

**MINUTES OF THE SYNOD COUNCIL, SOUTHWESTERN TEXAS SYNOD
EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN AMERICA
St. John Lutheran Church – San Juan, Texas
February 8-9, 2008**

Members Present:

Santiago Alanis	Peggy Janssen	Bishop Ray Tiemann
Lisa Beyer	The Rev. Robert Kaul	Jodi Vlasak
The Rev. Bonnie Claycomb	Linda Nicholas	The Rev. Wayne Walther
Margaret Cook	Jim Price	Bill Warncke
Gracie Cooley	Ronald Riske	The Rev. James Wilken
Mark Helmke	The Rev. William Swantner	Linda Zander
David Houston	Carl Teinert	

Advisory Members Present:

John Dellis	Donna Shurley	Claudia Teinert
The Rev. Stephen Kanouse		

Staff Present:

Janet Fries	The Rev. Michael Robinson	The Rev. Lynn Schudy Ziese
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Absent:

The Rev. Mark Behrendt	The Rev. Michael Coffey	The Rev. Eric Petty
The Rev. John Boldt	The Rev. Joe Garcia	Karen Stein
The Rev. Richard Bremer	Alton Luedke	Deborah Wilson

Friday, February 8, 2008

The Synod Council meeting was called to order by Vice President Mark Helmke at 7:12 p.m. Pastor Sylvia De Le Garza welcomed the Synod Council to San Juan. Opening devotion presented by Bishop Tiemann.

Roll Call

The secretary determined that a quorum was present.

VOTED

SC.08.2.1 To ratify the recommendation from the Executive Committee to adopt the Continuing Resolution 3.04as follows:

3.04A08

VACANCIES: The dean of the conference may appoint a qualified person to serve as a voting member of the synod council on an interim basis until a vacancy is filled by election by the conference.

VOTED

SC.08.2.2 To accept and seat Linda Nicholas (Rio Grande Valley Conference – Lay Representative) and The Rev. Eric Petty (Victoria Conference – Clergy Representative) as members of the Synod Council.

Agenda

Mr. Helmke presented a Proposed Agenda.

VOTED
SC.08.2.3 To adopt the proposed agenda.

VOTED
SC.08.2.4 To approve the minutes of the September 14-15, 2007, Synod Council meeting as submitted (Exhibit A).

The Synod Council then recessed in order that the committees could meet.

Saturday, February 9, 2008

The Synod Council meeting reconvened at 9:05 a.m. with a call to order by Mr. Helmke. Opening devotions were led by Bishop Tiemann.

Executive Committee Report

Mr. Helmke presented the report, including the following:

VOTED
I SC.08.2.4 To ratify the recommendation from the Executive Committee for a Statistician for the Southwestern Texas Synod Contract for January 1, 2008 – June 1, 2008, with Anne Jones Hilbert.

VOTED
I SC.08.2.5 To ratify the recommendation from the Executive Committee to adopt Continuing Resolution S9.01.A08 as follows:

S9.01.A08

The Synod Council Executive Committee shall provide for background checks for persons nominated for synodical office prior to the Synod Assembly at which the election will take place or as soon as possible after the Synod Assembly for newly elected officers nominated from the floor who were not identified as nominees prior to the assembly. The process shall be as follows:

- a. Prior to the Synod Assembly, appropriate notice of the background check requirement and protocol will be provided to voting members, potential nominees, and others as directed by the Synod Council.**
- b. Nominees and newly elected officers are required to provide written consent to a background check and all information necessary to complete a background check, which should be completed prior to the Synod Assembly with respect to nominees and prior to installation for newly elected officers, if possible.**
- c. The Synod Council's Executive Committee shall designate one Executive Committee or Synod Council member to obtain the background checks.**
- d. All background checks for nominees and newly elected officers will entail a criminal background check. A financial background check will be completed for nominees for treasurer. The Executive Committee shall decide whether additional types of background checks are appropriate for each officer position.**

- e. The background check results shall be provided to that nominee or elected officer and to the Synod Council's Executive Committee. Further disclosure of the results may be determined by the Executive Committee.
- f. The Executive Committee may adopt other procedures or protocols as are necessary to provide for background checks for nominees and newly elected synodical officers and shall report such actions to the Synod Council.

VOTED
SC.08.2.6

To approve the recommendation from the Executive Committee for the appointment of Kevin Benz to a second three-year term to the Board of Directors for Lutheran Social Services of the South, Inc.

VOTED
SC.08.2.7

To ratify the recommendation from the Executive Committee to modify Section 3 of the policies for The Philip L. Wahlberg Scholarship Fund as follows:

- 3. The Fund will be administered by a four-person Scholarship Committee:
 - a. The three ELCA bishops serving in Texas and Louisiana shall biennially choose one of their number to serve on the Scholarship Committee for a term of two years. By agreement of the bishops, the incumbent may be appointed for additional terms. The bishop serving on the Committee shall be its chair and function as the "process person" for the Fund.
 - b. A representative of each of the three synods shall be appointed by the respective bishops. Their terms of office shall be for three years, except that the initial appointments shall be for one, two, and three year terms to establish staggering of positions. The rotational schedule is below; the appointees will be lay or clergy, as noted in the schedule. Committee members may serve additional terms at the discretion of their bishop. Their specific task is the awarding of scholarships.
 - c. Terms of members of the Scholarship Committee shall begin on July 1 following their appointment.

Schedule of Appointments

YEAR	NTNL	TX-LA GULF COAST	SWTX
2007	Lay	Lay	Clergy
2008	Lay	---	---
2009	---	Clergy	---
2010	---	---	Lay
2011	Clergy	---	---
2012	---	Lay	---
2013	---	---	Lay
2014	Lay	---	---

YEAR	NTNL	TX-LA GULF COAST	SWTX
2015	---	Lay	---
2016	---	---	Clergy
2017	Lay	---	---
2018	---	Clergy	---
2019	---	---	Lay
2020	Clergy	---	---

VOTED

SC.08.2.8

To ratify the recommendation from the Executive Committee to designate a \$25,000 housing allowance out of salary as a portion of the compensation for Bishop Ray Tiemann for 2008, and to designate a \$26,000 housing allowance out of salary as a portion of the compensation for Assistant to the Bishop Mike Robinson for 2008

VOTED

SC.08.2.9

To ratify the recommendation from the Executive Committee to appoint the following persons to the Texas Lutheran University Corporation Board: The Rev. John Braulick, Michael Aguirre and Ralph Cook.

Treasurer's Report (Exhibits E, F and F-1)

Mr. Warncke presented the Treasurer's Report. The proposed budget for 2009-2010 was also presented and discussed at this time (Exhibit F-1)

Open Discussion

Mr. Helmke led the Synod Council in discussion for guidance on personnel reviews by the Executive Committee as part of *Forming Faithfulness – in Leaders, with Congregations, among Partners!* This new review process was adopted at the last Synod Assembly.

Administration and Finance Committee Report:

Mr. Price presented the report for this committee.

VOTED

SC.08.2.10

That the Executive Committee be authorized to approve a letter of engagement for the annual audit of the synod books.

VOTED

SC.08.2.11

To adopt the resolution as it appears in Exhibit J regarding the termination of cafeteria plan.

Legal, Constitutional and Roster Review Committee Report:

Pr. Wilken presented the report for this committee.

VOTED

SC.08.2.12 To approve On Leave from Call Status for:

- Pastor Heide Harris for a 5th year (study) beginning July 1, 2008
- Sister Carolyn Hellerich for a 1st year beginning October 1, 2007
- Pastor Arthur Lowe for a 1st year beginning January 13, 2008

Pastor Paul Muehlbrad for a 3rd year beginning January 1, 2008
Pastor Thomas Robison for a 1st year beginning March 1, 2008
Pastor Dawn Silvius for a 3rd year beginning October 31, 2008
Pastor Bill Snooks for a 1st year beginning December 1, 2007

VOTED

SC.08.2.13 To approve Specialized Calls for:

Pastor Kay Johnson as Chaplain for VITAS (Innovative Hospice Care) beginning
May 21, 2007
Pastor Armin Steege – Lutheran Social Services, Inc. (reinstatement)

VOTED

SC.08.2.14 To approve Retired Status for:

Pastor Mark Gruebmeyer as of January 1, 2008
Pastor Steve Rode as of January 1, 2008
Pastor Edward Kern as of February 1, 2008
Pastor Melvin Swoyer as of April 1, 2008

VOTED

SC.08.2.15 To approve the Constitution for New Hope Lutheran Worshipping Community, Blanco, pending conforming SAWC8.02.a and SAWC8.02.b to the language of the Model Constitution of the ELCA for Synodically Authorized Worshipping Communities, and the addition of SAWC8.02.e from the Model Constitution of the ELCA for Synodically Authorized Worshipping Communities.

VOTED

SC.08.2.16 To approve the Constitution for St. Andrew, Canyon Lake with changes to C12.01 and C12.04.j to conform to the language of the Model Constitution of the ELCA.

VOTED

SC.08.2.17 To approve changes to the Constitution for St. John (Lindenau), Cuero, for C10.04 and C12.02.

VOTED

SC.08.2.18 To approve the changes to the Constitution for Bethany, Fredericksburg, for C13.06 and C13.07, and to the Bylaws for 6A.8.

Office of the Bishop Reports (Exhibits G, G-1, G-2, G-3, G-4):

Bishop Tiemann presented his report including the following:

VOTED

SC.08.2.19 To approve the appointment of the following persons to the Nominating Committee for the 2008 Synod Assembly: Pr. Brad Highum, J. Haroldine Fox, Anne Hilbert, Pr. Alma Morales, Leah Clark, Pr. Steve Byrne and Amanda Schnelle.

VOTED

SC.08.2.20 To approve the designation of Lutheran Church of the Hills, Kerrville as a Synodically Authorized Worshiping Community.

VOTED

SC.08.2.21 To approve the appointment of John Dellis to the Lutheran Foundation of the Southwest Board beginning January 1, 2008.

VOTED

SC.08.2.22 To approve the Youth Ministry Co-Coordinator Contract for February 1, 2008 – January 31, 2009 with Heather Hansen (Exhibit G-2).

VOTED

SC.08.2.23 To approve the Youth Ministry Co-Coordinator Contract for February 1, 2008 – January 31, 2009 with Whitney Myers (Exhibit G-3).

Bishop Tiemann also presented the report of the Youth Ministry Co-Coordinators as outlined in Exhibit G-4.

Assistant to the Bishop Report:

The Assistant to the Bishop Ziese presented her report as outlined in Exhibit H.

Program and Evaluation Committee Report:

Pr. Kaul presented the report for this committee.

VOTED

SC.08.2.24 To approve Vision Grants in the following amounts:

- Trinity Lutheran, Mission - \$8,500
- Southwestern Texas Synod Office (2 new congregational tools) - \$5,070
- Holy Cross, Austin - \$8,710
- Southwestern Texas Synod Office (to train intentional interim ministers) - \$4,220
- St. Andrew, San Antonio - \$3,000
- New Lutheran campus ministry at UTSA - \$4,000
- Lutheran Seminary Program of the Southwest (marketing prospective students with emphasis on Rio Grande Valley) - \$4,000
- Austin Conference (beltway churches in declining area) - \$1,000
- Carlson/Chesley/Austin (develop disaster preparedness) - \$500
- Texas Impact-the Breath of Life (environmental) - \$1,000

Assistant to the Bishop Report:

The Assistant to the Bishop Robinson presented his report as outlined in Exhibit I.

Reports Received as Information

- Report from Pr. Skip Courter, Chair of the Leadership Support Committee regarding compensation guidelines was presented in a PowerPoint presentation. The report from the Commission for Professional Leadership (Exhibit O) was also received.

- Report from Ms. Teinert, Commission for Communication (Exhibit L).
- Report from Ms. Shurley, Commission for Congregational Life (Exhibit M).
- Report from Pr. Claycomb, Commission for Mission (Exhibit N)

- Report from Pr. Coffey, Commission for Professional Leadership (PL-1).

VOTED

- SC.08.2.25 To approve the appointment of Jeff Bullington as a member of the Lutheran Campus Ministry Committee for a two year term from September 1, 2007 – August 31, 2009.**

2008 Synod Assembly

VOTED

- SC.08.2.26 To recommend the proposed budget for 2009-2010 as outlined in Exhibit F-1 for approval by the 2008 Synod Assembly.**

VOTED

- SC.08.2.27 To recommend the Proposed Standing Rules as outlined in Exhibit P for adoption by the 2008 Synod Assembly.**

VOTED

- SC.08.2.28 To ratify the appointment of the following persons as members of the Planning Committee for the 2008 Synod Assembly – Tom Winn, Chair; Barbara Schutz, Lois Holck, Don Bergstrom, Tom Kesselring, Renee Kesselring, Mary McCauley, Marge Kretchmar, Mrs. Tom Winn and David Austin.**

Pr. Ziese presented preliminary information on the 2009 Synod Assembly.

VOTED

- SC.08.2.29 To approve the request received from Lutherans Concerned/North America for display space at the 2008 Synod Assembly.**

Written Reports Received:

- Report from Women of the ELCA (Exhibit R).
- Report from Cross Trails Ministry (Exhibit S).

After closing devotions lead by Bishop Tiemann, the meeting was adjourned at 3:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted

Linda Zander, Synod Secretary