

SYNOD COUNCIL MEMBERS

Present

The Rev. Albert Ahlstrom
Mr. William Anderson
The Rev. Edward Barnett
The Rev. William Baum
Bishop Stephen P. Bouman
Ms. Hope Card
Mr. Alan Chen
Mr. Robert Buescher, Treasurer
Mr. Gerald Erikson
Dcn Charles Germain
Mr. Gene Hiigel
Ms. Elizabeth Hoffmann
The Rev. Perry Kirschbaum
The Rev. Kathleen Koran
The Rev. James Krauser
Ms. Minerva Melendez
The Rev. Annemarie Noto, PhD
Ms. Beverly Small
Mr. Hans Vogel
Mr. Jonathan Westerlund
Ms. Renee Wicklund

Excused

Ms. Christine Connell, DM
Ms. Maria del Toro
Dr. Earl Marsan
The Rev. Fred McElderry
The Rev. Robert Schoepflin, Esq.

Absent

Mr. Patrick O'Brien

STAFF

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

AUXILIARY REPRESENTATIVES

The Rev. Laurie Cline, Conference of Deans
Ms. Marion Steadman – Women of the ELCA

GUESTS

The Rev. Jonathan Linman, ELCA Church Council
Mr. Howard Capell, Esq., Synod Attorney

I. CALL TO ORDER

Hans opened the meeting at 5:04 pm. Best wishes to Liz Hoffman on her birthday.

II. DEVOTIONS

Pr. Annemarie Noto

III. ADOPTION OF AGENDA

The agenda was adopted as presented

IV. MINUTES, November 27, 2007, consideration of

- Motion to amend Section IX to include item H reporting the results of the ballot conducted via email regarding synod administration over Bethlehem, Brooklyn.
- Motion to amend Section IX to remove Pr. Mills name as the mover of item B
- Motion to amend Section VIII; item B, to reflect that Pr. Ed Barnett was not a name placed in nomination for the Exec. Council but was a "write-in" on the election ballot.

The minutes were approved as corrected.

V. SPECIAL GUESTS

- The Rev. Jonathan Linman (ELCA Church Council Representative)
- Mr. Howard Capell, Esq., MNYS attorney

VII. REPORT OF THE BISHOP

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

- Bishop Bouman invited Mr. Capell to report to the synod council and thanked him for his service to the church.
 1. Mr. Capell advised the synod council of two offers to sell St. Paul's, Richmond Hill: \$2.1 – 2.3 M. He advised that the deal may come to maturity before the next synod council meeting – and that an email ballot may be necessary before the next meeting.
 2. Mr. Capell advised the synod council of pending property sales for St. Peter's, Brooklyn and Atonement, Staten Island. Motions will be offered later in the meeting. The MNYS has entered into a contract for St. Peter's, Brooklyn. The parsonage will not be sold. Anticipated closing: 60-90 days.
 3. Mr. Capell addressed the Sion, Manhattan project. Synod leadership has been working with Sion for two years to re-establish that property for a combined use of condos and church. We purchased the air rights to maximize the development. Upon completion of the sale of these units – we anticipate the project costs will be covered with an excess of \$2M-\$3M received. Turn around time of approximately two years is anticipated. There is an urgency to get the foundation into the ground by July. NYC has determined real estate abatements will not be available this year after July. The foundation must be in before July. The bank is now requiring a \$2M guarantee in order to secure the mortgage. Saint Peter's, Manhattan has offered to guarantee 1M (half the amount) to the synod, so that MNYS can add \$1M and provide the 2M guarantee to the bank.

Mr. Buescher moved that the synod provide a guarantee in the amount of \$2M to support the project at Sion, Manhattan. Pr. Baum suggested a friendly amendment to add the words “in partnership with Saint Peter's, Manhattan”. The amendment was adopted by general consent.

ACTION SC08:1/1:

***RESOLVED*, The Metropolitan New York Synod, in partnership with Saint Peter's, Manhattan, provide the bank with a guarantee in the amount of \$2 million to support the development project at Sion, Manhattan.**
ADOPTED

- Bishop Bouman invited Pr. Bob Wollenburg to report on the Town Hall Meetings. Pr. Wollenburg thanked everyone who attended – especially Bishop Bouman for his participation. The attendees commented that they had received a greater understating of who we are as synod; were introduced to synod staff and can now make connections with those in the synod offices; gained a sense of having partners in ministry. The Town Hall Meetings have certainly been worthwhile. Pr. Wollenburg indicated that the decision to continue next year is yet to be determined. Pr. Wollenburg noted that \$100,000 remains outstanding in the Tanzania endowment and that the prospects of reaching our goal – are very real. Bishop Bouman thanked Pr. Wollenburg for his work.
- Bishop Bouman invited Mr. John Litke to report on properties in transition
 1. Good Shepherd, Bayside. Sold in September 2007. New occupants – Korean, Presbyterian. Arrangements have been made for the parsonage to be available for Messiah, Flushing. It will remain a synod asset.
 2. St. Paul's, Richmond Hill filed suit against the synod, but the sale may well proceed even in the face of litigation.
 3. Bethlehem, Brooklyn has filed a second suit– papers in response to the suit will be filed this week
 4. St. Stephen's, Brooklyn. School went bankrupt. Agreement to support the school for the remainder of the current year. Planning team is working on a strategy to move forward.

Bishop Bouman offered a parting reflection:

He staffed for the church we didn't have yet... Bishop Bouman reflected on the formation of his staff and administration and the relocation of the synod offices. Reflection on the Jubilee program which assisted and cleared the debt of three congregations. The effort to deepen and expand our companion synod relationships. Synod leadership broadened the role of the deans to increase "grass roots" involvement – initiated the formation and establishment of the Commission for Evangelical Outreach (CEO), the Mission Development Board (MDB), the Mission Planning Team (MPT) – focused an emphasis on building relationships through Quadrant meetings, Town Hall meetings and Lenten one-on-ones. Bishop Bouman also noted the growth in our discussion on sexuality as more circumspect and acknowledged the impact of the annual Chrism Mass at St. Luke's, Farmingdale.

Synod Assembly themes for the Bishop's report:

- *Isaiah 58
- *Magnificat of Mary
- *Leviticus 25: Jubilee
- *Mark: The Cross / carnal / spiritual
- *Visitation: Tanzania challenge / Great Commission Synod
- *Acts 10: Up on the roof / ecstasy / blinded by the light / stunned by the resurrection of Jesus / 26 languages / our ethnic diversity / 30 new starts
- *Revelation: How churches grow – Remember your first love
- * Exodus 3: Burning bush
- *Deuteronomy: Great Hand me down of the faith. In the spirit of a wandering Armenian

Themes for the future:

- *Immigration: seen as a “law breaking” issue.
- *Funding the new ministries we've started
- *Great Commission is not a local option... “you either do it or you're not the church”
- *Conferences must be the platform for mission development. We need leaders that can coordinate the mission strategy in the conferences.
- *Our public voice has taken 10 years to happen. We need to nurture our ecumenical partnerships. We are a bridge and leaven out in the world.
- *In our moral deliberations – we need to listen to each other

b. Mission Development Board

(See Mr. John Litke's report above)

c. Calls:

- Rev. Barbara Hosmer, Interim Pastor at Old First Presbyterian, Huntington, NY effective 01 Sep 07 (**EXHIBIT A**)

ACTION SC08:1/2

RESOLVED, that the Rev. Barbara Hosmer be called through the Metropolitan New York Synod Council as Interim Pastor for Old First Presbyterian Church, Huntington, New York.

ADOPTED

d. Staff reports

(See Pr. Wollenburg's report above)

VIII. REPORT OF THE TREASURER

Mr. Buescher guided the Synod Council through a set of graphs to elucidate his report.

- a. Summary of Significant Items (**EXHIBIT B**)
- b. Property Assets (**EXHIBIT C**)
- c. Invested Assets Coverage (**EXHIBIT D**)

- d. Operating Expenses and Synod Funds (**EXHIBIT E**)
- e. 2007 Operating Performance (**EXHIBIT F**)
- f. MNYS Comparison of Mission Support Receipts – MS-4a (**EXHIBIT G**)

- What do we own? The first chart shows the expenses of our properties over the values.
- Reflects growth of investment values of assets
- Compares growing expenditures from assets with annual income.
- Demonstrates that we ran with income slightly ahead of expenses throughout the year
- Reported a small surplus for this fiscal year.

IX. PRESENTATION OF UPDATED ASSET AND INVESTMENT OBJECTIVES AND POLICY

Mr. Buescher discussed the document on the Application of Asset and Investment Objectives to explain how the policy works. (**EXHIBIT H**)

Motion to accept the amendments to the policy:

Approved

X. OLD BUSINESS

A. Contract for interim bishop

Mr. Vogel asked the consent of the synod council to address item **A** later in the meeting, following other business – so Bishop Bouman may take his leave.

VI. NEW BUSINESS

A. Resolution for approval of synod staff housing allowances

ACTION SC08: 1/3:

RESOLVED, that the following staff housing allowances for the calendar year 2008 be approved (**EXHIBIT I**)

1. The Rev. David Anglada	\$27,668.00
2. The Rev. Dr. Gary Mills	\$58,186.00
3. The Rev. Robert Wollenburg	\$68,698.00
4. The Rev. Dianne Loufman	\$ 9,600.00
5. The Rev. Eduardo Arias	\$26,798.00
6. The Rev. James O’Hanlon	\$20,823.82

APPROVED

B. Resolution for the sale of St. Peter’s, Bedford Ave., Brooklyn (EXHIBIT J**)**

ACTION SC08: 1/4:

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 Moses Gruenfeld as Purchaser, in consideration of the sales price of \$4,100,000.00 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 and 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 & Schoenfeld 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 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.

ADOPTED

C. Resolution for the sale of Atonement, Staten Island: **(EXHIBIT K)**

ACTION SCO8: 1/5

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 **FRANK McERLEAN**, as Purchaser, in consideration of the sales price of \$1,800,000.00 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 and 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 & Schoenfeld 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 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.

ADOPTED

D. Presentation of Partnership Grants 2008 (EXHIBIT L)

Grant proposals were reviewed by *The Mission Planning Team*, Pr. David Anglada and Bishop Bouman. It was suggested that a summary paragraph for each of the ministries along with a plan for use of the funding be provided to the Synod Council next year.

ACTION: SCO8:1/6

RESOLVED, that Synod Council accepts the Mission Support Grants *en bloc*

ADOPTED

VII. DEANS REPORT

Pr. Laurie Cline reported as the representative for the *Conference of Deans*. In their meeting with Bishop Bouman there was celebration of his new call and discussion about congregations in transition and conference business.

VIII. YOUTH REPORT

Two Youth Retreats are scheduled by LYO at Koinonia. Jr. High Retreat in February / Sr. High Retreat in March. Jr. High Dance (Gustavus Adolphus, NYC) with a Hawaiian theme is in the planning stages. LYO annual assembly May 9-10 when a new board will be elected. LYO requested time at the Synod Assembly to make a presentation. LYO has requested space on the website.

IX. AUXILLIARY ORGANIZATIONS

WELCA Super Saturday at the Wartburg on 8 Mar 08. Ms. Steadman is seeking information about any women's events happening within the congregations to be advertised in the WELCA monthly newsletter.

X. OTHER

A. Pr. James Krauser, on behalf of the Executive Committee, recommends the Synod Council appoint The Rev. David W. Olson as interim bishop of the

Metropolitan New York Synod. Pr. Ahlstrom questioned the part time status – Pr. Mills reminded us of the conversations with the representatives from Chicago – it was agreed that the interim bishop would spend two days in the office (administration) and provide pastoral presence in our congregations two Sundays a month. February 1, 2008 through August 1, 2008.

ACTION SC08:1/7:

RESOLVED, that the Synod Council appoint The Rev. David W. Olson as interim bishop (part-time) of the Metropolitan New York Synod
ADOPTED

- B. LISTENING POSTS: The schedule as listed. Synod Council members were invited to schedule an individual slot for 15 minutes. Synod Council members and Deans were invited to contact Pr. Mills for an appointment time. Representatives from Chicago will develop a synod profile and produce a document for distribution.

Thursday 2/28 (St. Peter’s, Hunt. Sta.) and Friday 2/29 (St. Luke’s, NYC)

9am - 10:30am	Clergy only
5pm - 6:30pm	Rostered deacons
7:00 - 8:30pm	General Session

Saturday 3/1 (St. John’s, Poughkeepsie)

9am - 10:30am	Rostered deacons
10:30am - 12:00noon	Clergy only
1:00pm - 2:30pm	General Session

- C. Pr. Barnett voiced a collective concern that a very deep and deliberate discernment process for the election of a bishop is necessary and is not yet in place. Spiritual retreats / prayer for discernment / liturgies should be developed and distributed around the synod to gather people in prayer for this process. Pr. Barnett moved that we instruct the *Conference of Deans* to organize prayer events/liturgies (using resources by the synod worship committee), opportunities for study and discussion within their conference for discernment for a bishop.

ACTION: SC08:1/8:

RESOLVED, that the Synod Council request the *Conference of Deans* provide opportunities for reflection on the spiritual and constitutional role of the bishop by organizing prayer events or other appropriate venues in preparation for the election of the bishop using resources supplied by the synod worship committee.

ADOPTED

- C. Executive Committee recommended a financial gift to Bishop Bouman using the customary ELCA model of six weeks compensation to a departing bishop. Pr. Baum moved the resolution:

Whereas, Bishop Bouman has served the Metropolitan New York Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church with great distinction, providing visionary leadership in service of the gospel of Jesus Christ, and

Whereas, his ministry has been a blessing to us, we joyfully send him forth now to be blessing to others, therefore be it

RESOLVED, that the Metropolitan New York Synod in gratitude and thanksgiving for the ministry of Bishop Bouman present him a farewell gift of six weeks compensation consistent with the guidance of the Evangelical Church in America.

ADOPTED.

- E. Pr. Gary Mills recommended a change in venue for the 2008 Synod Assembly from Suffern to Tarrytown, New York. The election of a new bishop will draw optimum attendance at the assembly. Pastor Mills recommended the Westchester Marriott, citing that the Marriott in Tarrytown as an accessible location that will accommodate in attendance 600+. Pr. Noto moved change of venue for the 2008 Synod Assembly.

ACTION: SC08:1/9:

RESOLVED, that the Synod Council of the Metropolitan New York Synod approve the change in venue for the 2008 Synod Assembly from the Holiday Inn, Suffern, New York to The Westchester Marriott, Tarrytown, New York.

ADOPTED

XI. CLOSING PRAYER AND ADJOURNMENT

Pr. Noto closed with prayer at 7:53 pm

Gayle E. Ruege
Administrative Assistant to the Bishop