

SYNOD COUNCIL MEETING

**Northeastern Pennsylvania Synod, Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
St. Peter's Lutheran Church, Pen Argyl, Pennsylvania
June 22, 2019**

ATTENDANCE. Synod Council Members Present: Dr. Donald Boyer, Pr. Samantha Drennan, Pr. Chris Druckenmiller, Andrew Hottenstein, Kristen Edelman-Weiner, Thomas Engle, Linda Eroh, Martin Everhart, Teresa Fry, Pr. Charles Grube, Lenna Harris, Elizabeth Leibenguth, Ruth Major, Louise McCloughan, Pr. Cheryl Meinschein, Pr. Carl Shankweiler, Victor Unks, Bishop Samuel Zeiser.

Synod Council Members Excused: Pr. June Bair, Pr. Lauren Blatt, Donald Dillman, Karrison Dubbs, Jeannette Richardson, Pr. Deborah Scheffey.

Synod Council Members Absent: Pr. Oliver Brown.

Other Persons Present: James Jennings, member of the Church Council of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America; Atty. Richard Ellis Santee Jr.; Pr. Michael Bennethum, Executive Associate of the Bishop and Director of Evangelical Mission.

OPENING WORSHIP AND ACTIVITY TO GET TO KNOW ONE ANOTHER. Bishop Samuel Zeiser led a communion service outdoors with his remarks reflecting on the history and nature of the area and with the participants communing one another by name.

CALL TO ORDER. Vice President Kristen Edelman-Weiner called the June 22, 2019, regular meeting of the Synod Council of the Northeastern Pennsylvania Synod, Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) to order at 9:30 a.m.

REORGANIZATION OF THE COUNCIL COMMITTEES. Vice President Edelman-Weiner posted a sheet of paper listing the council's committees. Bishop Zeiser spoke about the need to be organized and functioning well in light of the transition in 2020 to a new bishop. Ms. Edelman-Weiner asked the council members to write their names on slips of paper and post their names next to the committees on which they want to serve.

MINUTES OF MARCH 14 MEETING. The synod council minutes of March 14, 2019, were approved as distributed on a motion made by Dr. Donald Boyer and seconded by Thomas Engle.

NEW BUSINESS. Bishop Zeiser explained the need for appointing trustees for St. Peter Lutheran Church, Ridge Ave, Allentown (also known as St. Peter, 10th St.), and for St. Matthew's Lutheran Church, 26 South 10th St., Allentown. Both congregations are unable to conduct their own business and both have property that needs to be sold. Bishop Zeiser explained further that the remaining members of both congregations met with him and agreed that the synod should take over the administration of their congregations. He introduced Attorney Richard Santee Jr., who has agreed to deal with the legal issues related to the closing of these congregations.

Atty. Santee spoke about the responsibility of the synod to assume responsibility for congregations that have declined. He identified the conditions that need to be met when that responsibility devolves to the synod: (1) the members agree that it is no longer possible for them to function by themselves; (2) or it is the opinion of the synod council that the congregations can no longer function effectively; (3) it is necessary for the synod to protect the congregations' assets; (4) the congregations request that the synod take charge, which the synod "may" then do. In the case of these two congregations (St. Peter and St. Matthew), both the congregations and the bishop agree that they are no longer viable.

Years ago St. Peter's bought ten acres of land in Lower Macungie Township in anticipation of relocating; since then, the congregation has ceased to worship with the remaining leaders taking care of the congregation's business personally. All conditions specified in the synod's constitution for the synod's assuming control of a congregation have been met, asserted Atty. Santee. The synod should now ratify the work done to date, affirm the closing of the congregation, and assume responsibility for the remaining financial work, including the sale of the property owned by the congregation.

St. Matthew's came very recently and quickly to the synod's attention. Although their former parsonage is being rented, their assets are almost completely depleted. All constitutional criteria are met for the synod to assume responsibility.

The Rev. Cheryl Meinschein asked who will handle the day-to-day affairs of these congregations. The synod office handles the business of these closing congregations, and the Rev. Carl Shankweiler explained that this is the way the synod has dealt with the business of other congregations that have come under synodical control with St. Mark, Lackawaxen, and English, Minersville, being two examples. In the discussion it was also pointed out that there are persons expecting repayment when St. Peter's land is finally sold but that the land has been difficult to sell because of objections from the local township government. St. Matthew's has the complications of building problems and the fact that the parsonage is being rented. Blake C. Marles, Esq., can also assist with these legal matters.

Two resolutions were then introduced and adopted.

Dr. Boyer, seconded by Mr. Engle, moved the following resolution, which was adopted:

(2019.06.01) *Resolved*, That the draft resolution for the synod's assuming responsibility for St. Peter's, Ridge Avenue, be approved as developed by Atty. Richard Santee Jr. with the understanding that Atty. Santee may make editorial changes to the resolution as hereby presented to the synod council.

Martin Everhart, seconded by Linda Eroh, moved the following resolution, which was adopted:

(2019.06.02) *Resolved*, That the draft resolution for the synod's assuming responsibility for St. Matthew's, Allentown, be approved as developed by Atty. Richard Santee Jr. with the understanding that Atty. Santee may make editorial changes to the resolution as hereby presented to the synod council.

The draft resolutions as presented to the council on June 22 are as follows:

NORTHEAST PENNSYLVANIA SYNOD

RESOLUTION

RE: Closure of St. Peter’s Evangelical Lutheran Church, pursuant to Section S13.24, Constitution of the Northeastern Pennsylvania Synod

WHEREAS: St. Peter’s Evangelical Lutheran Church (hereinafter: “St. Peter’s ELC”) is a religious organization, incorporated as a non-profit (non-stock) corporation created on or about February 23, 1909, with a principal address of 114 North 10th Street, Allentown, Lehigh County, Pennsylvania; and

WHEREAS: St. Peter’s ELC, on or about March of 2005 purchased a tract of land, consisting of approximately 10.1 acres, located at 1245 Minesite Road, Allentown (Lower Macungie Township), Pennsylvania; and

WHEREAS: Since that time the ministry of the Church has declined in terms of membership, regularity of worship, and individual members, including the Pastor, have found it necessary to personally contribute to the ongoing maintenance, expenses and assessments with respect to the church and its property from their own funds; and

WHEREAS: No worship services have been conducted for more than three years; and

WHEREAS: The Constitution of the Northeastern Pennsylvania Synod provides: *“If any congregation of this Synod has disbanded, or if the members of such a congregation agree that it is no longer possible for it to function as such, or if it the opinion of the Synod Council that the membership of a congregation has become so scattered or so diminished in numbers so to make it impractical for such congregation to fulfill the purposes for which it was organized or that it is necessary for the Synod to protect the congregation’s property from waste 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 the Synod.”* [S13.24.] and

WHEREAS: Representatives of the congregation have reached out to Synod Administration and acknowledged the inability of the congregation to function as such and, further, requested assistance in facilitating the closure of the congregation and disposition of its assets; and

WHEREAS: At a meeting convened by the Northeastern Pennsylvania Synod on April 24, 2019, active members and leadership of St. Peters ELC requested that the Synod assume responsibility for management and stewardship of the Church’s assets and liabilities; and

WHEREAS: Exigent circumstances since April 24, 2019 have required immediate attention and action to preserve the assets of the Church, in particular the real estate owned by the Church; and

WHEREAS: The Constitution of the Northeastern Pennsylvania Synod provides that:

“The Synod may temporarily assume administration of a congregation upon its request or with its concurrence.” [S13.25.] and

WHEREAS: Since meeting with members of the congregation on April 24, 2019, the Northeastern Pennsylvania Synod has, exercising its authority pursuant to Section S13.24, temporarily assumed administration of the congregation, in particular by assuming responsibility for the marketing and listing for sale of property owned by St. Peter’s ELC located at 1345 Minesite Drive; and

WHEREAS, both members of the congregation and the Synod Administration concur that: 1) the congregation of St. Peter’s ELC has effectively disbanded; 2) its members are in agreement that it is no longer possible for the congregation to function; 3) the membership of the congregation has become so scattered or so diminished in numbers as to make it impractical for the congregation to fulfill the purposes for which it was organized and 4) it is necessary for the Synod to protect the congregation’s property from further diminution in value, waste and deterioration.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED:

The Synod Council ratifies and affirms the exercise of temporary authority and actions taken by the Northeastern Pennsylvania Synod since April 24, 2019 at the request of members of the St. Peters ELC Congregation, pursuant to Section S13.25 of the Constitution of the Northeastern Pennsylvania Synod;

The Synod Council, pursuant to Section S13.24 of the Constitution of the Northeastern Pennsylvania Synod, shall hold, manage, take charge and control the property of the congregation of St.Peter’s ELC for the purpose of closing the church;

Members of the St. Peters ELC Congregation shall cooperate with the Northeastern Pennsylvania Synod in transferring responsibility for, administration of, and liquidation of the assets of St. Peters ELC by executing all documents necessary to transfer title, ownership and responsibility for the assets and liabilities of St. Peters ELC to the Northeastern Pennsylvania Synod, for the purpose of closing the St. Peter’s ELC;

In accordance with *C7.01. of the ELCA’s Model Constitution for Congregations all assets of St. Peter’s ELC, after its closure, shall be held, managed and conveyed, for the benefit and on behalf of the Northeastern Pennsylvania Synod;

The Northeastern Pennsylvania Synod, having assumed responsibility for the closure of St. Peters ELC, shall work with the remaining members of St. Peter’s ELC to assure that the contributions of time, talent and resources by its pastor, secretary and other lay members of the Church are properly and appropriately recognized.

Approved: _____

By: _____
Northeast Pennsylvania Synod

NORTHEAST PENNSYLVANIA SYNOD

RESOLUTION

RE: Closure of St. Matthew's Evangelical Lutheran Church, pursuant to Section S13.24, Constitution of the Northeastern Pennsylvania Synod

WHEREAS: St. Matthew's Evangelical Lutheran Church (hereinafter "St. Matthew's ELC") is a religious organization, incorporated as a non-profit (non-stock) corporation with a principal address of 26 South 10th Street, Allentown, Lehigh County, Pennsylvania; and

WHEREAS: In recent years, the ministry of the Church has declined in terms of membership, church attendance, and stewardship, such that the Church is no longer able to sustain its ministry, staff and mission causes; and

WHEREAS: Sunday worship attendance has declined to an average of less than ten members; and

WHEREAS: Virtually all of the congregation's financial reserves have been depleted and is no longer financially viable for the congregation to continue; and

WHEREAS: The Constitution of the Northeastern Pennsylvania Synod provides: *"If any congregation of this Synod has disbanded, or if the members of such a congregation agree that it is no longer possible for it to function as such, or if it the opinion of the Synod Council that the membership of a congregation has become so scattered or so diminished in numbers so to make it impractical for such congregation to fulfill the purposes for which it was organized or that it is necessary for the Synod to protect the congregation's property from waste 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 the Synod."* S13.24.] and

WHEREAS: Representatives of the congregation have reached out to Synod Administration and acknowledged the inability of the congregation to function as such and, further, requested assistance in facilitating the closure of the congregation and disposition of its assets; and

WHEREAS, both members of the congregation and the Synod Administration concur that: 1) the congregation of St. Matthew's ELC has effectively disbanded; 2) its members are in agreement that it is no longer possible for the congregation to function; 3) the membership of the congregation has become so scattered or so diminished in numbers as to make it impractical for the congregation to fulfill the purposes for which it was organized; and 4) it is necessary for the Synod to protect the congregation's property from further diminution in value, waste and deterioration.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED:

The Synod Council, pursuant to Section S13.24 of the Constitution of the Northeastern Pennsylvania Synod, shall hold, manage, take charge and control the property of the congregation of St. Matthew's ELC for the purpose of closing the church;

Members of the St. Matthew's ELC congregation shall cooperate with the Northeastern Pennsylvania Synod in transferring responsibility for the administration and liquidation of the assets of St. Matthew's ELC by executing all documents necessary to transfer title, ownership and responsibility for the assets and liabilities of St. Matthew's ELC to the Northeastern Pennsylvania Synod, for the purpose of closing St. Matthew's ELC;

In accordance with *C7.01. of the ELCA's Model Constitution for Congregations all assets of St. Matthew's ELC, after its closure, shall be held, managed and conveyed, for the benefit and on behalf of the Northeastern Pennsylvania Synod.

Approved: _____

By: _____
Northeastern Pennsylvania Synod

BISHOP'S REPORT. Bishop Zeiser reported about a variety of concerns facing the synod.

1. 2019 Assembly. Most of the negative comments concerned the assembly's being a one-day assembly. A one-day assembly requires as much work as a two- or three-day assembly. Bishop Zeiser praised the Rev. D. Michael Bennethum's work in creating an appropriate agenda. The positives about the 2019 assembly included the distance's being less for many members and the lower cost as compared to other years. Nevertheless, fewer persons attended in 2019 as compared to other assemblies, in this case about 450 to 475. When asked what keeps people from coming to longer assemblies, cost is often mentioned; and yet when the cost was much lower for this one-day assembly, people did not come, perhaps because they consider a one-day assembly to be less important. Drawbacks that were noted included time pressure and little opportunity for personal interaction; a positive aspect was the way lunch was handled. Andrew Hottenstein said that the assembly went smoothly and was not overly hectic. Ruth Major asked about the elections; Bishop Zeiser responded that the synod learned a lot that could be helpful in the future but that conducting elections in a one-day assembly has shortcomings. Pr. Bennethum spoke about the challenge of using the space because, for example, the WIFI signal was not consistent (a situation that will not apply in 2020's venue). Was the procedure of having documents available electronically helpful? The Rev. Samantha Drennan herself found it to be helpful but her lay members did not; Elizabeth Leibenguth spoke about the lack of communication on the ap and on the assembly screens with an example being the lack of biographies for people nominated from the floor. Pr. Bennethum responded that in 2020 there will be time to produce biographies. The Rev. Charles Grube spoke about his need for a power source so that his laptop could work for the length of time needed. James Jennings observed that the assembly members were crowded, and so low attendance was actually needed to make the assembly work. There was further discussion of costs. Ruth Major pointed to the difficulty of

serving communion given the tightness of the chairs and tables. The Rev. Chris Druckenmiller spoke about a young couple who were very excited to be there and want to come again to an assembly. Bishop Zeiser said that their reaction is common, and Ms. Major added comments about members who were impressed, with Pr. Drennan reporting compliments about the worship.

2. The first meeting of the planning team for the 2020 assembly will take place on August 26. Some staff members will visit Kalahari, the location for that assembly.

3. Bishop Zeiser observed that the synod's involvement with St. Peter, Ridge, could extend beyond his tenure as bishop. St. Matthew's has issues concerning the tenants and liability.

4. Trinity, Clarks Summit, held its first vote to disaffiliate with the ELCA. The second vote has been postponed for the present. The Rev. George Matthews Jr., a former pastor of that congregation, is now serving there again and is being very helpful.

5. New Life, New Tripoli, will hold its first vote to disaffiliate with the ELCA on July 28.

6. St. Paul, Catasauqua, held its last service on June 2 and will sell its building to a congregation of Moslems. The congregation is looking to dispose of its assets in a way that supports local issues and neighboring Lutheran congregations.

7. Grace, Allentown, held its last service on April 28; the building will go to a Hispanic congregation.

8. September 1 will be Zion, Nesquehoning's last service. The synod is not expecting to have a fiduciary responsibility.

9. The number of pastors ready and willing to serve in transitions is low, which creates stress. There is also not an abundance of pastors seeking regular calls, so the waiting time in vacancies is longer. Therefore, our synod is looking to other synods for candidates. Congregations are often no longer able to pay for full-time pastors. Providing Sunday supply pastors is also a challenge; therefore, we are looking to other denominations that are our full-communion partners.

10. Diane Hemerly of the synod support staff is planning to retire effective October 1. Therefore, the synod is looking for a financial assistant/bookkeeper.

11. Bear Creek Camp has been functioning very well with The Rev. Jimmy Lee Werley filling in as director. Bishop Zeiser helped to install the 2019 staff. The search to find a new executive director is taking place.

12. The members of the 2019 churchwide assembly from our synod will meet on July 14.

13. Bishop Zeiser stated that his final year in office is underway. He wants to leave a synodical organization that is manageable and for which the administrative costs are in line with the

resources that are already in place. The Lutheran Center is being cleared of unnecessary things, and he intends to leave everything in good shape.

14. Bishop Zeiser reported that he is preparing a list of topics to discuss with his successor. When he took office there were only two months of transition; this time there will be three.

15. It is important not only to share thoughts about who the new bishop will be, but also about how we are going to be supportive of that person. Bishop Zeiser asserted that his successor will need support because the circumstances of the synod are different now.

ELCA CHURCH COUNCIL REPORT. Mr. Jennings, a member of the Church Council of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, explained some of the changes facing the churchwide organization. At the 2019 churchwide assembly the presiding bishop, the Rev. Elizabeth Eaton, will stand for reelection; the Rev. Chris Boerger, secretary, has chosen not to stand for reelection, meaning that there will be a new secretary. The proposed policy document *Trustworthy Servants of the People of God* continues to be revised; its content and how it has been released have all been controversial. The council is dealing with the issue of visitors to the council and their ability to engage in instant communication concerning what is being discussed. An ad hoc governance group is preparing a document on how to function. Mr. Jennings explained that his own role on the council's committees is changing. Currently co-chairperson of the budget and finance committee, in fall he will be the chairperson. He also serves on the development committee; and, at the 2019 ELCA assembly in Milwaukee, he will be co-chairperson of the committee on reference and counsel.

At this point in its proceedings, the synod council took a break.

VICE PRESIDENT'S REPORT. Vice President Edelman-Wiener thanked Pr. Druckenmiller and St. Peter's Church for hosting the council. She expressed appreciation that one of the open positions on the synod council has been taken care of. She encouraged members to change committees if they come to feel that they are on the wrong committee for them. She spoke of the need for many volunteers at the 2020 synod assembly and encouraged the recommending of people with needed talents. She said that she is putting together an ice cream tour of the synod so that people can gather to discuss synodical priorities; the gatherings will last for two hours each and will be an opportunity for people to meet.

SECRETARY'S REPORT. Secretary Shankweiler distributed a report dealing with various matters related to his roles as synod secretary and archivist. Included in the report was his recommendation of the following resolution, which was moved by Pr. Drennan, seconded by Ms. Leibenguth, and approved:

(2019.06.03) *Resolved*, That the secretary of the synod be asked to (1) express to the Williams Valley Ministerium the synod council's disappointment concerning the ministerium's treatment of one of our rostered leaders and (2) call upon that ministerium and all of its members to welcome as colleagues any clergy who are approved by the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and called by, or appointed to, one of our Williams Valley congregations.

He reported that the 2019 assembly adopted a resolution concerning the updating and organizing of the synod's Continuing Resolutions and Other Resolutions of Ongoing Impact. Only one item in the proposed document was objected to by the end of the assembly, I.11. which gave voice to pastors from other denominations serving our congregations. The objection was raised by Deacon Marlane Druckenmiller, who pointed out that this resolution concerning voice is no longer needed in light of the 2018 assembly action to amend the synod's constitution to grant these persons voice and vote (S7.22.c.). Therefore, I.11. has been dropped from the approved list of continuing resolutions and should require no further action other than to report to the 2020 assembly that this item was dropped for the reason given. The other items are now all approved.

The agreement made by Frank H. Reisner, Dr. Betty Jane Reisner, and Bishop Harold S. Weiss when the Reisners gave \$60,000 to renovate the annex at the synod's office in Wescosville in 1995, provided that "if the Annex is destroyed, sold or moved, Pledgee shall show suitable recognition to the dedication of Frank H. Reisner's father and Pledgors in the purchases or construction of any replacement facilities." Secretary Shankweiler recommended that this matter be dealt with by the synod council's administration committee so that an acknowledgement of this gift can be noted in the synod's current facilities. It was agreed that the administration committee will deal with this matter.

He reported that the new director of the Lutheran Archives Center at Philadelphia, Lisa Minardi, has questioned the amount of space required to hold our synod's video collection, which includes a few ELCA-produced materials but also many synodically produced programs. She obtained an estimate from Telefilm Transfers to convert all of these tapes to a modern digital format: \$24,638 to \$35,053. Secretary Shankweiler said that he will review this material.

The archives center has also returned to us the pectoral cross that was used by Bishop Harold S. Weiss, a former bishop of this synod, which had been presented to the archives with the understanding that it would be on permanent display. The center cannot make that guarantee. The cross will now be hung in our office building after it has been securely framed.

He reported about the closing of Zion, Nesquehoning, and how the synod might come into possession of their building. He observed that currently there are four different attorneys assisting seven congregations in closing; these attorneys sometimes have different approaches and recommendations concerning how to proceed with the legal issues related to closing.

There was a brief discussion of the fact that the synod's constitution explicitly gives to the bishop the power to sign deeds (*S8.12.i.1), though the council has sometimes authorized the secretary to sign deeds and other documents at settlement when synod-owned church buildings were sold. On advice from Richard Wiest, Esq., and from its own discussions, the executive committee concluded that there should be no problem with what the secretary has done in that there was always documentation from the synod council and the bishop's consent to allow the secretary to conduct church sales and sign for them.

Pr. Shankweiler offered to relinquish the position of archivist if someone else wanted to hold that position, but no one did. He also distributed recent copies of the *Archives Advocate*, which

included an introduction to the new Executive Director of the Archives, Lisa Minardi, and an article about one of our recently closed congregations, English, Minersville.

He explained that when none of the persons who signed a June 11, 2017, petition that raised concern, in part, about the number of “older white males” on the “stage” at synod assemblies ran this year for the office of secretary (to all of whom still in the synod he wrote, explaining the process for being nominated and the tasks of the secretary), he then agreed to stand again for election.

TREASURER’S REPORT. Treasurer Donald Dillman was not able to be present, so Dr. Boyer gave the report of the treasurer. Dr. Boyer explained that the treasurer and finance committee are trying to give complete reports of all accounts. The audit of 2018’s records is almost finished; by the October council meeting it should be complete and sent electronically to all council members. The difficulty in completing the audit is due to the fact that the ELCA’s Mission Investment Fund handled the synod’s bookkeeping in an experiment that became a “disaster.” Dr. Boyer also spoke about the selling of properties that come to the synod, saying that he would like some of the money coming from those sales to be designated for covering Lutheran Center building costs.

DIRECTOR OF EVANGELICAL MISSION REPORT. After Vice President Edelman-Wiener explained the position of the Director of Evangelical Mission, Pr. Bennethum pointed to Luther Seminary’s “Rethinking Stewardship” program. He explained that the synod applied for a grant to present “Extravagant Generosity: A Stewardship Extravaganza” on January 10-11, 2020. This will be a major event with workshops and is being sponsored by both the Northeastern and Southeastern Pennsylvania Synods. Scholarships will be available for persons who find the cost prohibitive.

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE. The executive committee had nothing to report.

FINANCE COMMITTEE. A chart was presented showing the proposed spending policy for the synod’s special funds. The recommended level of spending, Dr. Boyer explained, is based on a formula that considers a 5-year period of income. These funds represent a considerable amount of money that does not come from Mission Support. Pr. Meinschein asked whether this spending procedure could be changed given the anticipated transition costs of calling a new bishop in 2020. Dr. Boyer said that some of the funds are defined broadly enough that they could be changed. The following resolution was then adopted:

(2019.06.04) *Resolved*, That spending policies for synod funds for 2020 be established as follows:

- 8% (\$55,623) of the Prosser/Pahse/Mission Fund
- 8% (\$105,438) of the Kelchner Fund
- 10% (\$13,674) of the Student Education Fund
- 6% (\$4,664) of the Leadership Development Fund
- 8% (\$39,482) of the Social Ministry Fund

Dr. Boyer reported that Jeannette Richardson will return to the synod council and finance committee now that council meetings will take place in daylight. Other finance committee members are Mr. Hottenstein, Pr. Shankweiler, Louise McCloughan, and Mr. Dillman.

PROGRAM COMMITTEE. The program committee will consist of Ms. Eroh, Lenna Harris, Pr. Druckenmiller, Teresa Fry, and Victor Unks.

ADMINISTRATION COMMITTEE. Pr. Drennan will be the chairperson. Other members will be Mr. Everhart, Mr. Engle, and Pr. Meinschein. Pr. Bennethum reminded the committee that it will need to work this summer on an information security policy for the synod in that the synod’s insurance company expects the synod to have that kind of policy.

NOMINATING COMMITTEE. Then Rev. Lauren Blatt needed to be absent, but Pr. Grube of the nominating committee was present. He stressed the committee’s need to depend on the networking of all council members to find nominees. Currently there is the need of a youth male, not yet 18 years of age at the time of election.

WELCA REPORT. Ms. Harris reported that the Women of the ELCA had its thirtieth annual convention on May 18, 2019, at Trinity Lutheran Church, Lehighton. She explained that there are currently two openings on their board, for Schuylkill and Berks. The synodical unit hopes to communicate better, such as through their website. She reported that there is a new WELCA chapter at Muhlenberg College chaired by the Rev. Kristen Glass Perez, College Chaplain; justice issues and disaster relief are attractive to them. The last weekend in September they will be making blankets.

EN BLOC ITEMS. Pr. Shankweiler, seconded by Mr. Everhart, moved that the *en bloc* resolutions be approved as presented. The motion carried.

(2019.06.05) *Resolved*, That the 2020 budget of the Scranton/Wilkes-Barre Mission District be approved.

SCRANTON/WILKES-BARRE MISSION DISTRICT BUDGET 2020

| | |
|-------------------------------------|-------------------|
| INCOME: | |
| Congregational Donations | \$3,800.00 |
| Mission District Festival Donations | 475.00 |
| Investment Income Interest | 15.00 |
| TOTAL | \$4,290.00 |
| EXPENSES: | |
| Mission District Festival/Assembly | \$760.00 |
| Pastoral Workshop | 100.00 |
| District Wide Events | 100.00 |
| Youth Mission | 800.00 |
| Susquehanna County Initiative | 2,400.00 |
| Postage | 50.00 |
| Mileage Reimbursement | 80.00 |
| TOTAL | \$4,290.00 |

(2019.06.06) *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): The Rev. Jeffrey Bohan
- Clergy (second year): The Rev. Rebecca Knox
- Clergy (third year): The Rev. Kim Lengert
The Rev. Scott Lingenfelter

(2019.06.07) *Resolved*, That in accordance with ELCA bylaw 7.41.17. and upon endorsement by the bishop, the following rostered leaders be granted the roster status of “retired”:

Michael Bodnyk – effective 7/1/2019

(2019.06.08) *Resolved*, That in accordance with section S13.21 of the Northeastern Pennsylvania Synod Constitution, that the Williams Township Pastoral Charge be dissolved.

(2019.06.09) *Resolved*, That the 2020 budget of the East Berks Mission District be approved.

**EAST BERKS MISSION DISTRICT
2019-2020 Budget Proposal**

| INCOME | 2018-2019 BUDGET | 2018-2019 (ACTUAL) | 2019-2020 (PROPOSAL) |
|---------------------------------|-----------------------------|-------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| Congregational Support | \$2,500.00 | \$2,773.21 | \$2,500.00 |
| Leadership Training | \$450.00 | \$0.00 | \$0.00 |
| Baptismal Fraktur | \$1,000.00 | \$359.50 | \$400.00 |
| Miscellaneous | \$100.00 | \$1,054.14 | \$100.00 |
| TOTAL INCOME | \$4,050.00 | \$4,186.85 | \$3,000.00 |
| EXPENSES | | | |
| Youth Ministry | \$750.00 | \$0.00 | \$750.00 |
| Office Supplies | \$50.00 | \$40.00 | \$50.00 |
| Sean’s Expenses (mileage, etc.) | \$750.00 | \$320.96 | \$750.00 |
| Rostered Leaders’ Meetings | \$250.00 | \$330.50 | \$250.00 |
| The Potato Project | \$1,000.00 | \$1,000.00 | \$1,000.00 |
| Baptismal Fraktur | \$500.00 | \$0.00 | \$100.00 |
| Camp Noah 2018 (Evacuees) | \$200.00 | \$0.00 | \$0.00 |
| Miscellaneous | \$100.00 | \$543.60 | \$100.00 |
| TOTAL EXPENSES | \$3,600.00 | \$2,235.06 | \$3,000.00 |

(2019.06.10) *Resolved*, That in accordance with S10.03.f. of the Northeastern Pennsylvania Synod Constitution that Jeannette Richardson be appointed to fill the vacant synod council position of female person of color or language other than English, serving until the 2020 synod assembly.

ADJOURNMENT. Council members were asked to review the contact information listed for them in the membership handout. Vice President Edelman-Wiener declared the meeting adjourned at 12:08 p.m. The next council meeting will be October 19, 2019, 9:00 a.m. at Jerusalem Lutheran Church, Schuylkill Haven; future dates have not yet been established.

Carl D. Shankweiler, Secretary