

**Synod Council Meeting
Northeastern Pennsylvania Synod, ELCA
Atonement, Wyomissing
January 29, 2014**

Synod Council Members present: Donna Ahner, Pastor Paul Braden, Steve Barnett, Pastor Cindy Camp, Jim Carey, Pastor Lee Diefenderfer, Marty Everhart, Mark Hammond, Dave Hinrichs, Pastor Michele Kaufman, Pastor Jerry Kulp, Pastor Tricia McMackin, Jim Parks, Don Smith, Leslie Wagner and Pastor Gary Walbert.

Synod Council Members excused: Pastor Jerry Kulp and Terry Shilling

Synod Council Member not excused: Sister Ramona Daily and Pastor Michele Kaufman

Synod Staff Members present: Bishop Samuel Zeiser, Pastor Mike Bennethum, Pastor Carl Shankweiler, and Pastor Catherine Ziel.

Guests Present: Andrew Steele, Manager of Donor Relations for the Campaign for the ELCA

Pastor Rick Summy welcomed us to Atonement. Pastor Tom Scornavacchi shared information with us about Common Ground Ministry at Atonement.

Pastor Catherine Ziel led "Dwelling in the Word" for Matthew 5:1-12.

Vice President Don Smith called the meeting to order at 3:31 PM.

The minutes from the October 17th meeting were approved as presented.

Special Order

Andrew Steele, Manager for Donor Relations from The Campaign for the ELCA presented a video and information about the 5 year, \$200 million campaign. He also presented models for synod engagement.

Bishop's Report

Bishop Zeiser shared that he presided at one ordination and two installations since our last meeting.

~At present there are 20 congregations in the transition process who wish to have multiple candidates to interview. The capacity to provide these candidates is stretching synod staff. Please keep the staff and these congregations in your prayers.

~At St. John, Shenandoah, windows were installed in the parsonage before the cold weather. Bishop Zeiser visited with Pastor Mindy Heppe to catalog the many ministries St. John's undertakes. On Feb. 5th, a group of Lutherans, Moravians and Episcopalians will visit St. John's to see how an ecumenical effort can be supportive there.

~Mary Perun has retired. Laurie Christman is the new receptionist and Debbie Skinner is the new part-time Mission Support clerk.

~Synod Council members are asked to encourage pastors and treasurers to submit their 2014 Mission Support forms and encourage all Rostered Leaders to take Portico's 2014 Health Assessment by April 30th.

~ \$11,250 has been raised for the Fund for Leaders and Holy Spirit, Reading will match this amount.

~ The Committee of Deans will now oversee the celebration of major anniversaries for Rostered Leaders and will host a celebration at the Lutheran Center prior to the Synod Assembly. The Committee reviewed the honorarium for supply pastors and found our synod's compensation is one of the highest compared to other synod's and so the rates will remain the same as last year.

Vice Presidents Report

Don presented a written report and highlighted the work of the Call Process Task Force.

Secretary's Report

No report.

Treasurer's Report

Dave reported that at year end the mission support goal exceeded what had been pledged. Investments are up 10%.

Finance Committee

The following resolution was received from the Finance Committee and adopted:

(2014.1.1) Resolved, that \$12,000.00 from the Prosser/Pahse Fund be granted to Common Ground Ministry at Atonement Lutheran Church, Wyomissing.

Program and Review Committee

The following resolutions were received from the Program and Review Committee and adopted:

(2014.1.2) Resolved, that the following schedule [attached] for agenda items related to the election of the bishop be recommended to the 2014 Northeastern Pennsylvania Synod Assembly.

(2014.1.3) Resolved, that it be recommended to each of the nine mission districts of the Northeastern Pennsylvania Synod that they include in their 2014 Spring Assemblies a time for discussion of the election of a bishop including the procedure to be followed and the preparation of one question to be asked of the seven nominees

Mark reported that the committee has been discussing the issue of who should preside at the election of the Bishop at the synod assembly. Bishop Zeiser shared his viewpoint that by having the ELCA Churchwide representative preside it makes visible that we are part of the wider church. The consensus of the council is to have the ELCA representative preside.

Administration Committee

The committee is reviewing and updating the synod Personnel Policy as well as working on the Synod Assembly. The committee is also looking for suggestions for volunteers to serve on a Building and Grounds Committee for the Lutheran Center.

En Bloc Items

The following resolutions were adopted:

(2013.1.4) Resolved, that in accordance with sections 7.31.16 and 7.52.22 of the ELCA Constitution, "on leave from call" status be approved as follows:

Clergy (first year): Sonja Ware

Clergy (second year): Christian Matthy

2013.1.5) Resolved, that a call to be special service be extended to the Rev. Patricia Criste to serve as Director of Congregational and Community Ministry, Diakon Family Life Services, effective January 6, 2014.

(2013.1.6) Resolved, that the 2014 budget adopted by the West Berks Mission District be approved.

New Business

Council had an open discussion about the Campaign for the ELCA. We will need enthusiasm and a steering committee. It would be helpful to grow out of the "Do What Matters" program. The consensus of the council is to hold a council workshop in March to determine goals and structure.

The meeting adjourned at 5:28 PM.

Respectfully submitted,
Tricia A. McMackin
Synod Secretary