

SYNOD COUNCIL MEMBERS

Present

The Rev. Albert Ahlstrom
The Rev. James Anderson
Mr. William Anderson
The Rev. Edward Barnett
Mr. Leonard Bartkus
The Rev. William Baum
Bishop Stephen Bouman
Mr. Robert Buescher, Treasurer
Mr. Alan Chen
Ms. Chris Connell, DM
Ms. Maria del Toro
Ms. Elizabeth Hoffmann
The Rev. Marva Jenkins
The Rev. Kathleen Koran
The Rev. James Krauser, Sec'y
Mr. John Litke, V-President
Ms. Christina Lord-Barry
Dr. Earl Marsan

AUXILLIARY ORGANIZATIONS

The Rev. Fred McElderry
Mr. Stuart Meade
The Rev. Annemarie Noto, PhD
Mr. Patrick O'Brien
Ms. Beverly Small
Ms. Marion Steadman
Mr. Jonathan Westerlund
Ms. Sharon Wilson

Excused

Mr. John Vercelletto

Absent

STAFF

The Rev. Gary Mills
Ms. Joanne Strunck

I. CALL TO ORDER

II. DEVOTIONS

The Rev. James Krauser

III. Introduction of new council members: Stuart Meade, Jonathan Westerlund, Marva Jenkins

IV. ADOPTION OF AGENDA

The agenda was adopted with minor modifications.

V. MINUTES, July 19 2005, consideration of

The minutes were adopted as presented.

VI. SPECIAL GUESTS Rebecca Goodwin, Robert Angeletti and Ms. Chris Lutton
Custom Development Solutions

Mr. Angeletti introduced himself and reviewed the process being used in the

capital fund drive feasibility study now underway. He indicated that many of the council members had already been interviewed. He gave a brief discussion of his firm and the scope of its operations. He also introduced Ms. Goodwin who is the site director and Ms. Lutton who is also assisting in the process.

The purpose of their work is to gauge the level of enthusiasm for the work and projects before the synod. An outline of the process was distributed (**Exhibit A**). They are about half way through the process with 110 interviews having been completed; the goal is 200. An interim report is expected in mid-October and the final report in mid-to late November.

At the conclusion of their remarks, they fielded several questions from the members of the council. One asked how interviewees were selected. The response was that key to their goal was obtaining a cross section of the synod. Many were identified by the staff; others were generated through the interviews themselves.

VII. Mr. Litke explained the role of the Executive Committee in preparation for the upcoming vote.

VIII. REPORT OF THE BISHOP

A. Comments on issues of the wider church, synod, congregations, and the public arena

1. Bishop Bouman announced that he will be initiating annual one-on-one meetings with the pastors of the synod. In each case the bishop will be seeking to offer the expertise and services of the synod for stewardship and outreach. It is his goal to meet with every pastor every year for a 25 minute conversation around these issues:

- How is your soul?
- What is your goal for your congregation's mission support this year and how do you plan to present it to your congregation?
- What new mission initiatives are being introduced in your location and what are your goals for growing your church?

Aiming for pastoral contact and mutual accountability will be his highest priority. He is starting with the deans and then moving on to congregational pastors.

2. The bishop recently spoke at a press conference which was part of a three-day demonstration convened by Jim Wallis of Sojourners at the United Nations. It called for the UN and the United States to unite around the goals of the

Millennium Challenge and the massive poverty in our world. The bishop found hope in the fact that there was a wide spectrum of Christians united on the issue of poverty.

3. The bishop reported on the Quadrant Meetings and provided a copy of the outline he is using in his presentation. **(Exhibit B)**
4. He announced that the last portion of our mission tithe, \$92,000, will be sent to the two synods impacted most by hurricane Katrina – Texas/Louisiana (Bishop Blom) and Southeastern (Bishop Warren).
5. Lutheran Ministry in Higher Education (LMHE). First-call candidate, Ms. Janet Blair will be called to the campus ministry at Columbia. Campus ministry in our synod is a work in progress with continuing unresolved issues, one being the use of the parsonage at Columbia. Another problem has been the withdrawal of the Episcopal Church, which has taken its money out of the collective ministry. The bishop has met with Bishop Sisk about this. He referred council members to the Rev. Jack Saarla of Region 7 and Pastor Elise Brown, who serves on the LMHE board, for more information.
6. Bishop Bouman is still pursuing the issues raised around the funding stream for St. Paul's International/Ashirwad ministry. He will be meeting with Bishop Mark Hanson and the Division for Outreach when he is in Chicago for the Conference of Bishops.
7. While there are still some details to be worked out, Lutheran Services New York Alliance (LSNYA) and United Lutheran Appeal (ULA) have agreed to merge into one organization.
8. In putting together the Taskforce on Refugees, Asylum Seekers, and Immigrants, Bishop Bouman would like to include a lay person or a pastor from each of our ethnic groups, someone from Lutheran Social Services, and any other people with a heart for this ministry. The taskforce should include about 10 persons.
9. Bishop Bouman gave a brief review of the Churchwide Assembly and several positive enactments that had been supported by our synod
 1. Adoption of Eucharistic sharing with the Methodist Church
 2. Near unanimous adoption of the immigration resolution.
 3. Declaration of ministry and advocacy to the hungry and the poor as a core conviction of the church
 4. Adoption of Arab and African decent strategies
 5. Adoption of the Renewing worship process, which he believes has been a good process, for the most part.

B. Mission Development Board

1. Status of Hope, Scarsdale and St. Paul, Valley Stream sales.
 - a. Hope, Scarsdale. \$2.2 million is the best offer to date but there is still active bidding. We should have a firm offer by our next meeting

b. St. Paul, Valley Stream. We have a current offer of \$2.2 million, but are still in negotiation.

2. Status of St. Peter's Brooklyn [Bedford Avenue]

Mr. Litke gave some background in preparation for consideration of a resolution to be presented under new business. An agreement between St. Peter's and Lutheran Social Services was developing, but since the recent legal disputes, it is in abeyance temporarily. Recently there was an attempted takeover by some persons, but it was discovered in time to avert it. Significant legal work continues.

C. Appointments

1. Lutheran Statewide Advocacy board. Appointment of the Rev. Rose Ann Vita to first term. No objection
2. Compensation Guidelines Committee. Re-appointment of Mr. Robert Hastadt, as chair. No objection
3. Financial Management Committee. Re-appointment of the Rev. John Heller, Mr. Dick Case, and Mr. Paul Jensen to second terms. No objection
4. Candidacy Committee. After private discussion with Bishop Bouman, there were no objections to:
 - New appointment of Ms. Marlene Lund, Dr. Ralph Peters, Pr. Jeanne Warfield, Pr. Scott Kershner, and Pr. Martha Jacobi,
 - Renewed appointment for second term of Pr. Sharon Israel
5. Mission Planning Team. Appointment of the Rev. Rich Hill as chair of the: No objection.
6. Gay and Lesbian Commission. No objection to:
 - Appointment of the Revs. Robert Rimbo and Jane Gaeta to first term.
 - Re-appointment of Ms. Janet Blair and Mr. Mark Erson to second term.

D. Calls

ACTION (SC05:9/1) RESOLVED that synod council call Ms. Janet Blair as half-time interim pastor to the Columbia University community, through Lutheran Ministries in Higher Education, effective September 1, 2005.

ADOPTED

Pr. Koran expressed concern about retreating from the former policy of requiring first calls to come through congregations.

E. Staff reports – None

IX. REPORT OF THE TREASURER Mr. Robert Buescher

1. **Exhibit C.** Mr. Buescher provided by email several documents revealing the synod's mission support status through August. He particularly drew attention to the chart showing the continued downward trend.
2. **Exhibit D -** Operating Statement
3. **Exhibit E –** Balance Sheet - All Funds
4. **Exhibit F –** Summary of Significant Items:

X. OLD BUSINESS

A. Constitutions – none

B. Report on Zion Lutheran Church agreement

Pastor Gary Mills gave a review of the situation at Zion Lutheran Church in Spanish Harlem, our oldest Latino congregation, which had been on a downward spiral and now shows much promise under the leadership of Pastor Eduardo Fabian Arias. The congregation has agreed to enter into synodical administration. This will remove from the congregation responsibility for the daily financial obligations so they can better concentrate on ministry. A mission planning team of 4 members from the congregation and 4 members appointed by the bishop will manage the affairs of the congregation.

The building is in a state of dangerous disrepair. The mission planning team will work with contractors to plan removal of the existing structure and building in its stead a multi-purpose building containing church, offices, and co-ops. Funding for this project will come from multiple sources: the sale of their parsonage, which is in the Bronx and is now in contract for over \$200K; the ELCA Division for Outreach; synod partnership grants; and Saint Peter's Lexington Ave, along with the rest of the Manhattan conference.

The agreement with Zion calls for the end of synodical administration when the project is completed and the congregation moves into the building.

XI. NEW BUSINESS

A. Election of Executive Committee

Those nominated to the Executive Committee were: Mr. Lenny Bartkus, the Rev.

William Baum, Dr. Earl Marsan, Ms. Sharon Wilson, the Rev. Ed Barnett, Ms Elizabeth Hoffman, Ms. Christine Connell, DM. Those elected were Pastor Baum, Ms. Connell, Ms. Hoffman, and Dr. Marsan. **Exhibit G** shows a breakdown of the voting.

B. Financial Management Committee report – **Exhibit H**

Mr. Buescher re-presented a statement on Acceptance of Gifts to be attached to synod policies (see SC05:7/5 from the July 2005 synod council minutes). Synod council received the statement with no objection

C. Synod Assembly 2006 – approval of site and date

ACTION (SC05:9/2): RESOLVED that the 2006 Synod Assembly be held at the Mid-Hudson Civic Center on June 8-10.

ADOPTED

As Vice-president Litke previously reported, the formerly chosen site was not large enough. The cost will be in the same range as it was last year at St. Peter's, Huntington Station.

The Elections Committee and Nomination Committee are being formed. Mr. Litke said it was critical this be done soon (by our next meeting) and asked that suggested names be forwarded to Joanne Strunck.

D. St. Paul/Trinity congregation – approval of development report – **Exhibit I**

ACTION (SC05:9/3): RESOLVED that synod council accept the development report on St. Paul/Trinity congregation.

ADOPTED

E. St. Paul, Valley Stream – sale of property – See **Exhibit J** for full resolution.

ACTION (SC05:9/4) RESOLVED, that the certain written Agreement of Purchase and Sale between METROPOLITAN NEW YORK SYNOD OF THE EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN AMERICA , as Seller, and BETHLEHEM, as Purchaser, for the sale of the real property known as and by street address 74-80 Grove Street, Valley Stream, New York, in consideration of the sales price of \$2,230,000.00 to be paid by the Purchaser be and the same is hereby authorized, approved, ratified and adopted by the Synod Council as the binding act and deed of the METROPOLITAN NEW YORK SYNOD OF THE EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN AMERICA; and it is further,

RESOLVED, that the Officers of the METROPOLITAN NEW YORK SYNOD OF THE EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN AMERICA, acting solely on behalf of the Synod, be and hereby are authorized, empowered and directed to sign, verify and cause to be filed such Petition as may be required by law to obtain the approval of such sale by the Courts of the State of New York and the Attorney General of the State of New York; and, in the event that such approvals, shall be obtained, to thereafter execute, acknowledge and deliver a Deed of Conveyance and all such other documents as may be required to convey title to the Property , and to pay all customary and/or required closing costs, transfer taxes, brokerage, attorney and other professional fees incurred in connection with the sale of the Property; and otherwise do all such things as may, upon advice of Capell, Barnett & Matalon, LLP, counsel to the Synod, be reasonable, necessary, proper or convenient in order that the terms, provisions and agreements of such Agreement of Purchase and Sale be fulfilled and the transactions contemplated therein be effectuated; and it is further

RESOLVED, that METROPOLITAN NEW YORK SYNOD OF THE EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN AMERICA and each and every officer of the Synod, be and they hereby are authorized, empowered and directed to utilize the net proceeds from the sale of the Property, after payment of the customary and/or required closing costs, transfer taxes, attorney and other professional fees relating to the sale, in furtherance of the purposes for which the Synod was formed, in accordance with its Certificate of Incorporation and Constitution and By-Laws; and if is further

RESOLVED, that the dissolution of the Synod is not contemplated following the transfer of the Property.

Total Council Members: 27

Total Council Members present at the Meeting: 26

Total Votes for the Resolution: 26

Total Votes against the Resolutions:

ADOPTED: 26 Yes 0 No

- F. St. Peter Lutheran Church, Brooklyn – request for synod administration (See **Exhibit K** for full resolution)

A majority of the members of St. Peter's have signed a petition requesting synod administration under S 13.25.

ACTION (SC05:9/5) RESOLVED, that the Synod Council of the Metro Synod shall apply synodical administration over St Peter's and shall take charge and control of the property of St. Peter's to hold, manage, and convey the same on behalf of the Metro Synod and shall administer synodical administration to St Peter's and it's members.

ADOPTED

- G. Special meeting of the Synod Assembly (See **Exhibit L**)

ACTION (SC05:9/6): RESOLVED that synod council approve the Official Notice provided by Secretary James Krauser.

ADOPTED

A minor adjustment to the document which had been distributed was accepted by consensus. There was much discussion around whether this should be a legislative or consultative meeting and what the official notice should say.

There was further discussion as to whether synod council should meet again to consider the agenda or empower the executive committee with this task, and also whether the Executive Committee or other appointed persons should serve as Reference and Counsel.

ACTION (SC05:9/7): RESOLVED that the setting of the proposed agenda for the special meeting of the synod assembly be charged to the Executive Committee.

ADOPTED

ACTION (SC05:9/8): RESOLVED that the Executive Committee serve as Reference and Counsel.

ADOPTED

XII. DEANS REPORT – no report

XIII. YOUTH REPORT

Pastor Kathleen Koran reported that the Children, Youth and Family Ministry (CYFM) event, scheduled for September 17, was postponed until Spring due to lack of response. It was decided to postpone rather than cancel, as there is a real hunger for a more active youth ministry in our synod. She expressed that we have an incredible group of educators and youth leaders and our congregations should have the benefit of these resources. Low registration for the September 17 event was attributed to poor timing, with all the congregational activities in the fall.

Registration opened on September 15th for the 2006 Youth Assembly. Ms. Chris Connell asked council to encourage people to sign up since MNYS has a poor showing so far. She encouraged congregations to “adopt” solo young people from other congregations who have no one to go with them.

XIV. AUXILLIARY ORGANIZATIONS

Women of the ELCA. Ms. Marion Steadman gave a brief overview of the recent synodical WELCA convention, which dedicated its offerings to victims of Hurricane Katrina. The next major gathering will be Super Saturday on April 6, 2006.

XV. OTHER

- We will try to have name plates for our next meeting
- Mr. Litke asked members to think about “building bridges” in our individual conferences.
- Mr. Litke described what happens when council has a vote by mail. It is a difficult process because it requires a 100% response or the resolution does not move forward

XVI. CLOSING PRAYER AND ADJOURNMENT

Pastor Gary Mills closed with prayer. The next meeting is November 15.

Submitted by,

Joanne Strunck
Administrative Assistant to the Bishop