin the process of theological study and candidacy in the ELCA. One year of active membership in the ELCA is required prior to entrance. The entrance process requires the completion of an application portfolio that includes: application form, biographical essay, congregational registration, initial interview, psychological evaluation/career counseling consultation, background check and entrance interview. Normally, a positive entrance decision is required before an applicant is admitted to an ELCA seminary. Those approved for Entrance to Candidacy in 2011 included:

February 12, 2011

The Rev. Harry Schenkel, Ordained in another Lutheran Tradition

Eric Mull, Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Church, Flatbush

April 30, 2011

Julie Kelly, Our Savior Lutheran Church, Croton-on-Hudson
Nancy Rakoczy, St. Peter's Lutheran Church, Manhattan

June 11, 2011

The Rev. Chryll Crews, Ordained in another Christian Tradition

ENDORSEMENT encourages and affirms those who clearly demonstrate gifts and qualities for a specific form of ministry in the ELCA, as well as identifies areas for growth and development. Before endorsement, a candidate must complete at least two semesters of seminary study, parish fieldwork, and a unit of Clinical Pastoral Education. Candidates for endorsement complete an endorsement essay, which is discussed with the Candidacy Committee during an endorsement interview. Only endorsed candidates may participate in an ELCA internship. Candidates approved for Endorsement in 2011 included:

September 10, 2011

Emily Scott, Trinity Lower East Side

November 12, 2011

David Hanssen, Emmanuel Lutheran Church, Pleasantville
Nicholas Sollom, St. Peter's Lutheran Church, Manhattan
Marc Almendarez Stutzel, Trinity Lutheran Church, Long Island City

APPROVAL comes at the completion of all academic and practical requirements. The approval process includes the preparation of an Approval Essay and participation in the Approval Interview. A positive decision must be made in order to be available for assignment, ordination and first call for service to the whole church. Candidates approved for ordination or admission to the ELCA Roster in 2010 included:

February 12, 2011

Christopher Wogaman (reapproval)

June 11, 2011

The Rev. Harry Schenkel (admission to the ELCA roster)
The Rev. Donald Lemke (reinstatement to the ELCA roster)

September 10, 2011

The Rev. Mark Kiesel (admission to the ELCA roster)
Omar Ortiz, Trinity Lutheran Church, Brooklyn
Robert Rainis, Ascension Lutheran Church, Deer Park

November 12, 2011

David Drysdale, St. Matthew's Lutheran Church, White Plains
Timothy Johansen, St. Andrew's Lutheran Church, West Hempstead

Jonathan Racabarren, St. Luke's Lutheran Church, Manhattan

December 10, 2011

Sarah Anderson Rajarigam, Calvary Lutheran Church, Bronx
Leila Ortiz, Resurrection Lutheran Church, Bronx (reapproval)

New Candidates Encouraged

If you or someone you know would like to explore the possibility of a vocation in the ELCA as an ordained pastor, associate in ministry, diaconal minister or deaconess, the Candidacy Committee would be interested in speaking with you. For information, contact the Reverend Jeffrey Kolbo, Candidacy Coordinator, 631-744-9355 [jkolbo123@verizon.net] or the Reverend Jonathan Linman, Assistant to the Bishop for Formation, at 212-870-2374 [jlinman@mnys.org]

The Rev. Jeffrey Kolbo, Candidacy Committee Chairperson

Report of the Committee on Registration

Ms. Minerva Melendez gave the updated registration report.

Clergy	180
Lay Voting Members	245
AiMs	11
Total Voting members	<u>445</u>
Visitors	<u>22</u>
Total Attendance	467

Bishop Rimbo invited Ms. Elizabeth Hoffmann to the podium for announcements.

Bishop Rimbo then invited Pr. Kristina Ahlman to the podium to close the session with prayer.

FRIDAY, MAY 18, 2012

PLENARY SESSION

III

The third plenary session of the Twenty-first Regular Synod Assembly of the Metropolitan New York Synod was called to order, by Bishop Robert Alan Rimbo at 1:38pm. He then introduced Ms. Leila Johnson and Pr. Jonathan Linman as the hosts for the plenary session.

Report of the Committee on Registration

Ms. Minerva Melendez gave the updated registration report.

Clergy	193
Lay Voting Members	246
AiMs	11
Total Voting members	<u>450</u>
Visitors	<u>22</u>

Bishop Rimbo then invited the Assembly Chaplain, Pr. Kristina Ahlman, to open the session with prayer.

Bishop Rimbo then announced that the next item of business, consideration of the Strategic Plan, would be handled under a Consent Agenda and reviewed for the Assembly the mechanics of that process.

VP Maria Del Toro invited all members of the executive committee of the synod council to speak on the proposed strategic plan.

VP Del Toro began:

In many villages in Africa when an important person comes to visit the chief will lead his people out to greet the guest a short distance from the village. Once a visitor asked the chief, “are these your people standing behind you?” The chief replied, “some of them. These are my people who are alive today. Many of my people have died. But most of my people have yet to be born.”

Your Synod Council and Executive Committee have been thinking a great deal about all those people yet to be born who will find faith in God through the Lutheran tradition. While the process is called “strategic planning” – you should know for all of us – those sitting on this stage and everyone one of you – it is really considering the answer to a very important question: What does God want our Synod to do to reach future generations in Metropolitan New York with the life-changing Gospel?

We knew the answer was not just to “try harder.” We felt we had to be bold and courageous, to ask ourselves very tough questions and challenge our current thinking. To do this in the most disciplined, inclusive way possible, we chose a strategic planning process.

You may be asking, why a strategic planning process? There are three answers to that question: a spiritual one, a societal one, and a synod answer.

Romans 12:8 says if you are called to lead, you should lead with all diligence. We knew God was calling us to a constant and earnest effort to accomplish what is undertaken. Since we wanted a process with plenty of opportunities for many people to provide input and perspectives – we knew we had to be organized and use wisdom to allow God to speak clearly to us.

Clearly society has changed dramatically over the last two decades and the Christian Church has been greatly affected. Whether you believe people have left the church or the church has left the people – either way fewer people are finding the church relevant to their lives. We looked at trends and research that tells a clear story: we need a fresh plan for a new generation.

At last year's assembly we passed a resolution asking our Synod Council to develop a strategic plan. The Council charged the Executive Committee – who you see here on stage – with the task of leading the planning process. We wanted a process that would produce a vibrant Synod expression of Lutheranism.

We began last summer with prayer and discernment. Next we reviewed the significant amount of data from meetings and work done over the last several years. And when I say significant amount, this 3-ring binder strains to hold all the documents. You see on the screen some of the documents we reviewed.

I am sure many of you participated in some of these meetings, focus groups, surveys and interviews.

We engaged a consultant with more than 20 years experience in helping organizations develop strategic plans. Tom Massey, Senior Vice President of Daxko Consulting has been with us every step of the way – ensuring we stayed true to the process and planning principles we chose. As a side note, Tom admitted to us that as a Christian and proponent of the church as the hope of the world, he has become more than a consultant with us – but an advocate and partner to see God's Work through this effort.

Next, we listened. We listened carefully to a many people with a variety of perspectives. Before we made any attempt at formulating strategy – we wanted to be sure we understand the opinions and insights of those most involved in our congregations and synod. You will see a few of the groups and meetings held since last August.

We began with an online survey and 348 responded with insights on your congregations' past strengths, current issues, and dreams for the future. According to our consultant this is an astonishingly high number of responses for such a survey.

We also conducted individual interviews and met with several Synod committees. We had two sessions with the Council of Deans, two sessions with the Financial Management Committee, and worked with the Viability Committee and Synod staff. In all, more than 440 people shared their views and opinions with the Executive Committee. So you see, there are many fingerprints on this plan.

Strategic planning was on the agenda at the last nine Executive Committee meetings. The entire Synod Council was engaged in two retreats and four Council meetings. As you can tell, the Synod Council and its Executive Committee has devoted countless hours over the past 10 months to develop the plan we have before us today.

We wanted a plan that was clear, concise, and compelling. It needed to be clear so everyone could understand the direction and strategies. We tried to stay away from vague language or words only a seminary graduate could understand. This is a plan for all of us. We wanted it to be concise.

We have all seen massive documents that never get implemented. Also, we wanted everyone to be able to remember the key points and share it with others. Finally we wanted a compelling vision that would call others to join our efforts of sharing hope and grace to a troubled world.

And we knew what we did NOT want from a strategic plan. We did not want a comprehensive list of everything that could or should be done. Rather we wanted to focus clearly on what MUST be done. It is tempting to strive for consensus and compromise in planning. As I said, we did listen many people with a wide range of perspectives. But instead of looking for a point in the middle that would weaken everyone's ideas, we chose to be bold and discern the courageous path we thought God was challenging us to take.

This could be the most important point: this is not a tactical plan. It is about WHAT needs to be done, not HOW we propose to do it. We are setting a strategy and pointing a direction toward clear and achievable goals. We are offering our leaders and our people maximum flexibility in pursuing these goals, allowing them to adjust to the needs of the wide variety of communities we serve.

You will notice that this strategic plan places great trust in leaders among us in this room. Not individuals, but groups of leaders coming together according to our constitutional order to develop and execute these strategies with God's guidance.

Please note that these are 10-year strategies. We wanted ideas and targets that might be a stretch for us in the short term; but by God's grace and our diligence, we can dramatically extend our Synod's reach and deepen our Lutheran influence over the next decade and beyond.

In everything we have done in developing the strategic plan, we have been guided by a simple, but profound two-part planning principle.

First: we will preserve our Lutheran tradition. This plan will retain and strengthen our core focus on Word and Sacrament while operating within our existing constitutional order and governance structures.

Second: we will develop and employ bold new strategies to be relevant to the people of Metropolitan New York over the next decade. You will notice we enhanced and re-tooled some good strategies already in place – and developed some new strategies that will require creative and new-to-the-world thinking.

In short, the goal is to present our timeless God and historic Lutheran tradition in ways that are real and relevant to future generations.

In support of that goal, our strategies focus on three words taken directly from the mission and vision statements of the Constitution of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. Many of you will notice the words here are also the basis for our baptismal liturgy. If you remember nothing else from this session, take these three words with you: CLAIMED, GATHERED, SENT. Each of us – and the church in all its expressions – is claimed by God in Baptism, gathered by God into community, and sent by God to proclaim the gospel to all the world. Claimed, Gathered, Sent. This is who we are.

I have asked members of the Executive Committee to share an overview of each of the 3 strategies, and the 4 strategy enablers. As you listen, you may be tempted to think about an

old saying, “the devil is in the details.” I am asking you to stay away from the devil. I want you to think on a higher plane. Think about new strategies – or pathways – that can point us in a fresh direction to share our never changing faith. This body will elect and appoint talented leaders to our Synod Council, Executive Committee, and other committees to spend time developing the details, budgets, and action plans that will deliver on these strategies. For now, think about WHAT, not HOW.

Minerva Melendez will share with us about our Claimed Strategy.

Ms. Melendez then spoke:

Our focus for the Claimed Strategy is to help people grow in their faith through interaction and engagement with the Lutheran tradition.

Through looking at the research and talking with many of you we realized the idea of “member and nonmember” is still valid, but growing in faith is more of a process than an event. In the future we want to help all people – even those far from God or with no history with the Lutheran tradition – help them through all points along the journey to find God and a faith for daily living.

Our Claimed Strategy has 3 areas of focus. We want to communicate clearly to all people. We have all heard that if you ask 10 Lutherans what it means to be Lutheran you will get at least 20 answers. This part of the strategy challenges us to do the hard work to sharpen our message so that anyone and everyone can understand what it means to be Lutheran.

We know will be challenging to achieve. But just because it is difficult does not mean it is not important to do.

The second aspect of this strategy is to connect many to our network of Lutheran ministries. This will take some more detailed explanation, so I will come back to this part of the strategy in a minute.

The third point of this strategy is to challenge people to commit. The idea of being a member of a Lutheran congregation is as important as ever.

We want people to grow deeper in their faith and we will develop new initiatives and renew some existing ministries to do just that.

But I want to return to that second point of connection. We have come to understand that there are thousands of people among us who are not officially members of a Lutheran congregation, but if asked would say they something like: “I attend a Lutheran church,” or “I am involved with a Lutheran ministry,” or even “I belong to the Lutheran church.”

John Malone is a member of our Synod Council and has an interesting personal story related to this.

Dcn. John Malone shared his personal story of becoming involved in a congregation.

Ms. Melendez continued:

We would all love for people at this level of involvement to become a member of a Lutheran congregation – and perhaps many will, like John did.

But we wanted a plan to provide more meaningful opportunities to be involved in these people's lives during this time. This plan calls us to discover and implement a variety of new ways individuals and families can participate in our network of Lutheran ministries.

You will note in the printed plan that we will have committees responsible for developing each of the three strategies. We will discuss all of these committees under the Leadership Section of the plan.

Executive Committee member Bill Baum will now share the Gathered Strategy with you.

Pr. Baum spoke:

The objective of the Gathered Strategy is to ensure that Word and Sacrament ministry is provided in the metropolitan New York area.

The three areas of focus are: Locations, Leadership, and Ministries.

Determining the congregations and church facilities needed to meet the objective of this strategy will take a group of wise leaders, armed with plenty of data. We see this group working with maps pinpointing church facilities and addresses of members. This group will understand where the growing areas of metropolitan New York will be in the next decade. And above all, we see this group seeking God and praying a lot.

If your congregation is serving your community and moving forward as I explained in the report on viability this morning, God bless you and keep going. The work of this group will not hinder you.

But let us be clear. This Gathered Strategy calls for our Synod's resources to be directed to areas most in need of Word and Sacrament ministry for the future. If a congregation has reached the completion of its ministry and synod owned property is sold, this plan calls for 100% of the net proceeds go into the Synod Restricted Funds to support the key strategies as directed by the Synod Council.

We believe strongly that pastors and lay leaders are critical to this strategy being executed. This plan calls for resources to be directed to the recruiting, equipping and supporting of leaders.

The third aspect of this strategy is very exciting. We know we have ministries outside of local congregations that provide Word and Sacrament. Our campus, camping and chaplaincy ministries are great examples. But this plan calls for the development of new ministries to gather more people around our faith.

We can imagine small groups of people gathering in office buildings and community rooms using Lutheran resources to discover and share their faith in God. Bricks and mortar will no longer limit our reach.

I would like to invite Paul Milholland to discuss the Sent Strategy.

Pr. Milholland spoke:

For God so loved THE WORLD (not the synod, not our congregations, not the church) but the world. We are called by the Holy Spirit, gathered into a community/assembly to be nourished through Word & Sacrament, in order to be SENT into the world. Go in peace. Serve the Lord. Go in peace. Remember the poor. Hear the words of the 2nd verse of We are called, ELW #720: Come, open your heart. Show your mercy to all those in fear. We are called to be hope for the hopeless so hatred and blindness will be no more. We are called to act with justice, we are called to love tenderly; we are called to serve one another, to walk humbly with God.

The objective of our Sent Strategy is to do just that: proclaim the Gospel by responding to specific societal needs and issues. As you already know, the needs of society in general and metropolitan New York are many.

Our plan calls for our Synod to be very strategic in determining which needs we will address, and how we will address them.

We have 3 areas of focus: services, partnerships, and advocacy. Many congregations do amazing work in programs that help people in words and deed. The Sent Strategy Committee will employ the 3 D approach to program development: discover which programs are being offered by congregations, determine which of these programs should be developed more fully, then disseminate these program models. So you see we are not creating a social services delivery system – but more of a network of congregations, ministries, and leaders that are resourced and coordinated to ensure we are meeting needs in the name of Christ.

The truth is there are many great organizations in metropolitan New York who are experts in some of the most critical areas of need. In many cases we will partner with these organizations. In fact we already have Synod partnerships with Lutheran Social Services of NY, Lutheran Schools Association, Lutheran Counseling Services and Habitat for Humanity just to name a few.

The third aspect of this strategy, advocacy, is both challenging and exciting. Our denomination has specific stands on issues that are a part of our public record: Criminal Justice (to be adopted in 2013), genetics, abortion, race, ethnicity and culture, peace, health & healthcare, etc.

Our Synod is in a unique location. We are the media and financial capital of the world. Home of the United Nations. Metropolitan New York is as diverse ethnically as anywhere else on the globe. As we develop the “Lutheran voice” through our Strategic Plan, wouldn’t it be nice if the media looked to our chief pastor/bishop for a “word” on specific issues? Not just to the heads of other denominations/judicatories? We can be a leader in this area for the whole church.

As you are probably already thinking, the key to this strategy is determining which issues are best for our Synod to address. We cannot and should not try to do too many things – just address those issues best aligned with our collective strengths and capacities.

We are now going to move into the part of the plan we call “Strategy Enablers.” These four areas are designed to support our claimed, gathered, and sent strategies. Barbara Johnson will talk to us about Unity & Diversity.

Ms. Johnson spoke:

I am a part of a working group for racial and ethnic awareness and sensitivity. We decided for our part of the strategic plan we would develop a guiding strategy statement to direct all future work in this area. That statement is: As on the Day of Pentecost (Acts 2:1-13), the Holy Spirit still empowers God’s diverse people to be together and to understand each other, and share in proclaiming God’s deeds of power with a united voice in a diverse world. To help us so to preach the Gospel, the Metropolitan New York Synod will nurture racial and ethnic awareness and sensitivity in the hearts, minds, souls and behavior of all of God’s people in our synod and synodical programs, policies and procedures.

I will now ask Bob Buescher to discuss the financial aspect of the plan.

Mr. Buescher spoke:

The function of the Financial Management Committee remains as directed by its responsibilities listed in the Constitution. I would, however, add some detail to some of the items as they are important to the strategic plan.

In the preamble of the charter are the words “provides responsible management of all financial aspects of the synod, prepares budgets reflecting realistic receipts and expenditures that support the synod’s ministries and strengthens the financial position of the synod through all appropriate means.”

That’s pretty broad, and can mean a lot of different things to different people. So, I want to take these few minutes to look at some of the listed detail functions, and how they will serve the strategic plan.

As you will hear from our next presenter, there are 3 committees given the task of strategy development. The FMC will be a service to the other three committees early in their process by helping them understand the cost of efforts proposed, prior to them being passed to the Executive Committee and the synod Council for acceptance and direction.

The FMC will also be a help to these committees and the Synod Council Executive Committee at the end of their strategy development and authorization process. The FMC will work with the other committees and the Synod Council to establish a budget to be presented for final approval to the Assembly.

So the FMC is involved in the decisions for activity and spending throughout the governing process, from the earliest considerations to the presentation of proposed budgets and financial plans to the Synod Council, and you, the Assembly.

In addition to assisting with annual strategies, the FMC has two longer-term functions to assist the Synod Council. The FMC is responsible for the stewardship of the Synod’s investment portfolio consistent with approved fund objectives. Also, the FMC is responsible for developing and maintaining a system of long range financial planning for the synod. It’s

not enough to work with only the immediate future, but as the plan directs, we must look at a longer period and make suggestions and analyses.

The FMC will do its best to analyze plans from all sources, and provide accurate and useful information to the other committees and the Executive Committee and Synod Council. I will ask Bob Schoepflin to discuss Leadership as it relates to the strategic plan.

Pr. Schoepflin spoke:

I cannot emphasize enough how critical leadership will be to the success of this strategic plan. As you have seen, this plan outlines specific, but broad strategies to a desired end. However, the details on how this plan will be executed are left open to be developed. This is quite intentional. We believe the key to actually implementing a strategic plan is to assign accountability to passionate, gifted leaders, not to a document or the institution. The key word is accountability.

As Jim Collins said in the best selling business book of all times, Good to Great, first “who” then “what.” The Leadership section of this plan calls on specific groups of individuals to take ownership of key aspects of the plan, and to develop complete implementation tactics that achieve the objectives of the strategies.

So you are likely asking, who are these wise and gifted leaders? Well, they are sitting in this room right now. In fact, they may be you.

We are asking you to prayerfully consider being a part of making this strategic plan a reality and changing the course of the Lutheran Movement in Metropolitan New York forever. If you are sitting there with skills and passion for communicating and connecting people, please make it known to your pastor or a member of our Synod Council that you would love to serve on the Claimed Strategy Committee.

If you have an understanding of the neighborhoods and growth patterns of metropolitan New York, why not offer your leadership to the Gathered Strategy Committee? Let’s say you have the spiritual gift of service, the Sent Strategy Committee likely has a place for you.

What should you do with your expertise in marketing, finance, technology, or social media? Why not offer those to God to further His Kingdom here on earth?

The good news is the systems for governance are largely in place. We chose not to change the current constitutional and governance system of leadership. This Synod Assembly is still the top of the org chart. But since this body only meets once a year, we must choose people to act on our behalf for most of the year. That group is our Synod Council – which is elected by this Assembly.

As per our constitution, our Synod Council has an Executive Committee to direct and coordinate activities. This is true of the strategic plan as well. The Executive Committee is made up of the four officers of our Synod Council, plus four additional members, again elected by this Assembly.

Our Synod Council Executive Committee does not operate in a vacuum. The Conference of Deans provides the voice of the Congregations into the implementation of the strategic plan. And remember, the work of the Executive Committee is under the authority of our Synod Council and this Assembly.

But make no mistake about this fact: the accountability to direct and coordinate this strategic plan is with our Synod Council Executive Committee – a group of leaders elected or appointed by this Assembly.

The Executive Committee of the Synod Council is made up of 8 people. One half of this committee is the four officers elected directly by the Synod Assembly. The other four members are elected annually to one-year terms by the Synod Council from among its membership.

There are four committees named in this strategic plan. We have committees for the Claimed Strategy, Gathered Strategy, and Sent Strategy. These three committees will be filled through our normal committee recruitment process. Again, if you want to be involved in implementing this strategic plan, you will be given an opportunity to do so.

There is also the Financial Management Committee that is already in place as Bob Buescher explained earlier. The Bishop appoints this committee with advice and consent of the Synod Council.

Strategy Committees have a commission to develop their strategic area and make recommendations to the Synod Executive Committee.

Naturally, there may be sub-committees needed to fully execute strategies. Also, there are other on-going committees in other areas of Synod work.

The Bishop is charged with the execution of the key strategies and working with the Synod Council Executive Committee. Other synod staff positions will be created, filled, developed, and evaluated based on this strategic plan. Synod offices, technology, and other support will be evaluated based on the key strategies. In other words, the plan we are asking you to approve will direct decision-making on all levels.

I will now turn our presentation back to Maria.

VP Del Toro spoke:

The final strategy enabler, Financial Development, is one that is very important to me. I believe we have a strategic plan so compelling that many people will want to share their resources to extend our Lutheran tradition to future generations in metropolitan New York. The strategic plan before us is our case for support, our cause. We will develop a financial development plan that will bring additional resources for this strategic plan to be fully implemented.

This is our strategic plan – but more importantly – it is our answer to the question I asked at the beginning of this session: What does God want our Synod to do to reach future generations in Metropolitan New York with the life-changing Gospel? In 2017 we will celebrate the 500-year anniversary of Martin Luther ‘nailing the 95 Thesis on the door of the Castle Church in Wittenberg. How wonderful will it be 5 years from now to

celebrate the transformational work of our Synod, launched by our efforts to answer that question through this strategic plan.

I am sure many of you have this question in your head right now: What does this plan mean to my congregation? That is a fair question and one we are about to discuss. But I can partially answer that question right now. This plan does not have to mean one thing to your congregation. You can continue as you have and nothing we do today will have any affect on your congregation.

But I am asking you to think at a new level. While I was in Orlando at the church-wide gathering this year, I heard much talk about what it means to be Lutheran. Not just I am a member of a specific congregation; but rather, “I am a Lutheran.”

As a Lutheran, we say “God’s work, our hands.” I am asking you to join hands with your Lutheran brothers and sisters to see God’s work magnified through our efforts together. I think of what Mordecai told Ester: “and who knows whether you have not come to the Kingdom for such a time as this.” We are now at a point in history where our decisions can make a mark that will last for decades, or move us toward irrelevance. I think we are all here for such a time as this.

I am going to ask our consultant, Tom Massey, to come and lead us in a time of discussion about this strategic plan.

Mr. Tom Massey led the voting members of the Assembly in a discussion and exercise surrounding the strategic plan.

Then it came time for the Assembly to consider adoption of the plan.

**Metropolitan New York Synod
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
2013 – 2023 Strategic Plan**

Mission Statement

Marked with the cross of Christ forever, we are claimed, gathered and sent for the sake of the world.

Vision Statement

CLAIMED: by God’s grace for the sake of the world, we are a new creation through God’s living Word by the power of the Holy Spirit;

GATHERED: by God’s grace for the sake of the world, we will live among God’s faithful people, hear God’s Word and share Christ’s supper;

SENT: by God's grace for the sake of the world, we will proclaim the good news of God in Christ through word and deed, serve all people following the example of our Lord Jesus and strive for justice and peace in the world.

Key Strategies

Claimed

The objective of the Claimed Strategy is to help people grow in their faith through interaction and engagement with the Lutheran tradition.

The three areas of focus will be:

- Communication – share a clear, concise, compelling message of the Lutheran identity through a variety of methods and media
- Connection – provide a variety of opportunities for individuals and families to participate in the network of Lutheran ministries
- Commitment – challenge people to grow deeper in their faith through the development of new and renewed initiatives

The Synod Council Executive Committee will commission a Claimed Strategy Committee to develop this strategy and make recommendations back to the Synod Council Executive Committee.

Gathered

The objective of the Gathered Strategy is to ensure that Word and Sacrament ministry is provided in the metropolitan New York area.

The three areas of focus will be:

- Locations – determine the congregations and church facilities needed to meet the objective of this strategy
- Leadership – recruit, equip and support pastors and lay leaders to execute this strategy
- Ministries – develop new and renewed ministries to enhance this strategy

The Synod Council Executive Committee will commission a Gathered Strategy Committee to develop this strategy and make recommendations back to the Synod Council Executive Committee.

Sent

The objective of the Sent Strategy is to network congregations, ministries and leaders to proclaim the Gospel by responding to specific societal needs and issues.

The three areas of focus will be:

- Services – develop and deliver programs in our communities that help people in words and deeds
- Partnerships – determine organizations and ministries to support

- Advocacy – speak on specific justice and peace issues

The Synod Council Executive Committee will commission a Sent Strategy Committee to develop this strategy and make recommendations back to the Synod Council Executive Committee.

Strategy Enablers

Unity & Diversity

As on the Day of Pentecost (Acts 2:1-13), the Holy Spirit still empowers God’s diverse people to be together and to understand each other, and share in proclaiming God’s deeds of power with a united voice in a diverse world. To help us so to preach the Gospel, the Metropolitan New York Synod will nurture racial and ethnic awareness and sensitivity in the hearts, minds, souls and behavior of all of God’s people in our synod and synodical programs, policies and procedures.

Finance

The bishop will continue to appoint a Financial Management Committee. The Synod Council is responsible for the allocation and stewardship of assets. Using this direction, the Financial Management Committee will:

- Manage assets from all sources
- Develop a budget with a priority on enabling key strategies
- Allocate 100% of the net proceeds from the sales of synod owned property to the Synod Restricted Funds to support the key strategies as directed by the Synod Council.

Leadership

- The current constitutional governance system of Synod Assembly, Synod Council, Executive Committee, Conferences and Deans remains in place.
- The Synod Council Executive Committee is charged to direct and coordinate the key strategies. The Executive Committee receives input from the Conferences and Deans and reports to the Synod Council, which reports to the Synod Assembly.
- Other committees of the Synod Council include:
 - Claimed Strategy Committee
 - Gathered Strategy Committee
 - Sent Strategy Committee
 - Financial Management Committee
- The bishop will be charged with execution of the key strategies and working with the Synod Council Executive Committee. Other synod staff positions will be created, filled, developed, and evaluated based on the key strategies.
- Synod offices, technology, and other support will be evaluated based on the key strategies

Financial Development

The Synod Council will establish a financial development plan to secure resources for key strategies.

Pr. Krauser moved to amend the finance section of the plan under Strategic Enablers as follows:

Allocate 75% of the net proceeds from the sale of synod owned property to the Synod Restricted Funds to support the key strategies as directed by the Synod Council, also 25% of the fund from sale to be designated to a mission of their choosing by the remaining parishioners of the closing or merging congregation.

After second and discussion, this motion was **defeated**.

Pr. Splittergerber moved to amend the key strategies portion of the plan, under Sent, as follows:

The objective of the Sent Strategy is to network congregations, ministries and leaders to proclaim the Gospel by equipping congregations for evangelism within their communities and responding to specific societal needs and issues.

After second and discussion, this motion was **defeated**.

Dcn. Robert Michaelis moved to amend the finance portion of the plan as follows:

Allocate 75% of net proceeds from the sale of synod owned property to the synod restricted funds to support the key strategies as directed by the synod council, also 25% of the funds from sale to be designated to a mission of their choosing by the remaining parishioners of the closing or merging congregation.

After second and discussion, this motion was **defeated**.

Pr. Audrey Pedersen moved to amend the Sent Strategy portion of the plan from “change proclaim the Gospel by to ***proclaim the Gospel while...***”

After second and discussion, this motion was **adopted**.

Pr. Mark Erson moved to amend the Unity and Diversity, under Strategy Enablers, part of the plan as follows:

Under unity and diversity, change from “racial and ethnic awareness” to ***racial, ethnic and cultural awareness.***”

After second and discussion, this motion was **adopted**.

A motion to extend debate was defeated.

Bishop Rimbo called for a vote on the resolution. The voting members of the Assembly overwhelmingly adopted strategic plan as amended.

**ACTION SA2012.05.05
ADOPTED**

A Resolution to Adopt 2013-2023 Strategic Plan

RESOLVED, that the 2012-2023 Strategic Plan for the Metropolitan New York Synod be adopted.

The wording of the Strategic Plan that was adopted, as amended, follows:

**Metropolitan New York Synod
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
2013 – 2023 Strategic Plan**

Mission Statement

Marked with the cross of Christ forever, we are claimed, gathered and sent for the sake of the world.

Vision Statement

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SENT: by God’s grace for the sake of the world, we will proclaim the good news of God in Christ through word and deed, serve all people following the example of our Lord Jesus and strive for justice and peace in the world.

Key Strategies

Claimed

The objective of the Claimed Strategy is to help people grow in their faith through interaction and engagement with the Lutheran tradition.

The three areas of focus will be:

- **Communication – share a clear, concise, compelling message of the Lutheran identity through a variety of methods and media**
- **Connection – provide a variety of opportunities for individuals and families to participate in the network of Lutheran ministries**

- **Commitment – challenge people to grow deeper in their faith through the development of new and renewed initiatives**

The Synod Council Executive Committee will commission a Claimed Strategy Committee to develop this strategy and make recommendations back to the Synod Council Executive Committee.

Gathered

The objective of the Gathered Strategy is to ensure that Word and Sacrament ministry is provided in the metropolitan New York area.

The three areas of focus will be:

- **Locations – determine the congregations and church facilities needed to meet the objective of this strategy**
- **Leadership – recruit, equip and support pastors and lay leaders to execute this strategy**
- **Ministries – develop new and renewed ministries to enhance this strategy**

The Synod Council Executive Committee will commission a Gathered Strategy Committee to develop this strategy and make recommendations back to the Synod Council Executive Committee.

Sent

The objective of the Sent Strategy is to network congregations, ministries and leaders to proclaim the Gospel while responding to specific societal needs and issues.

The three areas of focus will be:

- **Services – develop and deliver programs in our communities that help people in words and deeds**
- **Partnerships – determine organizations and ministries to support**
- **Advocacy – speak on specific justice and peace issues**

The Synod Council Executive Committee will commission a Sent Strategy Committee to develop this strategy and make recommendations back to the Synod Council Executive Committee.

Strategy Enablers

Unity & Diversity

As on the Day of Pentecost (Acts 2:1-13), the Holy Spirit still empowers God’s diverse people to be together and to understand each other, and share in proclaiming God’s deeds of power with a united voice in a diverse world. To help us so to preach the Gospel, the Metropolitan New York Synod will nurture racial, ethnic and cultural awareness and sensitivity in the hearts, minds, souls and behavior of all of God’s people in our synod and synodical programs, policies and procedures.

Finance

The bishop will continue to appoint a Financial Management Committee. The Synod Council is responsible for the allocation and stewardship of assets. Using this direction, the Financial Management Committee will:

- **Manage assets from all sources**
- **Develop a budget with a priority on enabling key strategies**
- **Allocate 100% of the net proceeds from the sales of synod owned property to the Synod Restricted Funds to support the key strategies as directed by the Synod Council.**

Leadership

- **The current constitutional governance system of Synod Assembly, Synod Council, Executive Committee, Conferences and Deans remains in place.**
- **The Synod Council Executive Committee is charged to direct and coordinate the key strategies. The Executive Committee receives input from the Conferences and Deans and reports to the Synod Council, which reports to the Synod Assembly.**
- **Other committees of the Synod Council include:**
 - **Claimed Strategy Committee**
 - **Gathered Strategy Committee**
 - **Sent Strategy Committee**
 - **Financial Management Committee**
- **The bishop will be charged with execution of the key strategies and working with the Synod Council Executive Committee. Other synod staff positions will be created, filled, developed, and evaluated based on the key strategies.**
- **Synod offices, technology, and other support will be evaluated based on the key strategies**

Financial Development

The Synod Council will establish a financial development plan to secure resources for key strategies.

Bishop Rimbo next invited Pr. Elise Brown and Pr. Jonathan Linman to the podium to speak about Project Connect. A video presentation about Project Connect was shown to the Assembly.

Pr. Kathleen Koran was invited to the podium to mark, with Bishop Rimbo, the Silver and Golden Jubilee anniversaries.

25 Years, AiMS

Ms. Christine Hauge

Dcn. Donna Nekarda

25 Years, Pastors

Pr. Daphne Burt
Pr. Ulf Lunow
Pr. Terrence Walsh

50 Years, Pastors

Pr. Albert Ahlstrom
Pr. Robert Brueckner
Pr. Richard Miller

Pr. Koran next recognized the congregations of the synod celebrating significant anniversaries.

50 Years

King of Kings, New Windsor
Grace, North Branch

75 Years

Our Savior, Manhasset
Trinity, Wyandanch

100 Years

Christ, Floral Park
St. Johns, Lynbrook

150 Years

St Peters, NYC
Christ, Ellenville

Pr. Koran next introduced the Conference of Deans.

- + **Pr. Kristina Ahlman: Western Suffolk**
- + **Pr. Paul Block: Bronx**
- + **Pr. Paul Egensteiner / Pr. Norman White: Tappan Zee**
- + **Pr. Brenda Jack: Southeast Queens**
- + **Pr. Perry Kirschbaum: Eastern Nassau**
- + **Pr. Jeffrey Laustsen: Southwest Nassau**
- + **Pr. Barrie Lawless: Manhattan**
- + **Pr. Jay Longan: Northwest Queens**
- + **Pr. Robert Modr: Peconic**
- + **Pr. Ernie Moss: Delaware Hudson**
- + **Pr. Martin Nale: Western Nassau**
- + **Pr. Dennis O'Rourke: Hudson**
- + **Pr. Gary Schulz: Northeast Queens**
- + **Pr. Micah Stumme: Southwest Queens**
- + **Pr. Garry Squire: Staten Island**
- + **Pr. Griffin Thomas: Brooklyn Bridges**

- + **Pr. Diane Wildow: Southwest Brooklyn**
- + **Pr. Kipp Zimmermann: South Shore Brooklyn**

Pr. Koran next introduced rostered leaders new to the Synod.

- + **Pr. Rebecca Pollicino: Grace Uniondale**
- + **Pr. Johanna Andritz: St. Paul, Liberty**
- + **Pr. Robert Rainis: Epiphany, Bronx**
- + **Pr. Benjamin McKelahan: Mission Developer, Brooklyn**
- + **Pr. James Smith: Wagner College**
- + **Pr. Omar Ortiz: Trinity, Brooklyn (18th Street)**
- + **Pr. Stephanie Kershner: Grace, Scarsdale**
- + **Pr. Daniel Ruth: Lutheran World Relief**
- + **Pr. Donald Lemke: Christ, Ozone Park**
- + **Pr. Harry Schenkel: Transfiguration, Harlem**
- + **Pr. Daphne Burt: Trinity, Staten Island (OLFC)**
- + **Pr. Vanessa Cardinale (UCC): Trinity, Brooklyn (46th Street)**
- + **Pr. Joel Brandt: Gloria Dei, Huntington Station**
- + **Pr. David Anglada: Visiting Nurse Services of New York**
- + **Ms. Julie Hagen, AiM: Advent, Manhattan**
- + **Dcn. Ursil Silcott: Prince of Peace, Cambria Heights**
- + **Dcn. Gloria Taylor: St. John's, Poughkeepsie**

Bishop Rimbo then invited the voting members of the Assembly to enjoy a ten minute break.

After resumption of business, Pr. John Puotinen and Pr. Danielle Miller gave a report from Lutheran Theological Seminary in Philadelphia.

Bishop Rimbo announced that, with the consent of the synod council, the next item for business, a resolution on Preaching and Sacramental Practices, will be postponed until 2013 Assembly.

Report of Elections Committee

Ms. Christine Connell reported the results of the first ballot.

Treasurer -	291 ballots cast	146 needed to elect
Frank Suttell	291	elected

Synod Council

SW Queens Clergy -	273 ballots cast	137 needed to elect
William Baum	273	elected

NW Queens Clergy –	284 ballots cast	143 needed to elect
Roslyn Braithwaite	284	elected

SS Brooklyn Clergy –	274 ballots cast	138 needed to elect
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Khader El Yateem	170	elected	
Harriet Wieber	104		
Hudson Lay Female – 272 ballots cast			137 needed to elect
Hazel Goldstein	113		
Terra Rowe	159	elected	
Tappan Zee Lay Female – 254 ballots cast			129 needed to elect
Ellen Ottstadt	109		
Miryan Fernandez	145	elected	
W. Nassau Lay Female - 259 ballots cast			131 needed to elect
Barbara Holm	110		
Karen Wooley	149	elected	
Peconic Lay Male – 254 ballots cast			128 needed to elect
Tom Tresselt	100		
John Prosen	154	elected	
Manhattan Lay Male – 263 ballots cast			132 needed to elect
Christopher Vergara	185	elected	
Diogenes Vazquetelles	79		
Staten Island Lay Male – 257 ballots cast			129 needed to elect
Brian Reardon	157	elected	
Frank Ali	100		
At Large Clergy – 280 ballots cast			141 needed to elect
Brenda Jack	196	elected	
Diane Wildow	84		
At Large MC Female – 262 ballots cast			132 needed to elect
Barbara Johnson	140	elected	
Marie Plaisir	122		
At Large Young Adult – 264 ballots cast			133 needed to elect
Abby Triebel	264	elected	
At Large Youth – 255 ballots cast			128 needed to elect
Savanah Lochansingh	158	elected	
Hephzibah Panumaka	97		
Consultation Committee			
Clergy Male (vote for two) – 282 ballots cast			142 needed to elect
Paul Block	257	elected	
Paul Nordeen	176	elected	

Clergy Female (vote for two) – 281 ballots cast 141 needed to elect

Annmarie Noto	227	elected
Diane Wildow	200	elected

Discipline Committee

Clergy Female no one elected

Clergy Male – 270 ballots cast 136 needed to elect

Albert Ahlstrom	270	elected
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Lay Female no one elected

Lay Male – 242 ballots cast 122 needed to elect

Tom Tresselt	242	elected
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Churchwide Assembly

Clergy Male (vote for two) – 291 ballots cast 146 needed to elect

Jeff Koblo	90	
Kit Robison	68	
Bill Baum	116	
Craig Miller	127	
Paul Block	106	
William Clark	47	

Clergy Female (vote for two) – 292 ballots cast 147 needed to elect

Jennifer Guelmami	95	
Mary Chang	72	
Kathleen Koran	160	elected
Ann Tiemeyer	78	
Brenda Jack	99	
Diane Wildow	54	

Clergy MS (vote for one) – 286 ballots cast 144 needed to elect

Khader El-Yateem	82	
Perucy Butiku	147	elected
Linda Bell	55	

Lay Female (vote for four) – 277 ballots cast 140 needed to elect

Elizabeth Hoffman	206	elected
Dorothy Criscuolo	130	
Anita Williams	173	elected
Jacquelyn Harrel	108	
Marie Plaisir	179	elected
Meg Fielding	180	elected

Lay Male (vote for four) – 275 ballots cast

John Prosen	195	elected
Paul Lumpkin	183	elected
John Heidgerd	141	elected
Richard Thyden	135	
John Malone	148	elected
Brian Reardon	131	

139 needed to elect

Young Adult – 277 ballots cast

Marc Stutzel	277	elected
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140 needed to elect

ACTION SA2012.05.06

First Ballot - Elected

Treasurer

Mr. Frank Suttell

Synod Council

Pr. William Baum
Pr. Roslyn Braithwaite
Pr. Khader El Yateem
Ms. Terra Rowe
Ms. Miryan Fernandez
Ms. Karen Wooley
Dcn. John Prosen
Mr. Christopher Vergara
Mr. Brian Reardon
Pr. Brenda Jack
Ms. Barbara Johnson
Ms. Abby Triebel
Ms. Savanah Lochansingh

Consultation Committee

Pr. Paul Block
Pr. Paul Nordeen
Pr. Annemarie Noto
Pr. Diane Wildow

Discipline Committee

Pr. Al Ahlstrom
Mr. Tom Tresselt

Churchwide Assembly

Pr. Kathleen Koran
Pr. Perucy Butiku
Ms. Elizabeth Hoffman
Ms. Anita Williams
Ms. Marie Plaisir
Dcn. Meg Fielding
Dcn. John Prosen
Dcn. Paul Lumpkin
Mr. John Heidgerd

Dcn. John Malone
Mr. Marc Stutzel

Voting on the second ballot then took place by electronic voting.

Discipline Committee

Clergy Female (vote for one) Ann Tiemeyer
Linda Bell
Phyllis Haynes

Lay Female (vote for one) Christine Connell
Anita Williams

Churchwide Assembly

Clergy Male (vote for two) Jeff Kolbo
Bill Baum
Craig Miller
Paul Block

Clergy Female (vote for one) Jennifer Guelmami
Ann Tiemeyer
Brenda Jack

Ms. Christine Connell reported the results of the second ballot.

Discipline Committee

Clergy Female (vote for one) – 302 ballots cast 152 needed to elect
Ann Tiemeyer 150
Linda Bell 97
Phyllis Haynes 55

Lay Female (vote for one) – 294 ballots cast 148 needed to elect
Christine Connell 197 elected
Anita Williams 97

Churchwide Assembly

Clergy Male (vote for two) – 315 ballots cast 158 needed to elect
Jeff Kolbo 112
Bill Baum 171 elected
Craig Miller 193 elected
Paul Block 143

Clergy Female (vote for one) – 303 ballots cast 153 needed to elect
Jennifer Guelmami 94
Ann Tiemeyer 75
Brenda Jack 134

ACTION SA2012.05.07
Second Ballot - Elected

Discipline Committee Ms. Christine Connell

Churchwide Assembly Pr. William Baum
 Pr. Craig Miller

Third ballot voting will take place during the fourth plenary session Saturday morning.

Third Ballot:

Discipline Committee

Clergy Female (vote for one)

Ann Tiemeyer
Linda Bell

Churchwide Assembly

Clergy Female (vote for one)

Jennifer Guelmami
Brenda Jack

The report of the Hunger committee was given by Dcn. Karen Nurmi.

The Right Reverend Lawrence C. Provenzano, Bishop of the Episcopal Diocese of Long Island brought greetings to the Assembly.

The Rev, Dr. Rita M. Root, Interim Conference Minister of the New York Conference of the United Church of Christ brought greetings to the Assembly and commended the synod for the work it has done.

Bishop Rimbo made several announcements pertaining to the evening Festival Eucharist, including that the offering will be dedicated to the ELCA Malaria Campaign. He then invited Ms. Elizabeth Hoffman to the podium for announcements.

Bishop Rimbo then invited Pr. Kristina Ahlman to the podium to close the session with prayer.

The Assembly celebrated the Festival Eucharist in the ballroom at 7:30pm.

SATURDAY, MAY 19, 2012

PLENARY SESSION

IV

The voting members of the Assembly gathered for Morning Prayer at 8:00am.

The fourth plenary session of the Twenty-first Regular Synod Assembly of the Metropolitan New York Synod was called to order, by Bishop Robert Alan Rimbo at 8:25am. He then

introduced Ms. Marion Steadman and Pr. Kathleen Koran as the hosts for the plenary session.

Report of the Committee on Registration

Ms. Minerva Melendez gave the updated registration report.

Clergy	195
Lay Voting Members	248
AiMs	11
Total Voting members	<u>454</u>
Visitors	<u>22</u>
Total Attendance	476

Report of Elections Committee

Ms. Christine Connell led the Assembly in electronic voting on the third ballot and then immediately reported the results.

Discipline Committee

Clergy Female (vote for one) – 219 ballots cast	110 needed to elect
Ann Tiemeyer	143 elected
Linda Bell	76

Churchwide Assembly

Clergy Female (vote for one) – 228 ballots cast	115 needed to elect
Jennifer Guelmami	93
Brenda Jack	135 elected

ACTION SA2012.05.08

Third Ballot - Elected

Discipline Committee Pr. Anne Tiemeyer

Churchwide Assembly Pr. Brenda Jack

Report of Romania Committee

Pr. Leigh Pezet, chairperson, presented the report of the Romania Committee, noting that a visit from the Bishop and a group of pastors from Romania to our synod has been postponed in light of the resignation of Pr. Gary Mills who had worked with the committee and our colleagues in Romania since the inception of our companionship.

Report of the Tanzania Committee

Mr. Sheldon Erb, co-chairperson, presented the report of the Tanzania Committee.

Bishop Rimbo then invited Pr. Elise Brown to the podium, who addressed the Assembly on the ELCA Malaria Campaign and the work of our synod committee in this area. A resolution

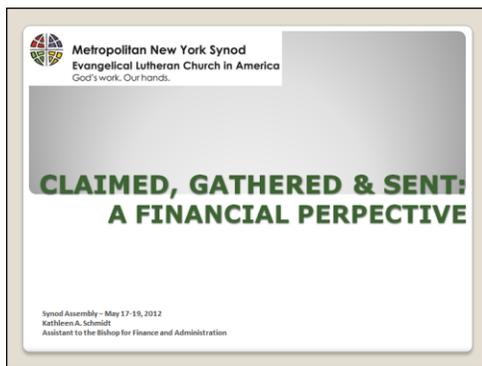
had been adopted by the Assembly on Thursday that had been drawn up and presented by that committee. The Assembly then viewed a video presentation on the ELCA Malaria Campaign.

Bishop Rimbo next invited Pr. Carol Fryer and Pr. Jack Horner to the podium to speak to the Assembly about their effort to raise money for the malaria campaign by climbing Mount Kilimanjaro during the summer of 2012. Pr. Horner was dressed in full mountain climbing gear.

Pr. Leo (Jay) Longen, Pastor of Trinity, Middle Village and Dean of the Northwest Queens Conference addressed the Assembly and presented a video on the successful merger between the congregations of Ascension, Glendale and Trinity, Middle Village.

Report of Assistant to the Bishop for Finance and Administration

Ms. Kathleen Schmidt presented the following report:



Thank you, Bishop Rimbo.

Before I begin my presentation, I would like to take this opportunity to publicly thank Bob Buescher for his faithful partnership with our synod during the years he served as Treasurer. And I want to thank you personally, Bob, for the time you spent bringing me up to speed when I first started, and for your careful attention to detail and your willingness to always talk through financial concerns. God bless you!

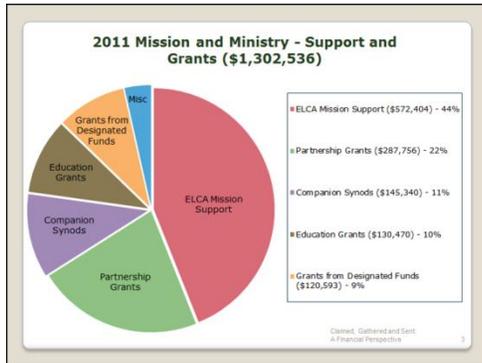


By now this should look very familiar to you. Over the last two days, you've heard a lot about our new mission statement. Many people have provided examples and insights as to how individuals, our congregations and our synod can and are living out our mission. I'm here today to bring a financial perspective to our mission statement.

Having been marked with the cross of Christ forever, I am challenged daily in my work to do everything I can to affirm that we are claimed, gathered and sent for the sake of the world. That may seem a little strange coming from a finance person. What do general ledgers, audits, fund accounting, and finance committee meetings have to do with living out such a bold mission statement? Well, those of you who have heard me speak at the last two Assemblies know that I believe that all of these things have everything to do with our mission. A thorough understanding of our synod's finances – not just tracking the money coming in and going out, but rather an appreciation for the strategic role that money plays in our mission, the realization that it's not unlimited and that tough decisions must be made every day – all of

this plays into achieving our mission of being claimed, gathered and sent for the sake of the world.

So, what role do the synod's finances play in helping our pastors and congregations live out our mission statement?



Let's begin with how our synod provides direct financial assistance to the wider church, to congregations, educational institutions, social ministry organizations, and even individuals. In 2011, 42%, of our total expenditures of \$3,098,415, or \$1.3 million, was paid out in direct support to organizations and congregations. As shown on the slide, I've separated these expenditures into six categories: ELCA Mission Support, Partnership Grants, Companion Synods, Education Grants, Grants from Designated Funds, and Miscellaneous grants. I spoke in detail about all of these categories at last year's Assembly, so today I'd like to focus on just three of them.



First, let's look at the mission support that our synod gives to the ELCA. In 2011, 48.5% of the mission support our synod received from congregations was sent on to the ELCA. This totaled about \$572,000. If you're like me, you probably don't think too much about the portion of your weekly offering that your congregation sends on to the synod. As individuals, we tend to focus on our local finances – whether it's paying the pastor's salary and benefits, fixing a leaking roof, or financing a food pantry for the community.

But it's important for us to maintain a broad vision, to recognize that we are all partners with our synod and with the ELCA. And, as partners, we can rejoice in how our mission support enables the synod expression and the ELCA expression of the church to do things that one congregation cannot do on its own.

I was privileged to attend the Churchwide Assembly for the first time last year as a voting member and found the experience to be not only very enlightening, but also inspiring and encouraging. Claimed, gathered and sent for the sake of the world – the ELCA's Mission Statement was front and center throughout the proceedings: in the daily worship, the presentations, and even in the discussion and voting on resolutions. Participating in the CWA not only made it abundantly clear to me why we need the three expressions of our church but I realized how great an impact our wider church has on the world by utilizing the combined gifts that come from our synods and congregations. The mission support that your congregation contributes to the synod, along with the gifts you contribute to ELCA World Hunger, Disaster Relief and other programs, not only make it possible for the ELCA to be a powerful voice for justice and peace throughout the world, but enables all of us, through the

ELCA, to provide tangible resources to those who need them most – the poor, the oppressed, the hungry, and the displaced. The whole is truly greater than the sum of its parts!



Last year, our synod gave partnership grants totaling \$288,000 to 19 congregations and two social ministry organizations. These grants are often given in partnership with the Congregational and Synodical Mission unit of the ELCA, which works with our Director for Evangelical Mission, Pr. Jack Horner, to evaluate congregational grant requests and provide additional grant funding to many of the congregations that receive partnership grants from our synod.

During 2011, the ELCA provided over \$222,000 in partnership grants to 14 congregations in our synod. So, between the churchwide expression and the synodical expression of our church, congregations in our synod received a total of \$510,000 in partnership grants last year. These grants, which are an expression of both the ELCA and our synod living out the “sent” part of the mission statement, help enable congregations whose members have been marked with the cross of Christ forever, to claim, gather and send for the sake of the world.

The partnership grants given last year went to renewing congregations such as Oceanside, to new starts, such as St. Lydia’s, a synodically-authorized worshipping community, some of our ethnic ministries, such as Salam Arabic in Brooklyn and Ascension, Deer Park’s Latino ministry, to our ministries with the poor, such as Transfiguration in the Bronx, and Trinity, Lower East Side in Manhattan, as well as to social ministry organizations such as Brewster Emergency Shelter and Trinity Place.

Congregations receiving these grants must sign a covenant with the ELCA and our synod. Part of that covenant is that they contribute mission support to the synod and provide regular reporting on how the funds are used and how the congregation is faring. Funds are cut off if congregations do not abide by the covenant. This is an example of accountability going both ways – our synod must be accountable to our congregations and the ELCA, but congregations must also be accountable to our synod.

A number of people have made comments to me over the last three years regarding partnership grants that imply that our synod just keeps giving grants to the same congregations over and over. While it is true that many of our ethnic congregations and congregations that minister primarily to the poor often receive ongoing partnership grants, most congregations are weaned off of the grants as time goes on. Just to give you an example – of the 21 grant recipients in 2008, 10 are no longer receiving grants. The 11 who still are receiving grants are all ethnic ministries or ministries with the poor. Pr. Jack Horner and the Outreach Committee take very seriously their duty to monitor and review these grants on a regular basis, and they are always looking for areas in our synod where we might begin a new start or where a congregational site is ripe for redevelopment.

DESIGNATED FUNDS GRANTS - \$120,593	
> Mission Redevelopment Fund - \$ 25,000	• Wagner College – to support the ministry of Pr. James Smith
> Salam Ministry Fund - \$ 51,650	• Salam Arabic Church – matching grant
> Winston Bone Scholarship Fund - \$ 4,252	• Scholarships for two African-American seminary students
> Ministerial Education Fund - \$ 1,225	• Scholarship for one seminary student
> Magda Bratland Fund - \$ 5,000	• Internship grant for a new ministry in Brooklyn

The third type of grant I will discuss in detail are those that were given out of the synod’s designated and temporarily restricted funds last year. I suspect that most people in our synod are aware of only a few of these funds, so I thought I would list for you the total amount expended from each fund. Although the amount of these grants awarded in 2011 accounted for less than 10% of the total amount of \$1.3 million paid out last year, they are an important piece in the financial picture of our synod. As you can see on this

slide and one I’ll show you in a moment, they came from many funds and were given for a variety of purposes. Let me highlight a few of these for you.

DESIGNATED FUNDS GRANTS - \$120,593	
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> Salam Ministry Fund - \$ 51,650	• Salam Arabic Church – matching grant
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> Magda Bratland Fund - \$ 5,000	• Internship grant for a new ministry in Brooklyn

Mission Redevelopment Fund - \$ 25,000

- \$25,000 was given from the Mission Redevelopment Fund to Wagner College to support the ministry of Pr. James Smith, a “son” of our synod, and a newly ordained pastor, who was called by the Synod Council to serve as the campus chaplain at Wagner College. The Synod Council committed to giving this grant for two years, after which Wagner College will provide 100% of the funding for Pr. Smith’s ministry.

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Salam Ministry Fund - \$ 51,650

- The Salam Ministry Fund is a new fund, and it is a wonderful example of a congregation and our synod working together towards a common goal. Pr. Jack Horner and I began working closely with the pastor and leaders of Salam Arabic Church over two years ago, as they struggled to pay their bills and maintain their building. It became clear that although they had 60-75 people attending worship each week, the stewardship offerings they received were not

enough to keep the congregation going financially. So, the congregation requested Synodical Administration. Working together, we came up with a plan to sell their existing property, and move the congregation a few blocks away into Our Saviour’s, Brooklyn, where Salam now rents space. The people of Salam, recognizing the interdependent relationship between the congregation and our synod, tithed 10% of the net sales proceeds to our synod. The remaining sales proceeds, about \$1,150,000 was used to establish the Salam Ministry Fund. A covenant was signed between the ELCA, our synod, and Salam in late 2010, part of which provides a framework for managing the fund. The goal is for Salam to ultimately become financially independent by increasing their stewardship. In the meantime, the fund will help them during this transition time. Up to 4.5% of the average fund balance may be distributed to Salam each year, based on a 3:1 match; i.e., \$3 from the fund for every

\$1 in stewardship. Pr. Horner will continue to work with Salam on building up their stewardship, with the goal that their dependency on the fund becomes less and less each year.

DESIGNATED FUNDS GRANTS - \$120,593, cont.

- > **Youth Ministries Fund - \$ 3,882**
 - To support youth events
- > **Bishop James Graefe Fund - \$ 8,650**
 - Three grants to pastors/congregations in crisis
- > **Samuel Trexler Fund - \$ 4,000**
 - Four study grants to pastors
- > **Bishop's Mission Fund - \$ 5,000**
 - St. John the Divine (The Value of Water - Sustaining a Green Planet)
- > **Wider Church Fund - \$ 7,500**
 - Lutheran Music Program
- > **Musical Instruments Fund - \$ 4,434**
 - Grants to help refurbish and move pianos from closed congregations.

Called, Gathered and Sent
A Practical Perspective

Samuel Trexler Fund - \$ 4,000

■ In 2011, four pastors received grants of \$1,000 each from the Samuel Trexler fund. This fund provides a means for our synod to assist pastors in financing advanced non-degree study, often helping to cover the cost of travel expenses for pastors seeking to broaden their ecumenical vision or to explore the cultural diversity of our Lutheran community in other parts of the world.

DESIGNATED FUNDS GRANTS - \$120,593, cont.

- > **Youth Ministries Fund - \$ 3,882**
 - To support youth events
- > **Bishop James Graefe Fund - \$ 8,650**
 - Three grants to pastors/congregations in crisis
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Called, Gathered and Sent
A Practical Perspective

Bishop's Mission Fund - \$ 5,000

■ Our synod gave a grant of \$5,000 from the Bishop's Mission Fund to the Cathedral of St. John the Divine to help sponsor "The Value of Water: Sustaining a Green Planet," which was the largest art exhibition ever held at the cathedral. It included paintings, sculptures, and multimedia pieces along with various programs, including educational programs for schoolchildren and adults.

CONGREGATIONS IN TRANSITION

- > Ministries need to be re-evaluated from time to time and sometimes re-invented
 - **Mergers** - Trinity, Middle Village and Ascension, Glendale
 - **Moving to another site** - Salam Arabic Church
 - **Tearing down an old building and constructing a new one** - the vision of Zion, 119th St., Manhattan

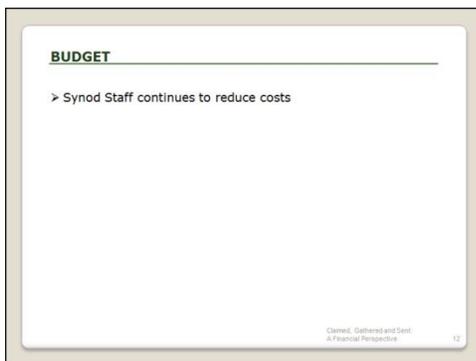
Called, Gathered and Sent
A Practical Perspective

You've heard during this Assembly that every congregation has a beginning and an end, and although the length of time between those two may sometimes depend on circumstances beyond our control, I believe that, more often than not, congregations with a long life span are ones who understand that congregations don't exist for themselves, but rather for the sake of others, and for the sake of the world. The Church (with a capital "C") will always go on, but the earthly vessels of the

Church are ever changing. As people of God who are called, gathered, and sent, we are constantly challenged to be a movement for wholeness in a fragmented, fear-filled world. To be that movement for wholeness, we ourselves, and our congregations, must be whole. Sometimes that means re-evaluating an existing ministry and working with its faithful people to help them either re-invent themselves, whether it be by merging with another congregation, a wonderful example of which you just heard about from Pr. Horner and Pastor Jay Longan, or by tearing down a crumbling building and constructing a new facility that meets the needs of the people not only in the congregation, but in their community among the people they have been sent to serve. Or it may be that a congregation finds itself unable to financially support its building and needs to consider selling the property and moving the ministry to a neighboring congregation that has room to accommodate them. I already gave

you one example of this when I spoke about the joint collaboration between Salam Arabic Church and our synod. Here's another example.

As you know from past reports to the Assembly, the people of Zion Lutheran Church in East Harlem, one of our Latino congregations, made a bold decision over 7 years ago. Their building on East 119th St. in Manhattan was literally crumbling around them, and was essentially uninhabitable. But Pastor Arias and the people of Zion had a vision for the future. Working with our synod, they came up with a plan whereby a developer would build a new structure to house not only a new sanctuary and meeting space for Zion, but would also include condominiums. Zion entered into a covenant with our synod to borrow the money to bring this dream to fruition, with our synod being repaid upon the sale of the property to a developer. It appeared to be a win-win situation for our synod, for Zion and for the developer. But the collapse of the financial markets in late 2008 necessitated putting the plan on hold for two years. As the market began to recover, members of our synod staff, along with the Zion Mission Guidance Team, our attorney, an architect and various developers, spent considerable time over the last two years continuing to work on the possibility of finding a developer for Zion's property site. However, it became clear that the economy had not recovered sufficiently to allow our synod to recoup from a developer more than approximately \$250,000 of the \$1.4 million loaned to Zion over the last 7 years, and so the decision was made by the Executive Committee and Synod Council last fall to cease all efforts regarding the development of the property and to sell the property, repay our synod the full amount loaned, and work with Zion and our other Latino ministries in Manhattan in an effort to develop a comprehensive Latino mission strategy for Manhattan, and to find Zion a new church home in an existing congregation. Our synod's Latino Mission Strategy Team is currently working to bring all of this to fruition. Although this was not the outcome everyone had hoped for, the pastor and people of Zion understand that as people of God, who are marked with the cross of Christ forever, they will find a way, albeit in another setting, to continue proclaiming to the world that they are claimed, gathered and sent by God to serve the Latino community in Manhattan.



Gathered together as the people of God in this Assembly, we are charged with the task of considering and voting on the budget. As I said earlier, the synod's coffers are not unlimited and tough financial decisions must be made on a regular basis. In my presentations to the Assembly the last two years, I have enumerated a number of areas in which we have worked to reduce spending. The bishop and synod staff, along with the Executive Committee, have continued these efforts over the last year. In an attempt to quantify the efforts to date, I recently did an analysis of the spending on synod operations since Bishop Rimbo took office. To do this, I removed what I call the non-operational expenses that are included in our budget, things like ELCA Mission Support, Partnership and Education grants, Companion Synod expenses, grants from designated funds - in fact, everything I just reviewed with you for 2011. I wanted to be able to compare apples

to apples and look strictly at our everyday operating costs, such as personnel and office expenses, etc. What I discovered is, I believe, very significant.

BUDGET, cont.

- > Synod Staff continues to reduce costs
- > Operational cost reduction since Bishop took office - \$500,000
- > Primary areas reduced:
 - \$200,000 – personnel expenses
 - \$110,000 – office expenses
 - \$75,000 – travel expenses

Claimed, Gathered and Sent
A Financial Perspective 13

The actual operating expenses that our synod incurred in 2011 were almost \$500,000 less than they were prior to Bishop Rimbo taking office. The major reductions were made in the following categories: almost \$200,000 in personnel expense, \$110,000 in office expenses, and over \$75,000 in travel expense.

BUDGET, cont.

- > Revised 2012 budget contains total cuts of almost \$300,000, \$232,000 of which are operational cuts
- > Proposed 2013 budget – total cuts of over \$300,000, of which \$176,000 are operational cuts
- > **Summary of Operational Budget Cuts:**

▪ 2009 – 2011	\$500,000
▪ Revised 2012 Budget	\$232,000
▪ Proposed 2013 Budget	<u>\$176,000</u>
TOTAL	\$908,000

Claimed, Gathered and Sent
A Financial Perspective 14

And if you add in the proposed additional operational cuts of \$232,000 in the revised 2012 budget and

\$176,000 in further operational cuts proposed for the 2013 budget, we're talking about projected operational cost reduction of over \$900,000 since Bishop Rimbo took office. I don't know about you, but I believe that this is very significant.

Certainly part of this frugality was born out of necessity – Mission Support had been declining for years. In fact, 2011 was the first year in many years when Mission Support contributions increased over the prior year. But it is also reflective of the commitment that the bishop, synod staff, Executive Committee and Synod Council have made to being good stewards of our financial resources. Fiduciary responsibility is an integral component to achieving our mission.

MARKED WITH THE CROSS OF CHRIST
FOREVER, WE ARE

 **CLAIMED**

 **GATHERED**

 **SENT**

FOR THE SAKE OF THE WORLD

Claimed, Gathered and Sent
A Financial Perspective 15

Having been marked with the cross of Christ forever, we are claimed, gathered, and sent by God for the sake of the world.

That is our mission. How bold! How simple! How profound! God has placed each and every one of us in such a time as this to live out that mission. A bit scary? Well, given the changing times we live in, almost certainly. But each day as I work with our bishop and other trusted colleagues in our synod office, and as we work together with our Synod Council, I am confident that God has given us the tools, the resources, and the perseverance to fulfill our mission. I look forward to continuing to serve our synod as we move boldly into the future. God calls, gathers and sends us to be a movement for wholeness in a fragmented, fear-filled world. So, let's get on with our mission!

Thank you.

Report of Environmental Stewardship Committee

Mr. Gerard Falco, chairperson, presented the report of the Environmental Stewardship Committee to the Assembly.

Constitutional Resolution

Bishop Rimbo invited Pr. Robert Schoepflin, Synod Secretary, to present a resolution to amend the Constitution of the Metropolitan New York Synod by creating one nomination and elections committee.

Pr. Schoepflin indicated that this motion comes from the Synod Council, which approved the proposed resolution at its January 2012 meeting, and that the motion did not require a second.

Indicating that the full text of the resolution was before the voting members, he proceeded to verbally read only the resolves.

A Resolution to Create one Metropolitan New York Synod Nominations and Elections Committee

WHEREAS, the Metropolitan New York Synod Constitution, section S9.01.01 states that the Bishop shall appoint a Committee on the Conduct of Elections whose sole responsibility shall be the distribution of ballots, supervision of the counting of ballots and recording of the same, and making the results known in detail to the Assembly, and

WHEREAS, the Metropolitan New York Synod Constitution section, S9.03 states that the Synod Council shall appoint a Nominating Committee whose multiple responsibilities shall include but not be limited to:

1. Gathering the list of all open offices from the Synod Secretary;
2. Soliciting nominees for open offices through personal contact;
3. Soliciting additional nominee suggestions through processes listed in Constitutional section S9.01.01 SA2003 B.2;
4. Selecting two persons for each office (or as prescribed by the governing documents) from nomination suggestions received and persons sought by the committee;
5. Performing its duties for developing the slate(s) and ballot(s) according to Constitutional section S9.01.01 SA2003 B.4;
6. Gathering information from each candidate for inclusion in the biographical information provided to the Voting Members;
7. Organizing nominees into groups of equivalent offices;
8. Develop sub-groups of equivalent offices insofar as it is necessary to reasonably ensure meeting representativeness goals;
9. Posting categorized nominee list(s) on the Web Site and through e-mail notice to the Deans and other mailing lists as appropriate.;
10. Announcing categorized nominee list(s) to the elected voting members at least three (3) weeks prior to the Synod Assembly opening session;
11. Receiving additional nominations in writing from voting members, once nominees are made public, on or before one week prior to the Synod Assembly opening session;

12. Integrating the nominations from the voting members with the Nominating Committee nominations and prepare a consolidated nomination form and consolidated biographic document for distribution to voting members at the assembly;
13. Following announcement of the First Ballot and any declared elections, and after examining the remaining candidates within each First Ballot ticket the nominating Committee prepares a Second Ballot and develops additional tickets as necessary such that only one office is to be elected per ticket following the Constitutional procedures as listed in S0.01.01 SA2003 D. 1, 2;
14. Complete any other duties as deemed necessary by the Synod Council or requested and approved by the voting members of the Synod Assembly, and

WHEREAS, the Committee on the Conduct of Elections and the Nominating Committee of the Metropolitan New York Synod have been working in concert during the past four (4) years in order to more efficiently serve both the Voting Members and the Synod Council and Bishop, and to fulfill the duties of each committee as prescribed in the Constitution of the Metropolitan New York Synod while also taking care to be good stewards of committee member's time through the sharing of responsibilities.

BE IT THEREFORE,

RESOLVED, that this Assembly of the Metropolitan New York Synod create one Constitutional Committee, to be called the Nominations and Elections Committee, whose responsibilities shall encompass the duties and responsibilities as listed in the Constitution of the Metropolitan New York Synod and currently relating to the Committee on the Conduct of Elections and the Nominating Committee, and

BE IT FURTHER,

RESOLVED, that the newly created Nominations and Elections Committee be appointed by the Bishop and approved by the Synod Council.

Submitted by the Metropolitan New York Synod Council

After the reading there was no discussion and the question was called. The resolution was **adopted**. Bishop Rimbo told the voting members that, pursuant to the constitutional provisions on amending our constitution, this resolution would have to be voted upon favorably once again, at the 2013 Synod Assembly, in order to be adopted.

ACTION SA2012.05.09

ADOPTED

**Resolution to Create One Metropolitan New York Synod
Nominations and Elections Committee**

RESOLVED, that this Assembly of the Metropolitan New York Synod create one Constitutional Committee, to be called the Nominations and Elections Committee, whose responsibilities shall encompass the duties and responsibilities as listed in the Constitution of the Metropolitan New York Synod and currently relating to the Committee on the Conduct of Elections and the Nominating Committee, and be it further

RESOLVED, that the newly created Nominations and Elections Committee be appointed by the Bishop and approved by the Synod Council.

Report of Lutheran Schools Association

Bishop Rimbo asked Pr. Jonathan Linman to introduce Mr. Linda Mitchell, Executive Director of Lutheran Schools Association, who gave a report to the Assembly.

Senior Housing Ministry, Amagansett

Bishop Rimbo invited Pr. Katrina Foster, to share the exciting report of the senior housing project underway at St. Michael's Lutheran Church in Amagansett. Pr. Foster did so, complete with hardhat and shovel.

Seafarer's & International House

Bishop Rimbo invited Pr. Marsh Drege, Director of Seafarer's & International House, to address the Assembly on the work and ministry of SIH.

Bishop Rimbo then asked Pr. Kristina Ahlman to lead the Assembly in prayer before its consideration of the proposal of the Synod Council to change our procedure on the election of a bishop. Following prayer, Bishop announced that the proposal would be handled under a Consent Agenda, unless the Assembly removes it, and reviewed what this entailed.

Pr. Robert Schoepflin, Chair of the Commission on the Bishop Election Procedure then gave its report to the Assembly, and indicated that the Synod Council voted, at its February 2012 meeting, to recommend adoption of this procedure for the election of a bishop.

Proposal from the Commission to Examine our Election Process

Background

The Commission was charged by the 2008 Synod Assembly with examining the procedures used by other synods and church bodies for electing a bishop and surveying the members of our own synod, and making recommendations for changes (if any) in our bishop election process. As reported at the 2011 Synod Assembly, numerous other synods of our Church have adopted procedures for nominating/identifying candidates for the office of bishop prior to the Assembly at which a Bishop will be elected. The response to these procedures has been favorable. A survey of members of our synod demonstrated a strong desire that nominees be identified prior to the Assembly so that more informed decision-making will guide our election process.

What follows is the recommendation of the Commission for a modification of our election procedure, to be presented to the voting members at our Assembly, May 17-19, 2012.

Procedure

A Bishop Election Committee (the “committee”), comprised of ten (10) members, six (6) lay and four (4) clergy, will be selected and installed at the Synod Assembly preceding the Assembly at which the election for bishop will occur (the “Electing Assembly”). [See Appendix A for selection and composition of this Committee].

The Committee will be charged with soliciting nominations from any baptized member of a congregation within the Synod and from any group of baptized members within the Synod, including, but not limited to, congregation councils, conferences, committees, and organizations, for the office of Bishop.

The period during which nominations may be made will begin on September 1 in the year prior to the Electing Assembly and end on January 1 of the year of the Electing Assembly. A nomination must be physically received or post-marked by January 1 to be considered by the committee. The form for making a nomination for the office of Bishop will be available on the website of the Synod no later than September 1 of the year prior to the Electing Assembly. The form will contain detailed instructions for its submission.

All nominations will be received by the Chairperson of the Committee who will send written acknowledgement of receipt to the maker (individual or group) of the nomination.

After the close of the nominating period, the Committee will prayerfully and deliberately select seven (7) nominees to be included on the first ballot for the election of Bishop. This selection process will include face to face interviews with the nominees and careful consideration of how each nominee’s gifts and strengths for leadership and ministry matches up with the strategic plan of the Synod. During this selection process, the Committee will receive written assurance from each of these nominees that he or she consents to stand for election as Bishop and that he or she will participate fully and willingly in the election processes both prior to and during the Electing Assembly, including the providing of all biographical information requested, meeting with the Committee, and attendance at the Electing Assembly and at all informational forums prior to the Electing Assembly. The Committee will have background checks and screening performed, in accordance with Synod and Churchwide guidelines, on each of the seven nominees prior to releasing the names and biographies of the nominees.

The names and biographies of the seven (7) nominees will be announced by the Committee by April 1 of the year of the Electing Assembly. Such announcement will be made via the Synod website, synod e-letter, and by written mailing to each congregation of the Synod. At the same time, the Committee will provide a schedule of informational forums (dates and locations) to be held with the candidates.

In accordance with the schedule provided by the Committee, four (4) informational forums will be held during which members of the Synod may meet, hear and ask questions of the nominees for Bishop. The Committee will determine the form and conduct of the forums. All seven (7) nominees will be required to be present at each of the forums. The

locations of the forums will be varied geographically within the Synod and be selected in order to provide for the broadest attendance possible. All forums will be scheduled to occur within the shortest time-frame practicable, and will be concluded no later than the Thursday of the week prior to the Electing Assembly.

The first ballot for the election of the Bishop will contain the names of the seven (7) nominees and one additional space in which a voting member at the Electing Assembly may nominate any other ELCA-rostered clergy person for the office of Bishop. In this manner the ballot is still an ecclesiastical ballot within the provisions of the Constitution of the Synod. If any nominee, including a nominee written on the ballot at the Assembly, receives the required number of votes to be elected (three-fourths of the votes), that nominee shall be deemed elected as Bishop. If no nominee receives the required number of votes to elect on the first ballot, it shall be considered the nominating ballot, and successive ballots shall be held in accordance with current constitutional provisions, until an individual is elected as Bishop. None of the seven (7) nominees placed on the ballot by the Committee shall have the right to withdraw his or her name before the second ballot. Any individual nominated on the first ballot by a voting member of the Electing Assembly shall have the right to withdraw his or her name from consideration prior to the second ballot.

During the Electing Assembly the Committee shall provide opportunities for questions to be placed to all the nominees and for each nominee to address the voting members as under current practice.

Timetable for Next Election of a Bishop (2014 Synod Assembly)

2012 Assembly	Consideration and vote on new procedure
January 2013	Conferences invited to submit nominations for Election Committee
January - March 2013	Commission receives nominations for Election Committee
2013 Assembly	Members of Election Committee selected by lot and installed
June-December 2013	Election Committee meets, elects chair, adds members if necessary, formulates selection plan, develops Bible study materials relating to office/election of bishop for use by congregations and conferences.
September 1, 2013	Nomination Form made available on Synod website.
September 1, 2013- January 1, 2014	Nominations received by Chairperson of Committee
January 1-March 31, 2014	Nominees interviewed. Background checks.

April 1, 2014	Seven (7) nominees announced via website, e-letter and written letter to congregations. Schedule of forums announced.
May 1, 2014	Informational forums begin to be held.
Assembly 2014	Election of Bishop

APPENDIX A

Process for nominees to the Bishop Election Committee

10 persons to be placed on the committee: 6 lay and 4 clergy

Selection to happen by lot (Acts 1:21-26 – the choice of Matthias to be an apostle)

²¹So one of the men who have accompanied us during all the time that the Lord Jesus went in and out among us, ²²beginning from the baptism of John until the day when he was taken up from us — one of these must become a witness with us to his resurrection." ²³So they proposed two, Joseph called Barsabbas, who was also known as Justus, and Matthias. ²⁴Then they prayed and said, "Lord, you know everyone's heart. Show us which one of these two you have chosen ²⁵to take the place in this ministry and apostleship from which Judas turned aside to go to his own place." ²⁶And they cast lots for them, and the lot fell on Matthias; and he was added to the eleven apostles. NRSV

Selection to occur at the 2013 Synod Assembly: two baskets, one with laypersons' and one with clergypersons' names; to be drawn by one of the ecumenical guests visiting assembly that year.

Each conference of the synod will be asked to submit suggestions to serve on the committee: 3 laypersons and 2 clergy.

Names do not necessarily need to be from the specific conference that suggests

Names must be of active members of a parish in the Metro NY Synod

In the suggestion of names, Conferences are asked to be mindful of the great diversity of our synod when suggesting names, being conscious of ethnic, geographic, economic, type/size of congregation, age, LGBT, other, issues

Person suggested must be contacted and agree to serve if chosen, understanding that there will be several meetings shortly after the 2013 Synod assembly, but that there will be a heavy commitment of work from January – March of 2014. (The dean of the conference that suggests will be responsible for securing permission from the nominee.)

It is understood that no person that might be a potential candidate for bishop shall be a person serving on the selection/call committee, thus any pastor who believes she/he might discern that God is calling them to serve as bishop shall not allow their name to be submitted

Person must understand the vital nature of confidentiality within the process, and will be asked to sign a confidentiality agreement and pledge before the 2013 Synod assembly that they will abide by this

Though a person can be suggested any number of times by any conference, should they meet the above, their name will appear in the “selection basket” only once. Trusting the guidance of the Holy Spirit, as happened in Acts, the names shall be drawn. Should the committee determine that they do not effectively reflect the rich diversity of our Synod, they may choose to appoint **no more than 5** additional persons to serve. The committee shall choose its own chairperson, understanding that this person will have responsibilities throughout the process in addition to committee meetings (including receiving potential bishop candidate names/resumes and supervising any contracted staff person to assist the committee with its work)

The item was removed from the Consent Agenda.

Pr. Jared Stahler moved the following amendment:

To begin first paragraph of section entitled Procedure as follows:

For an election occasioned by a vacancy in the office of bishop, a Bishop Election Committee.....

After second and discussion, the amendment was **defeated**.

Pr. Amandus Derr moved the following amendment:

To amend the first sentence of the fifth paragraph of section entitled Procedure as follows:

After the close of the nominating period, the Committee will prayerfully and deliberately select seven (7) nominees to be included on the first ballot for the election of the Bishop, **one of whom shall be the current Bishop if she or he is open to reelection**.

After second and discussion, the amendment was **adopted**.

After discussion on the floor as to whether a bishop election committee would be mandated to put forward a complete list of seven candidates in an election year when a popular incumbent bishop was standing for reelection, or could just put forward the name of such incumbent bishop, Ms. Lisa McCaffrey moved the following amendment:

To further amend the *already amended* first sentence of the fifth paragraph of section entitled Procedure as follows:

After the close of the nominating period, the Committee will prayerfully and deliberately select **up to** seven (7) nominees to be included on the first ballot for the election of the Bishop, one of whom shall be the current Bishop if she or he is open to reelection.

After second and discussion, the amendment was **adopted**.

The question was called and vote taken on the procedure as amended. The amended procedure was **adopted**.

**ACTION SA2012.05.10 A Resolution to Adopt Process for Election of Synodical Bishop
ADOPTED**

RESOLVED, that the modified process for electing our synodical bishop, including the timeline contained therein for the 2014 electing assembly, be adopted.

The procedure, as adopted, reads as follows:

Procedure

A Bishop Election Committee (the “committee”), comprised of ten (10) members, six (6) lay and four (4) clergy, will be selected and installed at the Synod Assembly preceding the Assembly at which the election for bishop will occur (the “Electing Assembly”). [See Appendix A for selection and composition of this Committee].

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All nominations will be received by the Chairperson of the Committee who will send written acknowledgement of receipt to the maker (individual or group) of the nomination.

After the close of the nominating period, the Committee will prayerfully and deliberately select up to seven (7) nominees to be included on the first ballot for the election of Bishop, one of whom shall be the current Bishop if she or he is open to reelection. This selection process will include face to face interviews with the nominees and careful consideration of how each nominee’s gifts and strengths for leadership and ministry matches up with the strategic plan of the Synod. During this selection process, the Committee will receive written assurance from each of these nominees that he or she consents to stand for election as Bishop and that he or she will participate fully and

willingly in the election processes both prior to and during the Electing Assembly, including the providing of all biographical information requested, meeting with the Committee, and attendance at the Electing Assembly and at all informational forums prior to the Electing Assembly. The Committee will have background checks and screening performed, in accordance with Synod and Churchwide guidelines, on each of the seven nominees prior to releasing the names and biographies of the nominees.

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During the Electing Assembly the Committee shall provide opportunities for questions to be placed to all the nominees and for each nominee to address the voting members as under current practice.

Koinonia

Bishop Rimbo indicated his pleasure in announcing that the Koinonia board of directors completed its search for an Executive Director earlier this year by calling a leadership team of three directors.

Ms. Eleanore Sudbrock, chair of the search team then introduced, to the applause of the Assembly, the new Executive Directors of Koinonia: Ms. Carol Hinderlie, Mr. Paul Hinderlie, and Mr. Tom Alhstrom.

Bishop Rimbo invited Ms. Elizabeth Hoffman to the podium for announcements, and then invited Pr. Kristina Ahlman to close the session with prayer.

SATURDAY, MAY 19, 2012

PLENARY SESSION V

The voting members of the Assembly gathered for Eucharist in the ballroom at 1:30 pm.

Following worship, the fifth plenary session of the Twenty-first Regular Synod Assembly of the Metropolitan New York Synod was called to order, by Bishop Robert Alan Rimbo at 2:20 pm. He then introduced Ms. Marion Steadman as the host for the plenary session.

Report of the Committee on Registration

Ms. Minerva Melendez gave the final registration report for the Assembly

Clergy	195
Lay Voting Members	250
AiMs	11
Total Voting members	<u>456</u>
Visitors	<u>22</u>
Total Attendance	478

Budget Resolution

The proposed budget of \$2,849,277 for fiscal year 2013, having been presented to the Assembly during an earlier session by Mr. Robert Buescher, Synod Treasurer, was brought before the voting members for adoption.

SA2012.05.11

Adopted a Budget of \$2,849,277 for F.Y 2013

ADOPTED

Closing of Assembly

Bishop Rimbo expressed final words of appreciation to the Assembly Chaplain, Pr. Kristina Ahlman, the Assembly Planning Committee, chaired by Ms. Elizabeth Hoffman, the Reference and Council Committee, chaired by Ms. Renee Wicklund, the Elections Committee, chaired by Ms. Christine Connell, Synod VP Maria Del Toro and members of the synod council, the members of Emanuel, Pleasantville, who assembled the assembly packets, to the Assembly Parliamentarian, Pr. Diana Austin, and to our consultant for the synod strategic plan, Mr. Tom Massey.

Special words of thanks were also directed to the synod worship team for planning and facilitating worship opportunities for the Assembly, to the musicians who helped lead our worship, to Mr. Bob Williams who served as photographer, and finally to Pr. Gary Mills who has served this synod faithfully in the bishop's office for so many years.

Bishop Rimbo then invited a motion to adjourn, which was made, seconded and passed.

The assembly concluded with the Order for the Closing of the Assembly with the Installation of Synod Council.

*Respectfully submitted,
Rev. Robert Schoepflin
Secretary, MNYS*