

MINUTES OF THE
FIFTEENTH REGULAR SYNOD ASSEMBLY OF THE
METROPOLITAN NEW YORK SYNOD OF THE
EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN AMERICA

June 8-10, 2006
Mid-Hudson Civic Center
Poughkeepsie, New York

*Living in God’s Amazing Grace:
Reclaiming the Great Commission*

Thursday, June 8, 2006
PLENARY SESSION I

At 1:00 p.m. in the Mid-Hudson Civic Center in Poughkeepsie, New York, the fifteenth synod assembly of the Metropolitan New York Synod began with the Holy Communion presided over by Bishop Stephen P. Bouman. The sermon at the opening service was given by keynote speaker Pastor Susan Briehl.

Following the worship the first plenary session was called to order by Bishop Stephen Paul Bouman at 2:12 p.m.

Pastor Eduardo Fabian Arias [Sion, Manhattan] was introduced as the chaplain for the assembly.

Registration and Attendance

Pr. Rosalind Braithwaite [Augustana, E. Elmhurst], Chair of the Committee on Registration and Attendance gave the preliminary report of attendance.

Registered:	132	Ordained Ministers
	163	Lay Voting Members
	8	Associates in Ministry
	303	Total Voting Members
	17	Registered Visitors

On the motion to adopt the Report

Adopted

On the basis of the report the chair declared a quorum present.

Ms. Dorothy Demarest was welcomed to the assembly. She will serve once again as parliamentarian.

Bishop Bouman directed the members to the Standing Rules adopted as Continuing Resolutions of our synod. He called for any additions. None were proposed.

Adoption of the Agenda

The bishop asked the members to look at the prepared agenda. He asked if there were any additions or corrections. There being none he called for the vote on the adoption of the printed agenda.

On the motion to adopt the agenda

Adopted

Agenda of the 2006 Synod Assembly

Thursday June 8

11:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.

1:00 p.m.

10:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

Registration

Opening Worship Service

Plenary I

Opening and Welcome

Introduction of Chaplain

Report of the Committee on Registration and Attendance

Introduction of Parliamentarian

Adoption of Agenda

Rules of Procedure

Committee on Elections: Floor Nominations

Committee on Reference and Counsel – Procedures

Introductions

ELCA Representative

Synod Officers

Bishop's Report – Part I

Treasurer's Report: Introduction of 2007 Budget

Keynote Address [Part 1]

Greetings: Lutheran Theological Seminary in Philadelphia

Report of the Committee on Reference and Counsel

Introduction of Assembly Planning Committee

Addresses by Candidates for Vice President

Announcements

Prayer

Dinner

5:45 p.m.

7:30 p.m.

Healing Service

Friday June 9

7:00 a.m.

8:00 a.m.

8:45 a.m. --

Breakfast/Budget Hearing

Service of the Word

Plenary Session II

Report of the ELCA Representative

Greetings: Episcopal Diocese of New York

Presentation: Natural Church Development Bishop-elect Claire Burkat

Elections

Greetings and Introductions

Former Bp. Ressmeyer

Synod Staff

Announcements

Prayer

10:50 a.m.

11:55 a.m.

1:00 p.m.

Breakout Sessions

Lunch

Plenary III

Prayer

Report of the Candidacy Committee

Greetings: Lutheran Services New York Alliance

Report on Asian Ministry

Report of the Synod Council

Report of the Reference & Counsel Committee [continued]

Keynote Address [Part 2]

Introductions
 Pastors New to Synod
 Deacons Newly Rostered
 Recognition of Anniversaries
 Presentation of Distinguished Disciple Award
 Announcements
 Prayer
5:30 p.m. Dinner
7:30 p.m. Festival Eucharist

Saturday June 10

7:00 a.m. Breakfast/Budget Hearing
8:00 a.m. Morning Prayer
8:35 a.m. Plenary IV
 Report of the Elections Committee
 Report of the Bishop [Part 2]
 Adoption of 2007 Budget
 Companion Synod Report
 Report of the Reference & Counsel Committee [continued]
 Servant to Servant
 Report of the ELCA Representative [Part 2]
 Announcements
 Prayer
11:40 p.m. Lunch
12:50 p.m. Eucharist
1:50 p.m. Plenary V
 Elections Committee: Report
 Report of the Reference & Counsel Committee [continued]
 Report of the Registration and Attendance Committee
 Announcements
 Closing and Adjournment

Elections and Nominations

Mr. John Litke, Vice President of the synod was introduced to describe for the members the work the assembly would complete on elections. He noted that Mr. James Steipp [Immanuel, Kingston] chair of the elections committee was unable to attend the first session due to the death of his wife's mother.

He noted when the supplemental nomination report would be available. He then described the process that would be used for the conduct of the first common ballot which would be taken during the second plenary session Friday morning. Members were told that a second ballot would be conducted as soon as results and new ballots are available.

Mr. Litke introduced the nomination reports and described the process for floor nominations. Bishop Bouman then led the assembly through the printed nominations report and called for further nominations where applicable.

Synod Council

Ticket 1 Lay Female	Marion Steadman [Bronx]	Hope Card [Floor]
Ticket 2 Clergy	Perry Kirschbaum [Eastern Nassau]	Martin Nale [Eastern Nassau]
Ticket 3 Clergy	Edward Barnett [SW Nassau]	No further nominations
Ticket 4 Clergy	Jeffrey Koenig [Western Suffolk]	Robert Schoepflin [Western Suffolk]
Ticket 5 Lay Male	F. Eugene (Gene) Hiigel [B'klyn Bridges]	James Vizzini [B'klyn Bridges]
Ticket 6 Lay Male	Gerald Erickson [Southwest B'klyn]	No further nominations
Ticket 7 Lay Male	Charles Germain	Stuart Meade
Ticket 8 Lay Male MCL	Earl Marsan	No further nominations

Ticket 9 Lay Female	Renee Wicklund	Minerva Melendez
Ticket 10 Clergy	Annmarie Noto	Diane Wildow [Floor]
	Robert Harris [Floor]	
Ticket 11 Youth	Joseph Masciello	Jonathan Westerlund
Officers		
Ticket 12 Vice President	Dorothy Scholz	Hans Vogel
Ticket 13 Secretary	James Krauser	No further nominations
Consultation Committee		
Ticket 14 Clergy Female	Mary Chang	Rose Ann Foege
Ticket 15 Clergy Male	Amandus Derr	Paul Schmiede
Discipline Committee		
Ticket 16 Clergy Female	Jane Gaeta	Ann Tiemeyer
Ticket 17 Clergy Male	Lyle Guttu	No further nominations
Ticket 18 Lay Female	Lydie Raschka	Billie Lee Whelan
Ticket 19 Lay Male	Homer Alexander	No further nominations
Ticket 20 Lay Male 2 yr.	Joe Giakette	No further nominations
Mission Development Board		
Ticket 21 Lay Female	Mary Heller	No further nominations
Ticket 22 Lay Male	Kamy Moghbeli	Paul Lumpkin
Ticket 23 Clergy 2 yr.	Audrey Petersen	Craig Miller [Floor]
2007 Churchwide Assembly		
Ticket 24 Lay Female	Maria Bogholtz	Christine Connell
	Meg Fielding	Allison Guttu
	Elizabeth Hoffman	Holly Jacobsen
	Billie Lee Wilson	
Ticket 25 Lay Male	Homer Alexander	Robert Busch
	John Litke	Paul Lumpkin
	Earl Marsan	Manuel Melendez
	Jeremy Posadas	John Prosen
	Edward Leyser [Floor]	
Ticket 26 Clergy	William Baum	Paul Block
	William Bogholtz	Perucy Butiku
	Mary Chang	Katrina Foster
	Marva Jenkins	Craig Miller
	Gary Schulz	Diane Wildow [Floor]
Ticket 27 Clergy	James Klockau	Jeffrey Kolbo
	James Krauser	Paul Milholland
	Frank Nelson	Annemarie Noto
	Peter Rustico	Eric Swensson
	Terry Luper [Floor]	Robert Harris [Floor]

Reference and Counsel

Pr. John Jurik chair of the Committee on Reference and Counsel was called upon to introduce the work of this committee. In his remarks he introduced the members of his committee. He instructed the members that they were to be careful to direct their attention to the replacement pages which were provided at registration as the report is processed by the assembly.

Pr. Jurik explained how to read the markings used to amend some of the resolutions. The committee recommendation is to be found at the conclusion of each resolution. He announced that any further

resolutions to be considered at this assembly had to be turned in by the conclusion of the first plenary session.

Bishop Bouman acknowledged hosts for the first plenary session.

The Reverend Sherman Hicks, Executive Director for Multicultural Ministries of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, was introduced as the representative of the ELCA to this year's assembly. Pr. Hicks assumed his directorship this January. Previously he served as the Mission Director and Coordinator of the African American/Black Outreach Strategy, and as bishop of the Metropolitan Chicago Synod of the ELCA and parishes in Washington, D.C., East Orange, N.J., and in Buffalo, N.Y. He also serves on the Board of Directors of the Resource Mission Institute in Gettysburg, Pa., the Lutheran Housing Services of Fairfax, Va., and Lutheran Services in America, Baltimore, Md. He previously served on boards of the Lifeline Partnership, Lutheran Social Services of Illinois, Bethphage Mission, Community Family Services, as president of the Interfaith Council for the Homeless (Chicago), AIDS National Interfaith Network (Washington), Council of Religious Leaders (Chicago) and as a trustee of Carthage College in Kenosha, Wisconsin.

The synod's other officers Mr. John Litke, Vice President, Pr. James Krauser, Secretary, Mr. Robert Buescher, Treasurer were also acknowledged.

Bishop Bouman then gave the first part of his report. Ms. Connie Duever of the synod staff read text from Isaiah.

Report of the Bishop – Part 1

"The Lord will guide you continually and satisfy your needs in parched places and make your bones strong and you shall be like a watered garden, like a spring of water whose waters never fail. Your ancient ruins shall be rebuilt. You shall raise the foundation of many generations. You shall be called the repairer of the breach, the restorer of things to live in." Isaiah 58: 11-14

It was at my first assembly as bishop 10 years ago that I relied on this text from Isaiah 58 to call our synod to be healers of the breach and restorers of streets to live in. This time, ten years later, that text is before me as I share this written report, as well as my two public reports at the assembly.

The author of this text addresses the community of Israel who had returned from the ground zero of exile in Babylon. Like the church in our metropolis today the message joins the community in their concern to rebuild the walls and the ruined streets of a ravished Jerusalem and surrounding neighborhoods. They are also concerned with rebuilding faithful commitment to worship and ethical life of the covenant. "You shall raise up the foundation of many generations"

The burning question of the writer of this text is whether the community and the nations that join them are worthy to stand in unity and justice when God appears and Zion is restored. Can Israel's people standing before the breach of their ruined community and broken communal life, the breach of the hungry, the ruined streets, the naked, the homeless poor, the afflicted, while pointing the angry finger at one another, be fully servants of the holy God?

A lot has happened in these past ten years. At the millennium we declared Jubilee and went to the breach of four congregations serving people living in poverty and, with many partners, helped them to wipe out 1.25 million dollars of debt. Our metropolis itself became the breach almost five years ago with the attacks of Sept. 11th.

In these past ten years we have begun ministry among many immigrants. We have seen some of our own congregations in the breach. In the midst of it we have experienced a renewal of evangelical fervor. We are a Great Commission Synod.

The breach is all creation "groaning in travail" for the second coming of our Lord. It is to that creation we are called to with the message of the gospel of the resurrection of Jesus.

Let us set before us this image of healers of the breach as I share some aspects of our life together in this written annual report.

1. One-on-ones with pastors

During Lent I had the privilege of holding conversations with almost every parish pastor of our synod. It was a soul satisfying experience. Our pastors are deeply committed to their vocations of Word and Sacrament ministry. They love those whom they serve. Many described their own breach in a time of financial pressure and declining membership. Many also described vibrant ministries to those in the breach in their communities and in their own membership. Ministry this side of heaven touches joy and sorrow, confident faith and doubt. Our pastors are faithfully accompanying those they serve as they fulfill the calls given to them by the Church through the Holy Spirit.

Several issues have emerged from these conversations. I have begun a discussion of some of these with our Deans and will gather them into a top 10 list. Something like: the top ten things on the minds and hearts of our pastors and congregations.

I will conduct one-on-ones with our pastors again. These relationships are at the heart of our life together.

2. The October Special Assembly

Our consultant in communications, Wendy Healy, tells us that this past month there were 400,000 hits on our synod website. I would like to think that all of those were directed at my Easter message, but I don't think that is true. Many were directed towards the resolutions of our Special Assembly in October. That assembly, and its aftermath, showed how divided we are on issues of sexuality in our synod. The breach found us. The divisions go deep and the circumstances around the assembly left many people upset. I have met with several congregation councils and many individuals and meetings of conference pastors since that assembly. I have also shared time, twice, at meetings of the Conference of Bishops around our resolutions. The Church Council has ruled on Resolution C from that assembly. Those resolutions and the Church Council's ruling are a matter of public record.

In the days ahead I hope that we can focus our conversation around issues such as scripture: how we read the Bible, the authority of scripture in the life of the church, how Lutherans read scripture through law and gospel.

I hope we talk about these issues in the light of evangelism. How can we welcome all God's children into the life of our congregations? How can we reach out with the Good News of Jesus to people who have been or feel excluded from the life of the church?

Finally, having just read the troubling account in a recent New Yorker Magazine about how issues of sexuality are dividing the Episcopal Church I am hoping and praying that the Lutheran community can offer to the church and to the world a sanctified community which is able to argue passionately about things that matter, still go to scripture and the Eucharist together, and is able to maintain its primary focus on the Great Commission and the breach to which God calls us.

3. Mission support

For several years now mission support (the money a congregation sends to the synod for the work of the wider church) in our synod has been flat or declining. We are experiencing at the synod what you are experiencing at your own congregations. The financial pressures are real. Health care costs keep spiraling. Energy costs and other financial pressures will continue to grow. In the midst of these challenges we have

taken the long view and are focusing on the life of discipleship and the life of a steward. Many congregations report that simple programs like Consecration Sundays are helping to rekindle the generosity of their members. Our fall Quadrant Meetings were about stewardship. Stewardship was part of the one-on-one conversations that I have been having with our pastors.

Mission support is vital to our life together for many reasons. One is that together we support over thirty ministries among us which would go away without our communal resolve to be generous and connected to these ministries. None of us can follow Jesus to the breach by ourselves. There are ministries around the world and on campuses, in seminaries. There are candidates for ministry. There is so much that God calls us to do together which none of us can accomplish by ourselves, and your mission support is critical to our partnership in these many ministries.

But even more important are the relationships and leadership. By relationships I refer to the passage from Corinthians in which Paul is asking an offering for the breach of the poor in Jerusalem. He says of the Macedonians, a congregation of people living in poverty themselves, that their generosity was because "first they gave of themselves to the Lord and then to us." It's about the relationships. Mission support is a sign of our communal love for one another in a time in which it is so easy to go our own way, to be individualistic, to ignore the good of the whole.

The second is leadership. When congregations see their leaders and their pastor generously and sacrificially support the wider ministry of the church they get the message and the encouragement for their own individual decisions about how they are stewards of God's gifts to them. Generosity begets generosity. Leadership in supporting the wider church consistently leads to a healthy congregation with all of the gifts that it will ever need for the work that God has called them to do in their own situation as well.

Ten years ago you called me as pastor of this synod. I am unabashed in asking for your support for these ministries that we do together. I am asking you to be accountable to our life together, to share a statement of intent in a timely way and to encourage your brothers and sisters in Christ in their attention to regular, cheerful and generous giving.

4. Fiscal matters

At this assembly you will be asked to pass a balanced budget. I want to publicly thank Bob Buescher, our treasurer, and the Financial Management Committee chaired by Paul Jensen for their hard work and support in helping me and my office put together a ten year financial plan. We are working with a management based budget in which we are able to track our spending through the year and hold each other accountable for it. We have been able to control spending and, for the most part, stay within the budget. Controlling unanticipated expenses is a work in progress. We have made tremendous strides but still need to grow toward tighter fiscal responsibility.

Various funding streams enter into the revenue side of our budget. There are many partnership grants which go into helping to fund staffing for our synod. Portions of the New York Synod Fund help provide some of the funding for our shared ministries. Of course the largest portion of the funding for our budget comes from the regular mission support of all of our congregations.

The Mission Development Board works with congregations in synodical administration as well as properties which may be sold or used for mission purposes. When a property is sold, a tithe goes to the work of the wider church. The proceeds are then put into the Mission Redevelopment Fund which is used for a variety of purposes. A large percentage of the proceeds after the tithe go to direct grants to congregations and new missions and a portion goes to support other operationally mandated responsibilities of the synod. The Mission Planning Team has responsibility, with the Bishop and staff, for bringing recommendations to Synod Council for allocation of these funds. There is now one unified funding process in our synod which has united our work with and funding from the national Division for Evangelical Outreach and Congregational Mission with local funding. Every congregation which receives funding has received training for grant writing, is represented by a Mission Team, and the funding is dependant on explicit goals and evaluation.

It is important that you understand that it is our wish that no congregations close. That is why we have developed so many tools with the Commission for Evangelical Outreach to work with congregations and clusters of congregations to develop plans for strengthening their ministries in the future. This is why we are encouraging conferences and local neighboring congregations to plan together for the future using concepts such as Total Ministry, Natural Church Development, "Re-rooting in the Community" and other ways of helping congregations to stay alive, healthy, and engaged in mission.

Yet, from time to time congregations do close. Most recently our work with two congregations in Valley Stream (St. Paul and Trinity) has helped form one powerful witness to the gospel from two struggling congregations.

It is also important for you to know that synodical administration is not necessarily a prelude to a congregation's closing. In the case of Zion in Harlem, it is to help a struggling congregation to do its business and carry on its affairs so that it can be strengthened to the point where it can be redeveloped. There is now a growing and powerful ministry at Zion in part because of its partnership with the synod during a period of synodical administration. This was also the case at Christ, Yonkers, where synodical administration oversaw the sale of the church, administration of the assets for future mission, and the building of a chapel for the congregation and its outreach in a senior housing complex.

All of these processes which I have been describing are ways in which the synod has been re-rooting its life into the life of its conferences and congregations. Deans, the Commission for Evangelical Outreach, Synod Council, and bishop's staff, and local congregations and leaders are all fully involved at every stage of all of these processes. God is continuing to be generous by providing varieties of gifts for the pursuit of the ministry to which God has called us in this metropolis and we continue to grow in our ability to form close partnerships throughout the synod to be good stewards of these gifts, opportunities, and shared ministries. Our goal is that every congregation is strengthened in mission to be a center for mission; that every conference is a place where leaders and congregations together can plan for future ministry on their territory. It means that we are strong when we go to the breach of mission.

5. Mission Strategy

Let me say a bit more about opportunities for mission strategy and evangelism. In the recent Lenten conversations with the parish pastors of our synod, it became very clear to me that there are quite a few situations in which there needs to be collaboration in mission planning among local groups of congregations, conferences, and in some cases entire boroughs. There are congregations in close geographic proximity who are having trouble sustaining full time pastoral ministry. Sometimes those clusters of congregations include parishes from full communion partners of other church bodies. Joint mission strategy ought to include looking at various possibilities for staffing these multi-parish situations as well as a common planning process which could lead not only to sustaining basic Word and Sacrament ministry for each congregation, but also helping congregations together to be doing outreach in the breach of their communities.

Some of these situations need immediate attention. It is my hope that the conference could become the platform for mission planning, for individual congregations, congregations together, the conference as a territory for ministry, and in some cases conferences together with a borough wide strategy. Such explorations of a borough wide strategy are already underway in Staten Island and in Brooklyn and have been suggested for Queens and the Bronx as well. A south shore cluster of Nassau County congregations has begun a planning process. The Conference of Deans, the Commission for Evangelical Outreach, my staff, and other leaders will be giving these opportunities for mission strategy our full attention. In every strategic planning process, whether it is that of an individual congregation, groups of congregations, or a conference, there needs to be a place to put the shovel into the ground, a place to start.

One such instrument for mission planning is the "Natural Church Development" process, or NCD. The Rev. Claire Burkat, the bishop-elect of the Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod, will be leading us in a training on this process during the Assembly.

Over ten years ago the "Re-rooting in the Community" mission strategy process was developed as the bishop's staff worked with the Southwest Brooklyn Conference. Over the years conferences and congregations have used a listening process as a way of developing concrete proposals for mission.

I will be using some of my presentation time at our Synod Assembly to lead an introductory training in the "Re-rooting in the Community" mission planning process.

Both NCD and re-rooting are only tools. What is really important is the will and resolve of a congregation to grow in its mission, to reach out with the gospel to its community, to listen to its members and to others in the community and to respond faithfully to the Great Commission. The Commission for Evangelical Outreach is planning training opportunities for leaders who will be coaches in these efforts.

6. Vacancy and Call Processes

Pastor Dianne Loufman has been called by our Synod Council to serve part time as Assistant to the Bishop for Vacancy and Call Processes. In her time with us Dianne has put a human face and personal and sustained attention to these important milestones in lives of congregations and pastors. As someone whose ministry has been involved in effective congregational growth, development of lay leadership, and outreach, Dianne understands that vacancy and call processes are teachable moments in the life of the church, a time when we can pay attention to opportunities for mission and outreach.

In working with my staff and the Conference of Deans, Dianne is providing leadership for a process which will make a difference in a vulnerable, yet richly hopeful, time in the lives of parishes and pastors. In the days when she is not in residence on our territory, Pastor Loufman lives with her family at our seminary in Philadelphia where her husband Dr. Erik M. Heen is a professor.

8. Ground Zero Five Years Later

September 11th, 2006 will mark the fifth anniversary of the terrorist attacks in New York, Washington, and Pennsylvania. In these past five years we have seen our world radically changed. This will be a difficult time for survivors of these attacks, as well as for those who lost loved ones and friends downtown and in the attacks in Pennsylvania and Washington. It continues to be a difficult time for the economic victims of these attacks. The climate for migrants, immigrants, and refugees has become more difficult and brittle. We are beginning to get a fuller picture of the long term effects of the poisonous and polluted atmosphere in which those who worked for rescue and recovery and then rebuilding have endured. We continue to see the effects of post traumatic stress in our metropolis as well. I believe that the depth and degree of some of the conflicts and emergencies which have arisen in the life of our synod have been exacerbated by living in a time of post traumatic stress.

In the midst of all this, Lutheran Disaster Response of New York continues to provide daily comfort and renewal in the gospel to thousands in Jesus name. These programs and ministries include "Faithful Response" located in Long Island providing post traumatic care and counseling for fire and rescue personnel, and many others. It includes many ministries of the Lutheran Counseling Center and the mission to children through the Lutheran Schools Association and the New Ground Camps in collaboration with Koinonia. Collaboration with Lutheran Social Services insures that many of the hidden victims of 9/11, including those who were economically devastated by the attacks, continue to receive attention and a path to renewed life through the Project LIFE program. Partnerships at the Unmet Needs Table, New York Disaster Interfaith (NYDIS), and many other partnerships continue to help us address the needs of people in a time of dislocation and terror.

Lutheran Disaster Response was led from the beginning by Dr. John Scibilia. His leadership in helping put LDRNY together cannot be overstated. In a time of chaos and numbing grief, John was a gift of God. Recently, after a time of sabbatical, rest and healing, John has submitted his resignation to President Benke and me. He is ready to move on to other opportunities for ministry to which God is calling him. President Benke and I are working with LDRNY's Board of Directors to revise our ten year fiscal and ministry plan to take us to the tenth anniversary of these attacks. LDRNY will be directed in the future by a team of leaders

from our synod and Atlantic District staff and coordinated by the current coordinator of LDRNY, Ms. Miki Baloy, who continues to give us outstanding service.

I should also note that Lutheran Social Services has become another affiliate with the national Lutheran Disaster Response network. They will be directing their attention to Katrina and other disasters in the future.

Please pray for LDRNY during this time of transition, and make a note for September 8th on your calendars. Five years ago we gathered for the first time after the September 11th attacks as all the pastors of the Atlantic District and the Metropolitan New York Synod with our national leaders at Holy Trinity in Manhattan. In the evening we gathered with lay leaders. We will gather again on Friday September 8th as one Lutheran community to share a time of music, reflection, and prayer. Details will be forthcoming.

9. Capital Fund Drive

Last year, we considered doing a capital campaign. After a thorough feasibility study the fund raising counsel we engaged recommended an effort to raise \$15 million dollars. We wanted to fund several endowments that would allow the work of the synod and its missions to continue on for generations. In our discussions regarding the capital campaign, it came to light that our synod relationships needed strengthening before we could launch this major effort. The synod council deferred the capital campaign and instead resolved to implement a program that could work on these issues.

We felt strongly that we needed a mission interpretation program to strengthen relationships in our synod. 'Mission interpretation' sounds like a confusing term, but what it means is this: we want to tell the stories. The stories of how God is working through us, through our local congregations, even through our national and global church. We want all our members to feel more connected to the life of the synod, we want to bring them into conversation with each other, and we want to improve our communication. We hope to accomplish this by lifting up the stunning stories of ministries taking place in this synod while also empowering people to tell their own stories.

The mission interpretation program has two parts. The first is to develop a network of mission interpreters: good communicators who serve as a living newsletter, personally relating mission stories on a regular basis throughout the congregations. We will establish this network as part of our participation in the ELCA Mission Interpretation Grant project. Metro New York, along with four other synods in the ELCA, was chosen to be a pilot for the 'Stories to Tell, Gifts to Share' program. 'Stories to Tell, Gifts to Share' is a stewardship resource that utilizes the power of storytelling: the great stories in the Bible, as well as the great stories of your own ministry in daily life. A training event for this program will take place on June 24; everyone is invited.

The second part of the program is to provide a vehicle for two-way communication between congregations and the synod office. This will be accomplished by holding a series of small town hall meetings this year across the entire synod. We aim to organize many meetings in various locations so that everyone has an opportunity to be heard. We want to hear the challenges and triumphs of your mission programs; we want to hear how we can better support you; we want to explore with you the bishop's priorities and your own for our mission together. You will be receiving information about these forums in the future--please plan to attend.

In April, we hired Sarah Goe as Director of Mission Interpretation to spearhead this initiative. Sarah has a background in communication and graphic design as well as a deep love of the Lutheran church. She views her role of mission interpreter as a way of 'sharing the good news.' Please consider Sarah a resource for your congregation.

10. The Watered Garden

Isaiah 58 tells us that when we are repairers of the breach and healers of streets to live in, then our life together will be "as a watered garden." That is a way of talking about our giftedness in the Spirit. There are so many ways in which we are blessed and gifted in this synod. To name just a few:

- Ø *The Center for Public Theology has provided leadership and planning for the newly formed Immigration Task Force of our synod and a course at Wagner on interfaith encounter, including an Interfaith Pilgrimage to the Holy Land.*
- Ø *Gayle Kliever and Bethany Hinsch, our teachers at Kibeta English Medium Primary School (KEMPS) in Tanzania are building and expanding on a tradition of strength as this school in our companion diocese ranked second in the region for academic excellence.*
- Ø *The Huntington Lecture was held at Saint Peter's, Manhattan for the first time, and brought together the national and local Episcopal and Lutheran bishops. This annual lecture will be a jewel in the crown of growing ecumenical work in our synod.*
- Ø *Campus Ministry is at a time of discernment and review as the board of Lutheran Ministries in Higher Education charts the course for the future.*
- Ø *The social ministry organizations of our synod and the United Lutheran Appeal have successfully merged into the Lutheran Social Services Alliance New York.*

In these times of opportunity and challenge, in a public arena hungry for a story to explain the world, may we together be healers of the breach by proclaiming the resurrection of Jesus from the dead.

In Christ's love,

+ Stephen P. Bouman

Bishop Stephen P. Bouman

Report of the Treasurer

Following the bishop's address, Mr. Robert Buescher, synod treasurer presented his report and that of the auditor.

Introduction

I am pleased to report to you that the financial condition of your Synod is stable and solid. But its future is not without its reliance on some critical assumptions.

As is our practice at Synod, we intend to be open, candid, and clear, and show you the good, the bad, and the ugly.

I will talk about three major topics, which I hope will detail that conclusion. They are:

*Results of FY 2005 from the Auditors Report,
The status of the 10 year Financial Plan we began last year, and,
The Proposed 2007 Budget*

This report will cover a lot of ground, but I will only take your time to touch on the areas that are most significant.

So we will begin with the Results of Last Year

For the results last year, we can view the Auditors Report. A copy of the Auditors Report is in your Bulletins of Reports, in the last section just after page C20.

I do not intend to read it to you. But I would like to point out some highlights that you will find interesting, as well as, I hope, informative.

You will note that they again give us what accountants call a "clean" opinion, stating that financial statements present fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of the Synod".

That's always a condition we have received and want to continue.

Page 2 shows that Total Assets rose from \$13.2 million to \$14.4 million in the year. Growing assets are a measure of increasing stability.

Page 4 of the Audit Report breaks down the change in the major net assets. I have marked two areas of interest. The first of these, and is the bulk of the net change in assets, the Unrestricted portion, was \$934,000.

It was much smaller than 2004. It was very large that year since that's the year we started to show appraised value of properties owned, and had to acknowledge that increase.

We added no new properties in 2005.

Almost all of the remaining increase of net assets was in Permanently Restricted Funds.

That increase was \$217,000.

This was entirely contributions and income into the Tanzanian Teacher Endowment, which now has a balance of \$376 thousand, a bit farther on its way to reach the \$1 million goal set by this Assembly a few years ago.

Page 17 of the Audit Report summarizes Budgeted Operations, and highlights Mission Support and the Revenue over Expenses for the year -

Budgeted Operations may be the best measure of the Synod's devotion to improve planning and internal control.

This page also shows Excess of Income over Expenses; which you may recall was to have been a "break even" year. Well, in 2005 - we missed it by \$57 thousand.

The \$57,000 net income deficit is almost equal to the shortfall in Mission Support where congregations contributed \$50,000 less than the budget.

The shortfall in Net Income is essentially "explained" by the shortfall in Mission Support.

Of course, many of the individual budgeted lines in our budget are not balanced; so Mission Support is not the only difference; but others seem to cancel each other.

We are reducing the incidents line item variances. Our accounting operation, with Staff Accountant, Gloria Torres, continues to produce timely monthly financial reports

Variances from budgets are followed by discussions with the responsible "spenders" with a view to explaining and correcting. That process is not yet perfect, but as your Treasurer I can attest that Synod folks know that budgets are much more than simply an estimate of future whims.

Here is a historical comparison to the net loss AND the shortfall in actual Mission Support.

	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005
Deficit in Net Income	220,000	175,000	451,000	108,000	58,000
Deficit in Mission Support	234,000	261,000	56,000	148,000	49,000

It is significant that essentially the total shortfall, except for 2003, can be explained by the shortfall in Mission Support for all the recent years.

The Financial Management Committee always has great difficulty in predicting Mission Support, since budgets are drafted almost two years ahead of current year results.

Unfortunately, you could conclude that, the Committee did not lower the anticipated Mission Support fast enough - far enough ahead of time - to match our declining contributions from the congregations.

Prediction of Mission Support becomes even more difficult, since many congregations are tardy in their submission of Statements of Intent; which again is the experience this year.

So, we must present a 2007 budget for approval without the benefit of actual 2006 performance, or even with estimates based on congregational commitments.

Perhaps the importance of completing a Statement of Intent and producing Parochial Reports is not fully appreciated. These are critical to our planning and analysis.

A new report is included in your material on pages C14-C20. It lists the performance of each and every one of the synod's congregations in this regard for the year ended January 31, 2006. The shaded areas show where your congregation appeared to have been tardy on that date. We hope you are proud of your congregation's record – but if you are embarrassed by it, only your action can achieve a better record in future issues of this report.

As one FMC member pointed out, even if a congregation has difficulty with its own financial obligations it costs nothing to complete a Statement of Intent, and to issue Parochial Reports.

The Second Topic of my report is the 10 Year Plan

Last year, the Financial Management Committee had asked the Bishop and his staff to prepare a 10 year financial plan, as a help in getting the long term prognosis of the Synod on an even keel.

That was done, with a lot of serious effort on the part of the Bishop and senior staff, and after much revision produced the document in your Bulletins of Reports C-10 and C-11.

So many decisions regarding future plans went into the document, and many and painful choices were made.

The general approach was first to do surgery on the size of office spending, and limit its growth, with a view to retaining the mandated functions, such as assistance in filling vacancies while not reducing payment for the work of the church at large, or reducing direct partnership grants to merging congregations, or curtailing assistance in support of higher educational institutions.

Lets first look a the Expense side. I want to point out that the plan shows on the bottom line of page C-11, that it is "break even" for all of the plan years.

In looking at inflation and normal growth, the plan employed a technique of applying an annual percentage increase for each category, which, by formula, was carried forward into the extended years.

You will see the percentage in the first column after the item list. As the team discussed each item, while viewing a projected image of the computer screen, that percentage could be changed, and the effect of the "what if" would immediately be seen.

Many alternatives were discovered in this process, and changes in staff assignments, and solutions for escalating costs were resolved by making some hard choices. Serious consideration of expenses, was viewed with the thought that "you can't spend it twice"

The plan revenue, page C-10 in your booklet, shows the various sources of income. The usual sources were verified, and pressed to their limit. New avenues were identified and were explored and used if deemed rational.

The top line is Mission Support, the largest source of income for the Synod. In light of the level and declining Mission Support received from congregations in past years, large increases were not considered rational.

The Bishop expressed hopes that congregations will stop the trend, and reverse it gradually, and the plan calls for an initial 3% annual growth. That is a bold prediction, but hopefully a reasonable assumption.

Even with all of the above, the sum total of frugal expenses, and modest increases in various revenues were not enough to initially produce a balanced budget.

As I mentioned last year, available unrestricted funds are fast disappearing, and are not sufficient to support a balanced budget over the longer period. The plan is therefore being forced to take more funds secured from the sale of properties in order to support contributions to the work of the church at large, and necessary functions and programs of the Synod. You will see on the line marked with a "C", near the bottom of the page how that line continues to be large although it shows a decrease in final years. In fact, the estimate of properties that will be sold is declining in the future, and the plan estimates that 30% of the net sale proceeds must be applied to various operational missions and programs of the Synod. That decision was not easy to make. But only you can give the Bishop reason to change it.

Modest increases of congregational Mission Support will result in less need for support from property sales – so, this became a critical choice. And I want you to understand that choice clearly: If our congregations cannot support the work of the Synod with increasing giving, and we do not wish to vastly reduce programs of support within and beyond our Synod, then we must continue the higher use of proceeds from the sale of properties.

The production of a ten year plan is, I believe, invaluable. It provides objective thoughtful consideration of the priorities for allocation of limited resources. Those thoughts can be recalled in the future, and put into perspective any emotional approaches to spending programs that always come up. Annual review and modification of the plan continues. Beginning in the next few weeks, the 10 year plan will be updated.

Our 3rd Topic for today is to present to you the Proposed 2007 Budget

Let's start with the expense page, page C-13 in your booklet. The expense summary of the 2007 budget the "bottom line", shows that 2007 is again a "break even" budget as it has been for 2005 and 2006. The 2007 budget plan shows only a 2.69% growth in spending since 2005, and only 4.86% growth when compared to the 2006 adjusted budget.

I wish to point out that the 2006 adjusted budget is lower than the actual expenditures from 2005. The reason is that some larger expenses along with corresponding grant revenue, are no longer envisioned. One such item is the related expense of a pastor at ground zero, supported by a grant from LDRNY, which was terminated this past year.

The FMC felt that planned expenses are about as frugal as currently possible. Only the largest needs have increases. A case in point is illustrated by Congregational Life, lines 203-205 which are Synods programs for Leaders and Congregations. 84% of that function 52 are direct grants to congregations. This category is much higher in 2006 and 2007 than in 2005.

Before the Synod Council approved this increase, the list was generated by a much more rigorous grant process than in prior years: All potential recipients are required to make new applications annually, on a deadline. Only the most worthy projects are supported. Furthermore, each recipient must be up to date on its parochial reports.

Now let's turn to the Revenue page, page C-12. There are a few items I would like to point out that the budget is again heavily supported by internal Synod funds. Let us be clear that, in the aggregate both 2006 and 2007 depend on over \$1 million from such sources.

The trail off of availability of undesignated funds, such as the exhaustion of the Bishop's Mission Fund, places a heavier burden on other sources. Line 70 in particular, shows the portion of proceeds from the sale of properties utilized in support of the operational budget. The 2007 budget will use \$490,000 from that source, representing over 13% of our total operating revenue. This is not an insignificant number, but I must point out that the 2007 budget calls for less than the 10 year plan prediction of \$623,000.

The Revenue side of the budget shows Mission Support enlarged, and the budget of \$1.4 million from congregational Mission Support for 2007. The FMC felt that it would be imprudent to assume a large increase. But make no mistake, the Budget "counts on" response from your congregations to halt the prior

trend. We hope and pray that it is not an unreasonable assumption. The FMC, in its adoption of this draft, felt that the expenses and revenue sources in this proposal are rational and represent the best use of Synod's resources.

I would urge your adoption when this budget is presented for your consideration Saturday morning.

If you wish further detail, copies of the complete budget are available, and there will be the usual "Budget Breakfast" I will be present, as will the Chairman of the FMC, Paul Jensen, and some other members of the FMC; and we will answer any questions and discuss any facet of the proposed budget you may wish.

And in Conclusion

I hope that in the discussion of the 3 Topics in this report, I have shown you the significant elements, and demonstrated that our financial condition is stable and solid, but not without reliance on some critical assumptions. As your Treasurer, I feel we are getting to know "where we are" and we are learning more about "how to get to where we want to be." We can be pleased that:

- *That our assets are growing, and safely invested,*
- *That there is a demonstrated concern for fiscal responsibility from the Bishop on down in the Synod office.*
- *That the Financial Management Committee is very active; and is commended for its faithful diligence in its pursuits on your behalf. Their planning and insight is crucial for improving our ability to look ahead with better clarity.*

We are also pleased that the Synod Council understands that it should not approve spending programs unless there is a plan to maintain fiscal integrity. But, all of that still doesn't mean we can be complacent about our situation; we must still embrace assumptions where the jury is out. There are things that need fixing, and we are about doing just that. We see light at the end of the tunnel, and we hope it is not the headlight of another train coming toward us.

Thanks for your continued attention to the financial matters of the Synod. We stand with you as partners and servants in the business and finances of the Synod.

Mr. Robert Buescher, Treasurer

The slide show that was presented at the assembly and the auditors' report are included in PDF format as separate documents on the CD-ROM. The following pages are the material that appeared in the Bulletin of Reports as pages C-10 through C-20 (referenced during the report that was given).

LONG TERM BUDGET ESTIMATES

File: Budgets/Long Term Plan

Mission Support at 3% (+)

10-19-05

File: Synod/Budgets/Long Term/Long Term Budget Plan 10-19-06 to SC and Assm

	Percent General Increase	After Yearly Change	2004 Actual	2005 Budget 10/5/05	2006 Budget Rev E	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
							0.20%	0.40%	0.60%	0.80%	1.00%	1.20%	1.40%	1.60%
Revenue														
Mission Support	3%	2006	1,492	1,500	1,400	1,442	1,488	1,539	1,594	1,655	1,721	1,793	1,872	1,928
Designated Gifts	n/a	n/a	n/a	200	200	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
ELCA Grants														
DO (Anglada)	8%	2006	168	95	101	107	113	120	128	135	143	152	161	171
FDN (Wollenburg)		2006		45	40	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Minsitry (Horizon)		2006		13	12	12	12	12	12	12	12	12	12	12
Cong Min (Staff Support)		2006		27	25	25	25	25	25	25	25	25	25	25
Evang grant				4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4
Other Grants	8%	2006	28	35	27	29	30	32	34	36	38	41	43	48
LDRNY Grants														
GZ Mission Start	0%	2006		142	142	142	142	142	142	142	142	142	142	142
Staff Time	0%	2006		18	18	18	18	18	18	18	18	18	18	18
Immigrant Relief	0%	2006		36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36
Special	0%	2006	234		7	60	60	60	60	60	60	60	60	60
Special Events (Inc Assembly)	4%	2006	0	75	57	59	62	64	67	69	72	75	78	81
Registration Fees	8%	2006	82	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Interest and Div	8%	2006	168	182	170	180	191	202	215	227	241	256	271	287
Rent Reim	8%	2006	16	20	22	23	25	28	28	29	31	33	35	37
Other				10	9									
TZ Endowment	2%	2010								57	58	59	60	62
Capital Endowment												400	500	500
Bequests														
Staff - Half Time						50	53	55	58	61	64	67	70	74
Support by Funds														
A Bishop's Mission Fund		2006	281	237	180	45	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
B Metro NY Synod Fund (General)		2006	216	0	200	212	225	238	0	0	0	0	0	0
C Metro NY Synod Fund (Oper)		2006	100	350	375	623	602	637	823	820	869	519	469	525
D Christ Yonkers Mission Fund		2006		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
E Mission ReDev Fund TZ		2006		0	50	51	52	53	54	50	50	50	50	50
F Mission ReDevel Fund (Grants)				191	227	238	250	263	276	290	304	319	335	352
H Urban Empowerment Fund				0	25	50	50	50	50	50	50	50	50	50
Other Funds	6%	2006		98	103	109	116	123	130	138	146	155	164	174
Total Revenue			2,783	3,254	3,430	3,516	3,554	3,700	3,753	3,915	4,085	4,266	4,457	4,634
			2,783	3,199	3,229									

	Year	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2014	2015	2015
Expenses													
ELCA		669	648	609	671	699	731	765	803	843	888	936	964
Designated Gifts	n/a	n/a	200	200	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Region 7 Coordinating Council	3%	7	7	7	7	7	8	8	8	8	9	9	9
Off Staff Salaries and Benefits	4%	1,199	982	944	1,032	1,073	1,116	1,161	1,207	1,255	1,306	1,368	1,412
Salaries and Benefits (LDRNY)	0%		135	138	138	138	138	138	138	138	138	138	138
Synod Outreach (not Salary R)	5%	94	102	87	91	96	101	106	111	117	122	129	135
Synod Life (Education)	1%	114	119	119	120	121	123	124	125	126	128	129	130
Synod Life (Other items)	5%	50	41	41	43	45	47	50	52	55	58	61	64
Cong Life (Partnership Grants)	5%	191	191	227	238	250	263	276	290	304	319	335	352
Cong Life (Other Items)	5%	74	182	175	184	193	203	213	223	235	246	259	271
Development (not Salary Related)	5%	41	24	49	51	54	57	60	63	68	69	72	76
Bishop's Office (Not Salary Related)	5%	88	26	25	26	28	29	30	32	34	35	37	39
Governance	5%	85	70	72	76	79	83	88	92	96	101	106	112
Communications and PR	5%		64	81	85	89	94	98	103	109	114	120	126
Off Services (Rent)	5%	176	177	201	211	222	233	244	257	269	283	297	312
Off Services (Copiers)	5%		15	62	65	68	72	75	79	83	87	92	96
Off Services (Prof Svcs)	5%		44	44	46	49	51	53	56	59	62	65	68
Off Services (Other items)	5%	108	77	149	158	164	172	181	190	200	210	220	231
Cost of Capital Campaign			150	200	200	100	100						
Staff - Half Time					50	53	55	58	61	64	67	70	74
Good Samaritan Account					25	25	25	25	25	25	25	25	25
New Staff Person (Prop Under Mgmt/Mission Dev (Cover by Miss Dev)													
Increased Program Costs #2	-1000%												
Total Expenses		2,887	3,254	3,430	3,516	3,554	3,699	3,753	3,915	4,086	4,266	4,457	4,634
		2,887	3,199	3,229									
Net Income		(104)	0	0	(0)	(0)	0	(0)	(0)	(0)	(0)	(0)	(0)

	E	F	H	J	O	P
1						
2		METROPOLITAN NEW YORK SYNOD				
3		Proposed Operating Fund Budget for 2007			File: Budgets\2007\2007 Budget Summary Rev C2 4-25-06	
4		CODING				
5		Category	Actual 2005	2006 Budget	2007 Budget	Descriptions/Comments
6	xxx		Audited	Rev L1		
7		REVENUE				
8		MISSION SUPPORT FROM CONGREGATIONS				
9		Undesignated Mission Support	1,450,845	1,400,000	1,400,000	Est. by FMC
10		Designated ELCA Projects	165,245	150,000	150,000	Est. by FMC
22		Designated MNYS Projects	74,112	50,000	50,000	Est. by FMC
32	10	TOTAL MISSION SUPPORT FROM CONGREGATIONS	1,710,202	1,600,000	1,600,000	
33						
34		GRANTS AND OTHER CONTRIBUTIONS				
35		ELCA - Division for Outreach	98,324	52,300	25,319	Assume 1/4 of 2006 Grant
36		ELCA - Foundation	40,000	40,000	26,544	Assume rep. of 2006 Grant
37		ELCA - Div for Congregational Ministries	26,673	24,673	23,000	Based on ELCA trend
38		ELCA - Div for Ministry - Horizon Grant	2,000	12,600	0	Grants terminated
39		ELCA - Evangelism Grant Fund (#917)	20,000	3,750	0	
40		ELCA - Leadership Development Grant		0	20,000	New Grant
41		ELCA - Directed Partnership Grants	10,000		0	
42		Bishop's Appeal	105	25,000	25,000	Projected
43		Other grants & contributions	57,482	2,000	10,000	Estimate
44		Aguilar Benefit Grant from Ind. Congregation		0	11,540	Estimate
45		LDRNY - G2 Mission Starts See LDRNY Note	135,835	0	0	Terminated
46		LDRNY - Staff Time Reim See LDRNY Note	15,000	0	0	Terminated
47		LDRNY - Immigrant Relief See LDRNY Note	33,675	36,000	36,000	Same as 2006
48		LDRNY - Expenses See LDRNY Note	2,500	0	0	Terminated
49		LDRNY - Vacancy, Pastoral Care, Crisis Etc. See LDRNY Note	36,000	60,000	60,000	Same as 2006
50	11	TOTAL GRANTS AND OTHER CONTRIBUTIONS	476,554	269,303	237,402	
51						
52		TRANSFERS FROM OTHER FUNDS				
53		Conference Fees & Registrations	73,527		38,550	All except Synod Assembly
70		Bishop's Mission Fund				
71		TZ Teachers Current - BMF	49,700	49,700	55,895	Minor inc from 2005
72		General Budget Support - BMF	135,000	135,500	0	10 yr plan
73		Ind. Gift flowing Through Fund-BMF	45,000	45,000	45,000	
74		Theo. Ed. Emerging Ministries-BMF	0	0		
75		Capital Fund Feasibility Study-BMF	138,351	150,000		
76		Metro New York Synod Fund				
77		General Budget Support, MNYSF (Separate from Sales)		200,000	212,000	10 yr plan
78		Net Proceeds from Sales-MNYSF	203,123	200,000	490,000	10 yr plan=\$623K
79		Mission Re-Investment Funds				
80		General Budget Support - MRF	189,823	329,800	355,488	New Starts, Pln Grants
81		Special Non-Recurring Grants-MRF	3,500			
83		Urban Empowerment Fnd Grts (Sup by Fund #305)	25,000	50,000	50,000	10 yr plan
84		Other Designated and Temp Restricted Funds	138,879	103,000	146,168	
100		Accumulated Depreciation		115,000	115,000	
101	12	TOTAL TRANSFERS FROM OTHER FUNDS	1,011,733	1,377,300	1,508,021	
102						
103		OTHER REVENUE				
104		Investment Income	207,091	170,000	225,000	
106		Other	3,288	10,000	4,000	
107		Rental Income	14,095	22,000	13,136	
112		Assembly (Fund #407)	53,698	57,000	75,000	Est. to recover costs
113		St. Olaf Concert	32,370			
114	14	TOTAL OTHER REVENUE	310,511	259,000	317,136	
115						
116		TOTAL REVENUE	3,509,041	3,462,983	3,962,569	

	F	F	H	J	D	P
1						
2		METROPOLITAN NEW YORK SYNOD				
3		Proposed Operating Fund Budget for 2007			File: Budgets\2007\2007 Budget Summary Rev C2 4-25-06	
4	CODING					
5		Category	Actual 2005	2006 Budget	2007 Budget	Descriptions/Comments
6	xxx		Audited	Rev L1		
117					3,515,000	10 year Plan
118		EXPENSES				
119		SYNOD OUTREACH (Synod Programs Beyond Synod)				
120		Synod Outreach - ELCA and Other Distribution				
121		ELCA Mission Support	825,185	809,000	851,000	48.5% of MS
123		Designated ELCA Projects	191,542	150,000	150,000	Matches Est. Revenue
134		Designated MNYS Projects	86,959	50,000	50,000	Matches Est. Revenue
143		Region 7 Coordinating Council	7,435	7,435	7,435	Same as 2006
144		ELCA Shared Risk Assessment				
145		Flow Through Grants	28,186			
146	30	Total Synod Outreach - ELCA and Other Distr	938,251	816,435	858,435	
176	31	Total Other Synod Outreach - All Other	412,987	199,002	282,172	
177		TOTAL SYNOD OUTREACH	1,351,248	1,005,527	1,120,607	
178						
179		SYNOD LIFE (Synod Programs for Entire Synod)				
186	40	Total Synod Life - Education	118,440	118,480	118,480	
187	41	Total Other Synod Life - Other Programs	113,493	124,054	130,500	
188		TOTAL SYNOD LIFE	231,933	242,544	248,980	
189						
190		CONGREGATIONAL LIFE (Programs and Services to Synod Leaders and Individual Congregations)				
203	50	Total Congregational Life - Shared Expenses	101,026	137,571	143,821	
204	51	Total Congregational Life - Programs & Services to Leaders	80,944	75,000	105,625	
205	52	Total Cong. Life - Programs and Services to Cong.	257,738	406,670	421,946	
206		TOTAL CONGREGATIONAL LIFE	439,707	619,441	671,494	
207						
208		DEVELOPMENT (Fundraising Activities for Synod and Beyond)				
209	60	TOTAL DEVELOPMENT	366,768	400,881	270,209	
210						
211		BISHOP'S OFFICE				
212	70	TOTAL BISHOPS OFFICE	359,560	362,081	433,257	
214						
215		SYNOD GOVERNANCE (Expenses of Governing Entities within Synod)				
216	80	TOTAL SYNOD GOVERNANCE	50,288	71,850	87,200	
217						
218		COMMUNICATIONS AND PR				
219	90	TOTAL COMMUNICATIONS AND PR	71,635	81,625	84,050	
220						
221		OFFICE SERVICES (Shared Expenses)				
222	91	TOTAL SHARED OFFICE SERVICES	693,421	707,724	746,752	
223						
224		TOTAL EXPENSES	3,588,580	3,492,683	3,662,559	
225					3,516,000	10 year plan
226		Net Income (loss)	(57,519)	0	(0)	
227						
228						
229						
230		Expense Change from 2006 Actual		97.93%	102.66%	2006-2007 - See Note (1)
231		Expense change from 2006 Rev L1 Budget			104.88%	2007 - See Note (2)
243						
244		Note (1) 3% is attributed to increase in Partnership Grants				
245		Note (2) 4% is attributed to increase in Partnership Grants				

CONGREGATIONAL PARTNERSHIP REPORT FOR THE PERIOD 02/01/05 TO 01/31/06													
MN YS ID	ELCA ID	Congregation	Location	Year Organized	Conference	Pastor (2)	Baptized Membership (1)	Confirmed-Communing-Contributing Members (1)	Average Worship Attendance (1)	2005 Statement of Intent	Mission Support Received 02/01/05 - 01/31/06	Average Annual M/S per Confirmed-Communing-Contributing Member Last Submitted	Annual Report Year (4)
01-01	20203	Immanuel	Kingston	1870	Hudson	Mueller	311	130	90	5,500	2,000	15.38	2004
01-02	03599	Redeemer	Kingston	1897	Hudson	Hrnicky	615	303	137	23,000	23,000	75.91	2004
01-03	03901	Trinity	Kingston	1842	Hudson	Harris	470	190	100	-	13,076	72.64	2003
01-04	03906	Redeemer	New Paltz	1954	Hudson	Wiecher	308	243	85	7,500	8,150	33.54	2004
01-05	03909	First	Poughkeepsie	1856	Hudson	Wuerz	511	143	80	-	1,050	7.34	2004
01-06	03914	Mount Calvary	Ruby	1856	Hudson	(Whitaker)	9	2	4	100	100	50.00	2004
01-07	03910	St. John's	Poughkeepsie	1901	Hudson	Ward	1,217	438	296	52,000	53,527	122.21	2004
01-09	03911	St. Paul	Red Hook	1715	Hudson	(Jetto)	307	75	40	-	-	-	1999
01-10	03913	Memorial	Rhinebeck	1868	Hudson	Jetto	105	43	35	6,250	6,262	145.93	2003
01-12	03912	Third	Rhinebeck	1842	Hudson		157	122	47	200	990	8.11	2004
01-13	03915	Atonement	Saugerties	1859	Hudson	Schreiber	736	175	85	8,250	6,903	39.45	2000
01-14	03917	St. Paul	West Camp	1710	Hudson	(Walley)	123	58	25	1,500	1,500	25.86	2004
01-15	03918	Christ	Woodstock	1806	Hudson	Tillberg	201	120	55	10,500	11,359	94.86	2004
02-01	20191	St. Thomas	Central Nyack	1896	Delaware Hudson	(Hultgren)	100	60	40	2,000	2,200	36.67	2004
02-02	03896	Christ	Ellenville	1862	Delaware Hudson	Pedersen	178	72	30	2,400	1,000	13.89	2004
02-03	03897	Grace	Greenwood Lake	1956	Delaware Hudson	Traugott	298	125	55	4,000	4,000	32.00	2004
02-04	03898	First	Jeffersonville	1917	Delaware Hudson	(Hagedorn)	240	80	33	2,100	2,104	26.30	2004
02-05	03902	St. Paul	Liberty	1894	Delaware Hudson	Pedersen	336	111	46	2,700	2,700	24.32	2004
02-06	03903	St. Johns	Middletown	1896	Delaware Hudson	Rustico	669	465	233	12,000	8,667	18.64	2004
02-07	03904	St. Paul	Narrowsburg	1869	Delaware Hudson	Haynes	276	120	72	7,500	7,500	62.50	2003
02-08	04004	St. Paul	New City	1907	Delaware Hudson	Rottman	215	153	83	15,000	13,750	89.97	2004
02-09	03916	King of Kings	New Windsor	1962	Delaware Hudson	Tennermann	688	230	136	21,000	14,000	60.87	2004
02-10	03905	Christ	Newburg	1876	Delaware Hudson	(Moss)	484	100	60	1,500	1,500	15.00	2003
02-11	03907	Grace	North Branch	1962	Delaware Hudson	(Hagedorn)	105	45	18	1,600	1,596	35.47	2004
02-12	04008	Good Shepherd	Pearl River	1901	Delaware Hudson	Havrilla	993	688	243	30,000	30,000	43.60	2004
02-13	03908	St. Peter	Port Jervis	1859	Delaware Hudson	Diver	187	85	61	6,000	3,150	37.06	2004
02-14	03995	Christ	Suffern	1715	Delaware Hudson	Dickson	458	290	175	-	-	-	1999
03-01	03996	Trinity	Brewster	1938	Tappan Zee	Koran	706	334	154	13,596	14,768	44.22	2004
03-02	20192	Our Redeemer	Chappaqua	1946	Tappan Zee	Pezel	160	41	34	4,120	4,481	109.29	2004
03-03	03999	Our Saviour	Croton on Hudson	1935	Tappan Zee	Stephens	317	120	73	-	6,500	54.17	2004
03-04	10345	Dobbs Ferry	Dobbs Ferry	1939	Tappan Zee	Mielowski	244	111	108	13,228	14,188	127.92	2003
03-05	04000	St. John	Mamaroneck	1913	Tappan Zee	Henk	545	402	125	9,000	6,500	16.17	2004
03-06	04001	Resurrection	Mt. Kisco	1936	Tappan Zee	Horner	343	165	134	20,249	9,623	52.02	2004

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03-07	07399	United	ML Vernon	1858	Tappan Zee	(Elseroad)	52	49	71	8,800	7,700	157.14	2004
03-08	04005	Holy Trinity	New Rochelle	1899	Tappan Zee	Swanson	84	71	55	3,000	3,228	45.46	2003
03-09	04006	St. Luke	New Rochelle	1869	Tappan Zee	Damrow	427	287	95	5,500	5,500	20.60	2004
03-10	04009	Emmanuel	Pleasantville	1893	Tappan Zee	Egensteiner	482	215	150	34,000	34,000	158.14	2003
03-11	03997	St. Paul's	Rye Brook	1866	Tappan Zee	Israel	400	276	95	10,500	10,500	38.04	2004
03-13	10508	Grace	Scarsdale	1949	Tappan Zee	S. Brown	102	72	53	4,500	4,500	62.50	1994
03-14	04011	St. Matthew	White Plains	1895	Tappan Zee	Mathson	506	247	108	3,000	3,437	13.91	2004
03-15	04012	Trinity	White Plains	1897	Tappan Zee	Kochanski	292	220	94	12,500	11,881	54.00	2004
03-16	04007	Grace	Yorktown Heights	1963	Tappan Zee	Kennedy	859	571	214	23,000	23,000	40.28	2004
03-17	04014	St. Andrew	Yorktown Heights	1956	Tappan Zee	Johnson	658	260	131	16,000	16,000	61.54	2004
03-20	30696	Christ Westchester Ministries (3)	Yonkers	2005	Tappan Zee	O'Hanlon							
04-01	03923	St. John	Bellmore	1928	Eastern Nassau	Cline	188	127	76	12,500	12,517	98.56	2004
04-02	03928	St. Luke	Farmingdale	1911	Eastern Nassau	Eberhardt	2,137	1,052	295		2,200	2.09	2004
04-04	03935	St. Stephen	Hicksville	1910	Eastern Nassau	F. Nelson	451	270	119	15,000	15,000	55.58	2004
04-05	10404	Good Shepherd	Levittown	1950	Eastern Nassau	(Gaeta)	480	210	92	1,700	1,602	7.63	2004
04-06	03941	St. David's	Massapequa Park	1951	Eastern Nassau	(Noto)	1,422	438	187	25,000	25,000	57.08	2003
04-07	03943	St. John	Merrick	1917	Eastern Nassau	Kirschbaum	474	252	138		24,094	95.61	2004
04-08	03946	Grace	North Bellmore	1918	Eastern Nassau	T. Taylor	508	154	89	6,400	2,926	19.00	2004
04-09	20211	Good Shepherd	Plainview	1952	Eastern Nassau	Kunder	415	238	121	21,000	21,000	88.24	2004
04-10	20219	Our Redeemer	Seaford	1931	Eastern Nassau	Klose	987	350	190	15,000	15,000	42.86	2004
04-11	03950	Faith	Syosset	1952	Eastern Nassau	Anderson	446	151	86	9,120	4,200	27.81	2004
04-12	03952	Christ	Wantagh	1927	Eastern Nassau	Nale	1,145	314	126	26,000	26,127	83.21	2004
05-01	03927	Advent	Elmont	1954	Western Nassau	McKenzie	137	80	70		1,394	17.43	2004
05-02	03929	Christ	Floral Park	1912	Western Nassau	Martin	404	235	90	16,500	14,718	62.53	2004
05-03	03930	Ascension	Franklin Square	1923	Western Nassau	(Luper)	594	400	120	5,000	4,500	11.25	2003
05-04	10374	Our Savior	Glen Head	1946	Western Nassau	Johnson	450	200	95	5,000	3,988	20.00	2004
05-05	20206	Our Saviour	Manhasset	1937	Western Nassau	Ormand	391	290	134	30,000	33,000	113.79	2004
05-06	20207	Our Saviour	Mineola	1921	Western Nassau	(Schriever)	395	83	60	7,500	8,000	96.39	2004
05-07	03944	Christ	New Hyde Park	1946	Western Nassau	White	117	70	53	3,600	4,115	58.79	2004
05-08	03945	Gloria Dei	New Hyde Park	1942	Western Nassau	Olsen	225	145	108	2,600	2,600	17.93	2004
05-09	20213	Our Savior	Port Washington	1920	Western Nassau	Vogelley	344	200	95	13,000	13,000	65.00	2003
05-10	03948	St. James	Stewart Manor	1927	Western Nassau	(McKenzie)	100	89	60				2004
05-12	10534	New Hope	Valley Stream	1942	Western Nassau	Hopkins	237	84	70	9,000	3,785	45.08	2004

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05-13	03953	St. Andrew	West Hempstead	1947	Western Nassau	McElderry	611	210	111	15,000	8,000	38.10	2004
05-14	30630	Kalam (3)	Roslyn	1980	Southwest Nassau	Chen				1,500	1,500		
06-01	10269	Bethlehem	Baldwin	1941	Southwest Nassau	Wilson	342	183	90	5,200	5,041	27.55	2004
06-02	03921	St. Peter's	Baldwin	1916	Southwest Nassau	Barnett	590	301	135	15,848	18,853	62.63	1997
06-03	10320	Incarnation	Cedarhurst	1937	Southwest Nassau	(Spittgerber)	111	79	34	2,000	2,064	26.13	2004
06-04	03931	Christ/Cristo	Freeport	1909	Southwest Nassau	Tomecek	234	180	100	3,600	2,100	11.87	2004
06-05	03933	Epiphany	Hempstead	1897	Southwest Nassau	Oberkehr	799	450	120	15,000	6,000	13.33	2004
06-06	10405	St. John's by the Sea	Long Beach	1927	Southwest Nassau	Spittgerber	129	79	52	1,200	1,200	15.19	2004
06-07	03940	St. John	Lynbrook	1912	Southwest Nassau	Anderson	328	227	85	8,500	11,796	51.97	2003
06-08	20205	Grace	Malverne	1931	Southwest Nassau	Klockau	681	349	130		7,052	20.23	1998
06-09	10446	Oceanside	Oceanside	1930	Southwest Nassau	Swan	259	140	54				2004
06-10	03947	Holy Trinity	Rockville Centre	1899	Southwest Nassau	Laustsen	859	390	219	18,555	19,602	50.26	2004
06-11	03948	Good Shepherd	Roosevelt	1949	Southwest Nassau	J. Taylor	618	305	200				2004
06-12	10532	Grace	Uniondale	1948	Southwest Nassau	(Cline)	134	100	89	10,000	5,000	50.00	2004
06-14	30115	Resurrection	Hempstead	1997	Southwest Nassau	Alguera	200	80	130	1,000	1,300	16.25	2003
07-01	03957	St. Michael's	Amagansett	1966	Peconic	Schock	138	73	35	2,520	2,280	30.96	2004
07-02	03925	Incarnation	Bridgehampton	1956	Peconic	Vita	44	30	35				2003
07-03	10330	Holy Cross	Commack	1957	Peconic	Lutz	244	105	56	4,000	4,000	38.10	2004
07-05	03932	St. Peter	Greenport	1866	Peconic	Johnson	648	480	230	13,000	13,000	27.08	2004
07-07	03938	Holy Cross	Lake Ronkonkomo	1948	Peconic	Raggie	1,621	437	355	13,000	5,555	12.71	2001
07-08	03942	Advent	Mattituck	1931	Peconic	Summers	145	114	64	4,000	4,000	35.09	2004
07-09	10457	Our Savior	Patchogue	1947	Peconic	Scheika	389	221	82	11,700	15,871	71.61	2004
07-10	10484	St. Paul	Port Jefferson	1917	Peconic	Krauser	468	113	83	3,600	1,200	10.82	2003
07-12	10497	Trinity	Rocky Point	1949	Peconic	Kolbo	1,571	871	417	33,000	33,138	38.05	2004
07-13	10507	Hope	Selden	1965	Peconic	Hill	1,541	700	205	8,000	5,936	8.48	2004
07-14	20220	St. Andrews	Smithtown	1950	Peconic	Modr	994	730	227	25,000	12,000	18.44	2004
08-01	03920	Cross of Christ	Babylon	1924	Western Suffolk	Bond	1,184	425	221	27,500	10,000	23.53	2004
08-04	03926	Ascension	Deer Park	1954	Western Suffolk	O'Rourke	1,813	554	392	33,000	23,000	41.52	2004
08-05	10329	Christ	East Northport	1961	Western Suffolk	Walrud	950	575	289	6,000	4,000	6.96	2004
08-06	20197	St. Pauls	East Northport	1914	Western Suffolk	(L. Mehl)	1,355	733	307	13,000	14,083	19.21	2001
08-07	03936	Gloria Dei	Huntington Station	1932	Western Suffolk	Britton	686	453	170	14,000	14,000	30.91	2004
08-08	20201	St. Peters	Huntington Station	1908	Western Suffolk	(C. Berg)	851	525	232		32,925	62.72	2004
08-09	03937	Christ	Islip Terrace	1915	Western Suffolk	Munz	953	401	141	9,000	9,000	22.44	2004

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08-10	03939	St John	Lindenhurst	1876	Western Suffolk	Miholland	1,131	335	260	16,000	16,000	47.76	2004
08-11	10413	King of Kings	Melville	1966	Western Suffolk	Koenig	85	54	32	1,500	1,500	27.78	2004
08-12	03865	Latvian Church of NY	Melville	1946	Western Suffolk	Salins	1,035	700	0	2,800	2,800	4.00	2004
08-13	03954	Trinity	Wyandanch	1937	Western Suffolk	M. Smith	405	140	105	2,200	-	-	2004
08-14	03956	Abiding Presence	Fort Solonga	1963	Western Suffolk	Schoepflin	1,795	920	455	24,000	24,000	26.09	2004
08-15	03955	Calvary	Hauppauge	1963	Western Suffolk	Ahlman	459	215	110	5,000	4,583	21.32	2004
09-01	03825	Advent	Manhattan	1896	Manhattan	E. Brown	190	125	117	14,000	15,000	120.00	2003
09-03	03829	Christ	Manhattan	1868	Manhattan	Swertfager	68	36	30	4,150	5,807	155.75	2004
09-04	03831	New York Finnish	Manhattan	1907	Manhattan	Koskela	118	97	45	2,500	-	-	2004
09-05	03832	Grace and St. Paul	Manhattan	1885	Manhattan	Hauser	64	45	42	7,000	6,700	136.73	2004
09-06	03833	Gustavas Adolphus	Manhattan	1865	Manhattan	Kessler	714	325	200	18,000	18,000	55.38	2004
09-07	03835	Holy Trinity	Manhattan	1868	Manhattan	Rimbo	414	116	145	10,000	13,853	-	2004
09-08	20208	Immanuel	Manhattan	1863	Manhattan	G. Fryer	439	124	114	13,500	13,500	108.87	2004
09-09	03838	Our Saviour-Atonement	Manhattan	1896	Manhattan	Lawless	73	64	45	14,000	14,000	218.75	2004
09-10	03840	St. John	Manhattan	1855	Manhattan	Eckhardt	79	45	42	3,000	3,000	61.22	2004
09-11	20300	St. Luke	Manhattan	1850	Manhattan	Schmiege	138	100	94	9,000	16,500	165.00	2003
09-14	03846	St. Peter	Manhattan	1862	Manhattan	Derr	512	205	357	33,500	26,230	127.33	2004
09-15	03849	Transfiguration	Manhattan	1923	Manhattan	(Ballenger)	1,037	100	125	-	3,000	30.00	2003
19-16	10434	Trinity of Manhattan	Manhattan	1888	Manhattan	Neumark	140	64	51	2,250	2,250	35.16	2003
09-17	20209	Trinity Lower Eastside	Manhattan	1849	Manhattan	Trzynka	127	50	50	2,650	2,700	54.00	2004
09-18	03852	Zion (119th St.)	Manhattan	1950	Manhattan	Arias	46	44	25	-	-	-	2004
09-19	03853	Zion St. Mark	Manhattan	1847	Manhattan	Kaufman	71	70	30	-	-	-	2004
09-20	30556	Huna Kristen Batak (3)	Manhattan	2000	Manhattan	Silaban	90	40	55	600	600	15.00	2004
10-01	10428	Abiding Presence	Bronx	1958	Bronx	(Missic)	467	240	250	6,000	6,000	25.00	2001
10-02	04015	All Saints	Bronx	1971	Bronx	M. Thomas	122	60	55	1,500	2,044	34.07	2004
10-03	10426	Bethlehem	Bronx	1926	Bronx	(McFarland)	105	55	42	2,750	2,000	36.36	2003
10-04	30193	New Hope (3)	Bronx	1992	Bronx	M. Thomas	122	60	55	1,500	257	4.28	2004
10-05	03828	Calvary	Bronx	1924	Bronx	Wiles	88	50	34	4,000	4,112	82.24	2004
10-06	03830	Epiphany	Bronx	1880	Bronx	O'Hanion	221	38	40	2,500	2,727	71.76	2004
10-07	10429	First	Bronx	1922	Bronx	Lunow	364	75	65	1,000	1,310	17.47	2004
10-08	10430	Fordham	Bronx	1915	Bronx	Foster	97	60	66	8,000	3,561	59.35	2004
10-09	10432	Kingsbridge	Bronx	1937	Bronx	(L. Berg)	63	30	30	2,000	-	-	2003
10-10	03839	Resurrection	Bronx	1959	Bronx	(Simpson)	119	76	80	-	1,142	15.03	2002

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10-11	03841	St. John	Bronx	1860	Bronx	(Foster)	94	52	45	-	-	-	2001
10-12	03842	St. Luke	Bronx	1898	Bronx	Balint	26	18	10	-	-	-	1998
10-13	03844	St. Paul	Bronx	1882	Bronx	J. Thomas	321	125	125	6,500	2,000	16.00	2003
10-14	10433	St. Peter (E 140th St.)	Bronx	1890	Bronx	M. Thomas	122	73	62	-	1,300	17.51	2004
10-15	03847	St. Peter (E 219th St.)	Bronx	1894	Bronx	Hagan	307	225	170	1,200	-	-	1997
10-16	03848	St. Thomas	Bronx	1894	Bronx	Koene	88	61	38	1,200	1,100	18.03	2004
10-17	03850	Transfiguration	Bronx	1931	Bronx	Block	137	60	30	3,300	1,630	27.17	2004
11-02	03891	Christ	Staten Island	1925	Staten Island	Peacock	892	497	166	7,500	7,934	15.96	2004
11-03	10355	Eitingville	Staten Island	1920	Staten Island	(Rodriguez)	524	155	140	4,000	1,000	6.45	2004
11-04	03892	Immanuel	Staten Island	1911	Staten Island	Harris	72	30	22	5,800	5,500	183.33	2004
11-05	03890	Messiah	Staten Island	1923	Staten Island	Squire	367	188	73	4,800	8,976	47.74	2002
11-06	10515	Our Saviour	Staten Island	1893	Staten Island		234	99	60	1,800	1,845	18.64	2004
11-07	03923	St. Paul's-St. Luke's	Staten Island	1971	Staten Island	Kaada	172	83	31	2,000	1,870	22.53	2000
11-08	03894	Trinity	Staten Island	1856	Staten Island	Michael	662	275	175	18,500	19,500	70.91	2004
11-09	10487	Zion	Staten Island	1894	Staten Island	(Jurik)	535	249	188	5,000	5,000	24.10	2004
12-01	03962	Prince of Peace	Cambria Heights	1938	Queens Southeast	Jack	175	67	77	14,000	11,907	177.72	2004
12-02	03969	Holy Trinity	Hollis	1908	Queens Southeast	Buliku	45	25	30	-	200	8.00	2004
12-04	07388	New Hope	Jamaica	1973	Queens Southeast	B. Smith	412	172	130	15,500	18,067	105.04	2004
12-05	03974	Our Saviour	Jamaica	1923	Queens Southeast	Fritch	620	222	227	7,200	7,200	32.43	2004
12-06	03976	Epiphany	Laurelton	1931	Queens Southeast	Jenkins	85	75	65	3,500	3,500	46.67	2004
12-07	03984	Redeemer	Queens Village	1923	Queens Southeast	Geddada	251	112	65	6,600	6,600	58.93	2004
12-09	03992	St. Peter	Springfield Gardens	1927	Queens Southeast	Clarke	202	121	85	1,000	1,000	8.26	2004
12-10	03993	Resurrection	St. Albans	1926	Queens Southeast	Parkinson-Harrison	332	220	125	-	800	4.08	2003
12-11	10499	Trinity	St. Albans	1925	Queens Southeast	(Parkinson-Harrison)	39	28	20	1,200	600	21.43	2004
13-01	03885	St. Phillip	Brooklyn	1914	Queens Southwest	Kuttler	147	100	44	650	-	-	2004
13-02	03988	Ascension	Glendale	1924	Queens Southwest	Foege	86	45	30	500	750	16.67	2004
13-03	03970	St. Barnabas	Howard Beach	1922	Queens Southwest	Baum	384	171	82	4,715	4,671	27.32	2004
13-04	03981	Christ	Ozone Park	1880	Queens Southwest	(Stumme)	104	68	49	900	300	4.41	1997
13-05	03983	St. James-St. Matthew	Ozone Park	1927	Queens Southwest	Stumme	184	128	75	7,500	7,500	58.59	2004
13-07	03985	St. John	Richmond Hill	1903	Queens Southwest	Sonnenberg	351	63	35	3,600	3,325	52.78	2001
13-08	20214	St. Pauls (114th St.)	Richmond Hill	1902	Queens Southwest	(Sonnenberg)	99	40	40	-	-	-	1998
13-09	03986	St. Paul (129th St.)	Richmond Hill	1914	Queens Southwest	Gerber	418	80	80	8,750	9,403	117.54	2004
13-10	03987	Covenant	Ridgewood	1910	Queens Southwest	Ross	415	127	61	-	1,156	9.10	2004

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13-11	03994	St. Luke	Woodhaven	1908	Queens Southwest	Ospina, (G. Mehl)	275	236	115	3,000	3,289	13.94	2004
14-01	03959	Good Shepherd	Bayside	1927	Queens Northeast	(Schulz)	70	62	22	1,000	-	-	2004
14-02	03961	Holy Trinity	Bellerose	1926	Queens Northeast	Schulz	294	211	69	7,000	7,583	35.94	2004
14-03	03963	St. Paul's International	Floral Park	1950	Queens Northeast	Peter	100	46	32	2,500	3,458	75.17	2004
14-04	03964	Christ	Flushing	1940	Queens Northeast	Sutberlin	78	70	30	-	500	7.14	2001
14-05	03965	Messiah	Flushing	1924	Queens Northeast	(Bogholtz)	145	80	37	-	3,713	46.41	2004
14-06	03968	Redeemer	Flushing	1928	Queens Northeast	Pflug	481	340	132	-	-	-	2004
14-08	03971	All Saints	Jamaica	1928	Queens Northeast	(Sheppard)	106	73	45	-	504	6.90	2004
14-09	03977	Christ	Little Neck	1925	Queens Northeast	(Wifall)	85	58	25	4,200	4,200	72.41	2004
15-01	20185	Grace	Astoria	1916	Queens Northwest	L. Nelson	211	188	63	-	2,500	13.30	1991
15-02	03978	Augustana	East Elmhurst	1897	Queens Northwest	Braithwaite	61	48	27	1,200	900	18.75	2002
15-03	20198	Bethany	Elmhurst	1913	Queens Northwest	(Lu)	12	12	8	756	723	60.25	2004
15-04	03967	Grace	Forest Hills	1926	Queens Northwest	Haak	193	150	55	-	1,087	7.25	2004
15-05	20202	Atonement	Jackson Heights	1940	Queens Northwest	Walbrodt	255	125	92	3,500	2,500	20.00	2004
15-06	20204	Trinity	Long Island City	1843	Queens Northwest	(Church)	446	178	77	4,800	4,800	26.97	2001
15-07	03824	Trinity-St. Andrew	Maspeth	1899	Queens Northwest	Weber	298	140	80	5,200	5,200	37.14	2004
15-08	03980	Trinity	Middle Village	1863	Queens Northwest	Longan	395	244	65	5,500	2,750	11.27	2004
15-09	20223	St. Jacobus	Woodside	1867	Queens Northwest	Rosenholtz	151	95	72	8,000	8,000	84.21	2001
15-10	30240	Grace Chinese	Elmhurst	1996	Queens Northwest	Lu	199	92	183	-	3,300	35.87	2004
16-01	03855	Bethlehem	Brooklyn	1874	Brooklyn Bridges	(Anglada)	74	59	49	-	-	-	2003
16-04	03858	Epiphany	Brooklyn	1908	Brooklyn Bridges	Gahagan	480	126	150	-	3,000	23.61	1990
16-05	07637	Espiritu Santo	Brooklyn	1982	Brooklyn Bridges	(Sanchez)	248	30	80	-	-	-	1990
16-07	03866	Messiah	Brooklyn	1899	Brooklyn Bridges	R. Griffin Thomas	32	26	18	2,700	2,906	111.77	2004
16-08	03869	Reformation	Brooklyn	1888	Brooklyn Bridges	Hunke	201	66	20	1,500	1,500	22.73	2004
16-09	03873	St. John	Brooklyn	1867	Brooklyn Bridges	(R. Thomas)	33	18	18	-	-	-	2004
16-10	07389	St. John-St. Matthew-Emanuel	Brooklyn	1868	Brooklyn Bridges	Parsons	264	148	79	20,000	15,333	103.60	2004
16-11	03877	St. Luke	Brooklyn	1869	Brooklyn Bridges	(Graepel)	158	44	31	-	-	-	2001
16-13	03881	St. Paul	Brooklyn	1853	Brooklyn Bridges		23	19	5	-	-	-	1990
16-14	03884	St. Peter	Brooklyn	1867	Brooklyn Bridges	(Guttu)	102	56	50	1,000	748	13.36	1992
16-15	03889	Zion German	Brooklyn	1855	Brooklyn Bridges	Muenich	192	80	68	-	-	-	1998
17-01	03854	Advent	Brooklyn	1909	South Shore Brooklyn	Paulsen	19	17	20	2,500	2,656	156.24	2004
17-02	03861	Holy Redeemer	Brooklyn	1859	South Shore Brooklyn	(Clark)	169	82	54	5,000	4,170	50.85	2004
17-03	03862	Holy Trinity	Brooklyn	1826	South Shore Brooklyn	Zimmermann	210	114	78	11,508	12,515	109.76	2004

CONGREGATIONAL PARTNERSHIP REPORT FOR THE PERIOD 02/01/05 TO 01/31/06												
MNYS ID	ELCA ID	Congregation	Location	Year Organized	Conference	Pastor (2)	Baptized Membership (1)	Commune-Contributing Members (1)	Average Worship Attendance (1)	2005 Statement of Intent	Mission Support Received 02/01/05 - 01/31/06	Average Annual M/S per Confirmed-Contributing Member Last Submitted Annual Report Year (4)
17-04	03868	Redeemer	Brooklyn	1894	South Shore Brooklyn	(Aguilar)	39	23	45	-	1,300	2004
17-05	03872	St James	Brooklyn	1924	South Shore Brooklyn	Nebraska	234	75	52	1,800	1,390	2004
17-07	03882	St Paul's	Brooklyn	1919	South Shore Brooklyn	Simuro	151	81	60	3,000	3,000	2004
17-08	03880	St Paul	Brooklyn	1907	South Shore Brooklyn	van Harter	64	31	35	-	-	2003
17-09	03886	St Stephen	Brooklyn	1898	South Shore Brooklyn	Karshner	275	108	101	4,700	4,700	2004
17-10	20188	Trinity Flatbush	Brooklyn	1886	South Shore Brooklyn	(Ortiz)	83	32	20	-	1,097	2002
18-01	20186	Bethlehem	Brooklyn	1905	Southwest Brooklyn	Knudsen	207	100	61	10,000	10,000	2003
18-02	10305	Bethany	Brooklyn	1912	Southwest Brooklyn	Warfield	205	57	58	4,000	4,058	2004
18-03	03856	Christ	Brooklyn	1956	Southwest Brooklyn	Cheung	139	43	80	-	-	2004
18-05	03859	Good Shepherd	Brooklyn	1906	Southwest Brooklyn	Rommereim	369	142	71	15,600	15,600	2004
18-07	10306	Our Saviour	Brooklyn	1866	Southwest Brooklyn	Miller	161	46	44	8,700	8,701	2004
18-08	07440	Redeemer-St. John	Brooklyn	1929	Southwest Brooklyn	Truscott	220	131	75	6,000	5,500	2004
18-09	03871	St Jacobi	Brooklyn	1889	Southwest Brooklyn	Chang	31	23	18	1,500	750	2004
18-11	03887	Salem	Brooklyn	1904	Southwest Brooklyn	Wieber	26	17	25	2,500	2,500	2004
18-12	10308	Trinity	Brooklyn	1890	Southwest Brooklyn	(Wright)	365	165	190	12,000	12,000	2004
18-13	10309	Zion	Brooklyn	1908	Southwest Brooklyn	Wildow	159	19	16	250	250	2004
18-14	30308	Salam Arabic	Brooklyn	1998	Southwest Brooklyn	El-Yateem	78	58	90	3,000	2,500	2003
18-15	30668	Reformation	Brooklyn	2004	Southwest Brooklyn	Shin	-	-	-	2,800	2,800	-
SYNOD TOTALS							78,776	37,407	20,542	\$ 1,468,865	\$ 1,450,844	\$ 38.79

NOTES: (1) Statistics are from the last Congregational Annual Report (2004 or earlier). (2) A name in parenthesis is Interim, Vacancy or Vice Pastor. (3) Under development. (4) This report is for the year ending 02/01/06. The latest Congregational Annual Report year is 2004.

SUMMARY: 43 (20%) congregations submitted no Statement of Intent. 26 Congregations (12%) provided no Mission Support. 59 (27%) congregations submitted no Annual Congregational Report.

The budget for fiscal year 2007 will be considered in Plenary Session IV on Saturday morning. Following the Treasurer's report the assembly sang "I Love to Tell the Story."

Keynote Address

Pr. Susan Briehl was introduced to give the keynote address. Pr. Briehl is a Lutheran pastor who has served in parish, campus, and retreat center settings. Currently her working life includes serving part-time both as the Distinguished Professor of the Art of Ministry at Wartburg Seminary in Dubuque, IA where she teaches homiletics and worship, and as an Associate with the Valparaiso Project on the Education and Formation of People in Faith. Her writing includes *Encountering Jesus in the Gospel of John: A Scripture Study* (GIA); *Turn My Heart* (with Marty Haugen); *Come, Lord Jesus: Devotions for the Home for Advent, Christmas, and Epiphany* (Augsburg), two chapters written with her daughters in *Way to Live: Christian Practices for Teens (Upper Room)* and several liturgical and hymn texts. She makes her home in Spokane, Washington with her husband, Bishop Martin Wells of the Eastern Washington-Idaho Synod ELCA, and their daughters, Mary Emily and Magdalena.

Her theme was "We exist because of a surplus of God's love." She told that surplus is contained in the story embedded deep within us by our elders. the stories that "bear the deep mystery of a God who does not abandon...of a God who journey's with us...who has gone into the deep tunnel and come out to life." She urged the members to not "hide this story from our children" because there are "alternate stories" seeking to claim them. "We must not hide the stories of a suffering love...of a God who knows the brokenness and enters it and takes it on." She cautioned against the temptation to "tell our children an easy story and to withhold from them the story of the cross."

The text of her address was not available for publication.

Greetings from the Lutheran Theological Seminary at Philadelphia

In introducing President Philip Krey, Bishop Bouman told the assembly of Pr. Krey's newly published book and reminded the members of the seminary's capital campaign.

President Krey spoke of the seminary's shared commitment with the synod to the "Great Commission" in the preparation of student's for pastoral ministry. He also told the members of their new emphasis on lay education and directed the members to a brochure "P.S. Plus" in their packets. He extended an "altar call" to all to explore their vocation in rostered ministry or otherwise through the seminary. The seminary works with the TEEM program for providing alternative routes to ministry.

He thanked Dr. Earl Marsan of our synod, who serves on the board and Pr. Heidi Neumark who is leaving the board this year after many years of service.

President Krey also thanked the assembly for the dedication of the offering from the Eucharist for the support of the seminary capital campaign.

Pr. Glenn Miller then reported on the progress of that capital campaign. He reported that the new Brossman Center has served the students and seminary for a whole year. How they functioned without it, is a mystery. He reported that two major gifts were received from individuals in the synod and large commitments from several congregations. He also reported that part of the proceeds of a closed

congregation went to the seminary. To day over 4\$ 700,000 has been raised within the synod. Though our synod and others the seminary has now raised over \$13,000,000 of the \$20,000,000 goal.

Reference and Counsel

Pr. Jurik began the work of this committee with prayer for the Holy Spirit.

ITEM A.1

A RESOLUTION ON ISRAELI PALESTINIAN CONFLICT

Whereas, The ELCA, through its pension investment plans, and other investment programs, has attempted to demonstrate a socially responsible investment policy; and

Whereas, The ELCA's current policy is to promote awareness and engage in accompaniment and advocacy for peace with justice between Israel and Palestine, ELCA Assembly Adopts Campaign for 'Justice in the Holy Land' (August 13, 2005); and

Whereas, Voting members of the 2005 Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) urged Lutherans (August 13, 2005) to participate in a campaign – “Peace Not Walls: Stand for Justice in the Holy Land” – designed to build awareness, and engage in accompaniment and advocacy activities for “peace with justice” between Israel and Palestine; and

Whereas, In a news conference the Rev. Rebecca S.V. Larson, executive director, ELCA Division for Church in Society, said the ELCA's strategy does not contain “a policy on divestment”; and

Whereas, The ELCA recognizes that there are people of honor and dis-honor, and people of peace in Israel and in Palestine; and

Whereas, The building of a 360 kilometer long security wall by Israel and the proposed additional 240 kilometer extension ~~are impediments to~~ complicate a final and comprehensive negotiated settlement of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict; and

Whereas, The Israeli demolition of Palestinian homes in the Gaza Strip and in the Occupied Territories of the West Bank and East Jerusalem ~~is illegal under international law and~~ is a deterrent to the peace process; therefore and

~~Whereas, There seems to be little will on behalf of the Israeli government to recognize the rights of the Palestinians to a sovereign state to be created in the West Bank — which includes East Jerusalem — and Gaza; be it~~

RESOLVED, That the Metropolitan New York Synod ~~commends~~ memorializes the 2007 ELCA Churchwide Assembly to “take appropriate action where it finds that its corporate investments¹ support the occupation of Palestinian Lands or violence against innocent Israelis, and encourage investment strategies that support the infrastructure of a future Palestinian State.”²; and be it further

~~*RESOLVED*, That the ELCA initiate a process of divestment in multinational corporations operating in Israel, in accordance with the ELCA practice on social investments; and be it further~~

RESOLVED, That the ELCA, through appropriate channels, support an implementation of UN Resolutions 242* and 338* directed towards peace, justice and co-existence in the Holy Land.

Submitted by
St. Paul's Lutheran Church of Parkchester

¹ Reference to companies that contribute to the infrastructure of Israel's ongoing occupation of the West Bank and the Gaza Strip and companies that have connection to organizations responsible for violence against Israel.

² Part of a resolution adopted by The Church of England

RECOMMENDATION:

The Committee on Reference and Counsel presents this resolution to the assembly as amended without prejudice.

Pr. James Thomas [St. Paul's, Parkchester (Bronx)] spoke on behalf of the resolution submitted by his congregation.

On the adoption of the resolution [A.1]

**Adopted
SA2006.06.01**

RESOLVED, That the Metropolitan New York Synod ~~commends~~ memorializes the 2007 ELCA Churchwide Assembly to “take appropriate action where it finds that its corporate investments¹ support the occupation of Palestinian Lands or violence against innocent Israelis, and encourage investment strategies that support the infrastructure of a future Palestinian State.”²; and be it further

RESOLVED, That the ELCA, through appropriate channels, support an implementation of UN Resolutions 242* and 338* directed towards peace, justice and co-existence in the Holy Land.

To expedite the work of the assembly, the bishop asked the assembly if there were objection to reading only the resolved sections of the resolutions. None was heard.

ITEM A.2

A RESOLUTION ON INTER-RELIGIOUS COOPERATION FOR PROGRESS ON PEACE

Whereas, Israel and Palestine, the home of our faith heritage, have taken dramatic, democratic steps in the effort to resolve their conflict despite the continued provocation from extremists on both sides; and

Whereas, The United States often finds itself isolated internationally, while its relations are strained with many of its closest allies, and the Muslim world; and

Whereas, Lutherans and other Christians historically have in their sinfulness sometimes been responsible for their own share of intolerance, chauvinism and violence, we of the Metropolitan New York Synod are therefore

RESOLVED,

- § To ~~recommit~~ pledge ourselves to prayer and advocacy on behalf of peace in the Middle East in solidarity with our fellow Lutherans there and also with people of other faiths and
- § To annually commemorate the memory of Dietrich Bonhoeffer and his witness that “The church is church only when it exists for others” and his commitment to give his own life in the cause of opposing racial, political and religious oppression; and
- § To continue in Bonhoeffer’s work to see discipleship in light of the theology of the cross as a call to solidarity with those who suffer and following the prophetic approach of Jesus as we see it for our time and
- § To respond against religious fanaticism with tolerance, fellowship and cooperation at the congregational and synodical level, expanding on our ecumenical progress with interfaith action; and be it further

RESOLVED, That

¹ Reference to companies that contribute to the infrastructure of Israel's ongoing occupation of the West Bank and the Gaza Strip and companies that have connection to organizations responsible for violence against Israel.

² Part of a resolution adopted by The Church of England

- § We commend Bishop Bouman for his leadership of the May 4, 2005 Holocaust Commemoration at Saint Peter's in Manhattan jointly with the Central Synagogue.
- § We commend Bishop Hanson for his leadership together with Christian, Jewish and Muslim leaders in a national campaign called "Walk the Road to Peace." Together they have organized to support more active U.S. leadership in the effort to find peace between Israelis and Palestinians, and to partner with Arabs and Jews who are working together. <http://www.walktheroadtopeace.org/>
- § We will continue to seek to find Jews, Muslims and other people of faith who want to work together for the healing of our world as the way of greatest integrity and success.

Submitted by

Rev. James O'Hanlon,
Rev. James Sudbrock,
Rev. Amandus J. Derr
Rev. Khader N. El-Yateem
Rev. Kathleen R. Koran

Rev. William Baum
Ms. Sharon Wilson
Rev. Heidi Neumark
Rev. Chris Mietlowski

RECOMMENDATION:

The Committee on Reference and Counsel presents this resolution to the assembly as amended with a recommendation for its adoption.

Pr. O'Hanlon as the principle author spoke in support of the resolution. Pr. John MacKenzie spoke in opposition

On the adoption of the resolution [A.2]

**Adopted
SA2006.06.02**

RESOLVED,

- § To pledge ourselves to prayer and advocacy on behalf of peace in the Middle East in solidarity with our fellow Lutherans there and also with people of other faiths and
- § To annually commemorate the memory of Dietrich Bonhoeffer and his witness that "The church is church only when it exists for others" and his commitment to give his own life in the cause of opposing racial, political and religious oppression; and
- § To continue in Bonhoeffer's work to see discipleship in light of the theology of the cross as a call to solidarity with those who suffer and following the prophetic approach of Jesus as we see it for our time and
- § To respond against religious fanaticism with tolerance, fellowship and cooperation at the congregational and synodical level, expanding on our ecumenical progress with interfaith action; and be it further

RESOLVED, That

- § We commend Bishop Bouman for his leadership of the May 4, 2005 Holocaust Commemoration at Saint Peter's in Manhattan jointly with the Central Synagogue.
- § We commend Bishop Hanson for his leadership together with Christian, Jewish and Muslim leaders in a national campaign called "Walk the Road to Peace." Together they have organized to support more active U.S. leadership in the effort to find peace between Israelis and Palestinians, and to partner with Arabs and Jews who are working together. <http://www.walktheroadtopeace.org/>
- § We will continue to seek to find Jews, Muslims and other people of faith who want to work together for the healing of our world as the way of greatest integrity and success.

ITEM B

A RESOLUTION PROVIDING FOR CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT GRANTS

Whereas, It is important for the wider church to be concerned about spiritual growth and evangelism, and

Whereas, The Mission Development Board approves funds for evangelism and community outreach projects but not for capital improvement, and

Whereas, The morale of the church can be greatly strengthened by adding to the beauty of the building or fixing long overdue maintenance or repair projects, and

Whereas, It is greatly saddening that some churches are closing due to low attendance and these churches are being sold, and

Whereas, Currently the sale of these churches is funding the Mission Development Board and its grants, be it

RESOLVED, That when a church property is sold, the churches within its conference, will be eligible for a capital improvement grant of up to \$10,000.

Applicants must be up to date on their parochial reports and Mission Support and must apply within six months of the sale of the property in question.

Project estimates must be provided as well as receipts for expenses for the finished work.

If the churches in that conference do not apply for the funds available, up to \$150,000 will be available to other churches in the Synod (on a first come, first served basis) for capital improvement grants of up to \$10,000.

This grant would be one time only.

Submitted by

Ms. Chris Lord-Barry, St. Paul's International Lutheran Church

RECOMMENDATION:

The Committee on Reference and Counsel presents this resolution to the assembly with a recommendation against its adoption.

Ms. Dorothy Zelenko, St. Matthew's White Plains rose to speak for the resolution.

Pr. James Thomas, St. Paul's Parkchester, spoke against the resolution.

Mr. Robert Buescher, Treasurer rose to comment on the asset growth of the synod over the last several years

On the adoption of the resolution

Defeated

ITEM C

AMENDMENTS TO GOVERNING DOCUMENTS

C.1

Whereas, The publication and distribution of large printed documents such as the synod assembly minutes is a large cost for the synod that could be reduced substantially by electronic publication, and

Whereas, Storing the publications for later reference consumes substantial space that is reduced by electronic publications, and

Whereas, Searching for past actions in printed matter is tedious and error prone, and can be easier in electronic publications, therefore be it

RESOLVED, That the Metropolitan New York Synod adopt the following amendment to the bylaws

S7.01.04 d. Publication of minutes for congregations and rostered persons using electronic means is permissible providing that printed alternatives are available for those that request them.

2/3 majority required [†S18.21]

Submitted by,
Vice President John Litke, Secretary James Krauser

RECOMMENDATION:

The Committee on Reference and Counsel presents this amendment to the synod’s governing documents to the assembly with a recommendation for their adoption.

Mr. Litke spoke briefly on the rationale for this amendment. Pr. Paul Block asked how what methods were under consideration for distribution of the minutes. Mr. Litke responded that they would be available on a CD-ROM disk. Pr. Michael Church spoke word of caution. Given the rapid rate at which electronic technology changes he was concerned that in a few years such copies of the minutes would be obsolete and unusable.

In response to a concern expressed by the Archivist, the resolution was amended by **unanimous consent** to read (*additional words underscored*):

RESOLVED, That the Metropolitan New York Synod adopt the following amendment to the bylaws

S7.01.04 d. Publication of minutes for congregations and rostered persons using electronic means in a secure format that cannot be altered is permissible providing that printed alternatives are available for those that request them.

Mr. Jeremy Posadas [Trinity Manhattan] spoke in favor of the conservation of resources and proposed an amendment.

To amend by addition:

S7.01.04 d. Publication of minutes and materials for synod assemblies for congregations and rostered persons using electronic means in a secure format that cannot be altered is permissible providing that printed alternatives are available for those that request them.

The amendment was seconded. Three speakers rose to speak against the amendment. They were Pr. Paul Milholland [St. John’s-Lindenhurst] Pr. Paul Schmiede [St. Luke-Manhattan], and Mr. Litke. The previous question was moved, seconded and adopted.

On the Posadas amendment

defeated

On the adoption of the resolution as amended [C.1]

**Adopted
SA2006.06.03**

RESOLVED, That the Metropolitan New York Synod adopt the following amendment to the bylaws

S7.01.04 d. Publication of minutes for congregations and rostered persons using electronic means in a secure format that cannot be altered is permissible providing that printed alternatives are available for those that request them.

C.2

The following amendments to S7.26 of the synod constitution have been recommended by the 2005 ELCA Churchwide Assembly:

- S7.26. This synod may establish processes through the Synod Council that permit representatives of mission settings formed with the intent of becoming chartered congregations and authorized worshipping communities of the synod, under ELCA bylaw 10.02.03., to serve as voting members of the Synod Assembly, consistent with †S7.21. ~~Such authorized~~ Authorized worshipping communities, acknowledged under criteria, policies, and procedures ~~of the ELCA Division for Outreach and approved by~~ the Church Council of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, shall accept and adhere to the Confession of Faith and Statement of Purpose of this church, shall be served by leadership under the criteria of this church, and shall be subject to the discipline of this church.

Simple majority required [†S18.12.]

RECOMMENDATION:

The Committee on Reference and Counsel presents these amendments to the synod's governing documents to the assembly with a recommendation for their adoption.

On the adoption of the resolution [C.2]

**Adopted
SA2006.06.04**

- S7.26. This synod may establish processes through the Synod Council that permit representatives of mission settings formed with the intent of becoming chartered congregations and authorized worshipping communities of the synod, under ELCA bylaw 10.02.03., to serve as voting members of the Synod Assembly, consistent with †S7.21. ~~Such authorized~~ Authorized worshipping communities, acknowledged under criteria, policies, and procedures ~~of the ELCA Division for Outreach and approved by~~ the Church Council of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, shall accept and adhere to the Confession of Faith and Statement of Purpose of this church, shall be served by leadership under the criteria of this church, and shall be subject to the discipline of this church.

Ms. Louise Litke has chaired the planning committee for 10 years, she was called on to recognize her committee.

Vice Presidential Candidates

Nominees for the office of Vice President were requested to prepare remarks in response to a question prepared by the out-going vice president

“The Church exists both as an inclusive fellowship and as local congregations gathered for worship and Christian service. Congregations find their fulfillment in the universal community of the Church, and the universal Church exists in and through congregations. This church, therefore, derives its character and powers both from the sanction and representation of its congregations and from its inherent nature as an expression of the broader fellowship of the faithful. In length, it acknowledges itself to be in the historic continuity of the communion of saints; in breadth, it expresses the fellowship of believers and congregations in our day.”

The ELCA constitution states in part:

“The Church exists both as an inclusive fellowship and as local congregations gathered for worship and Christian service. Congregations find their fulfillment in the universal community of the Church, and the universal Church exists in and through congregations.”

Please comment on how you see this vision could or should be manifest in the life of the Metro New York Synod.

Mr. Hans Vogel spoke about the importance of the “interdependent” relationships within our synod. He spoke of Bp. Graefe’s remark that “you have to do the windows”, meaning we have to look out as well as within. He spoke of our need to reach out to our neighborhood particularly those who are overlooked. He spoke of our need to recommit to our neighborhoods, the church at large and the church beyond our borders. There are wonderful opportunities for us on each these levels. We are called to be leaders as well as followers in the ecumenical community, to be proactive not only reactive. In our metropolitan area we have great opportunities in this ,

Ms. Dorothy Scholz said that the Metro NY is very blessed that we’re not a group of homogeneous congregations. We are blessed with a diversity of experience and ideas. She said we need to work on communicating what the bishop has called on us to do. That we find better ways to share the story of the old churches and the emerging churches. The universal church does not mean sameness, but multifaceted and , multicultural.

Recess

Prior to announcing the recess, Bishop Bouman acknowledged the presence of the synod’s attorney, Mr. Howard Capell.

Following the announcements by Ms. Litke, Pr. Arias offered a closing prayer. The session ended at 5:34 p.m.

In the evening a Healing Service was celebrated presided over by Bishop Bouman. The Rev. Brenda Smith [New Hope-Jamaica] gave the sermon.

Friday, June 9, 2006
PLENARY SESSION II

Following the Morning Prayer, the second plenary session was called to order at 9:46 a.m. the Mid-Hudson Civic Center in Poughkeepsie, New York. Pastor Richard Mueller [Immanuel, Kingston], Dean of the Hudson Conference, was invited to give greetings to the assembly. He welcomed us to the place where the river runs to, through and from.

Pr. Brathwaite reported that registration stood at 378 voting members as of 8:30 a.m.

Voting Member H. Ressmeyer, of Stewart Manor rose to a point of order concerning the credentialing of certain members. The chair asked the assembly to stand at ease while this matter was inquired into. Following the consultation the member withdrew his point of order.

Address of the ELCA Representative

Pr. Sherman Hicks, ELCA Executive Director for Multicultural Ministries gave the following address.

My sisters and brothers in Christ, I greet you in the name of our risen and ascended Lord, Jesus the Christ. I bring you greetings from your partners in ministry at the Churchwide Office in Chicago. Some people say you can't return home but as a son of the Metropolitan New York Synod, LCA, I have come home and it is a joy and honor for me to be here.

I wish to begin this first presentation by thanking you. Thank you for your warm hospitality and this opportunity to share with you. Thank you for sharing your leadership with the wider church. Kamy Moghbeli and Sarah Geddada serve on the Global Mission Program Committee. Frederick Rennick and Brian Hofland serve on the Foundation Board. Daniel Joy serves on the Committee of Hearing Officers. Lee Wesley serves on the Committee on Discipline. Abraham Cheng Lu serves on the Mission Investment Fund Board. Grace and Khader El-Yateem serve on the Multicultural Ministries Program Committee. Kathryn Lawler and David Wansch are current missionary personnel through Global Mission Program Unit.

For this leadership from your synod to the wider church, I say "thank you" for sharing your talents in such a way that holds up the interdependent ecclesiology of which our church espouses. May more people come forth as together we are making a difference.

I also wish to thank you for your financial support. The ELCA gives thanks for the growth of the Mission Investment Fund this past year, and for the faithful stewardship of Mission Investors. As of December 31, 2005, investments in the fund totaled \$318 million – an increase of nearly \$10 million. This strong commitment by Mission Investors enables the fund to make low-interest loans to young mission congregations for purchases of land and construction of initial church buildings, and to established congregations for renovation, expansion and relocation projects. Today, more than 630 loans are at work in ELCA congregations and other ELCA-related ministries.

As of December 31, 2005, the investments in the fund by many individuals and 50 congregations and ministries in this synod totaled \$3,891,297. Mission Investment Fund loans to nine congregations in the synod, as of December 31, 2005, totaled \$1,202,053. A growing number of individuals are earning interest on their financial resources while they are helping to build the church as Mission Investors.

We are grateful for your partnership with the Mission Investment Fund of the ELCA.

It is my pleasure, to report on the activity related to the ELCA Fund for Leaders in Mission and the Metropolitan New York Synod Fund for Leaders in Mission. I am reminded daily of the importance of this effort in the life of the church as we seek to affirm and support those who seek to discover and develop their gifts for ministry leadership.

Here are a few highlights from the Metropolitan New York Synod Fund for Leaders in Mission this past year:

- As of December 31, 2005, the Metropolitan New York Synod had \$136,824 in its two scholarship endowment funds:
 - \$105,276 – Metropolitan New York Synod Fund for Leaders in Mission
 - \$ 31,548 – The Reverend Jack H. Traugott Seminary Scholarship Fund
- Based on current market rates, we anticipate that the Metropolitan New York Synod will have approximately \$8,500 in scholarship funds to award to students from the synod for 2006-07 academic year.

In addition to your synod funds, the ELCA Fund for Leaders in Mission continues to build a churchwide resource for seminary scholarships:

In December, the ELCA fund for Leaders in Mission Endowment surpassed \$12 million.

- 32 new scholarships were given this year; a total of 135 scholarships were funded in 2005-2006 bringing total funds distributed to \$1.7 million.
- The ELCA Fund for Leaders in Mission continues to provide scholarship support for Giovanni Sanchez, member of Iglesia Evangelica Luterana Del Espiritu in Brooklyn, who will graduate from the Lutheran Theological Seminary at Philadelphia this Spring.

Individuals and congregations throughout Metropolitan New York have been very generous to the synod's fund. It is exciting to see how quickly this fund has grown.

Giovanni Sanchez says: *"Now, more than ever, God is calling men and women to rise to the occasion and bring their gifts and talents to aid a people that need hope and consolation. I believe God has called ordinary people like me to be an instrument in his hands and bring forth healing to our nation."*

By your generous giving you are assisting people like Giovanni Sanchez.

Thank you for your financial support.

The overall financial results for churchwide in fiscal 2005 were positive. Total current income and expense were up over the prior year and restricted income reached record levels.

The disaster response to the hurricanes was \$24 million. Even with this generosity the Hunger Appeal exceeded its goal of \$16.5 million with gifts totaling \$17 million.

Amazing grace; amazing gifts!

We are not a poor church. God is pleased when we share so generously the blessings we have received. Now I would like for us to ponder three questions:

1. What does it mean to be the ELCA today?
2. What is our mission together?
3. How do we make a difference together?

To get us started on these questions let's watch a short video.

My brothers and sisters in Christ, together we are Evangelical! In 2005 the ELCA opened 56 new congregational starts. In 2006 the ELCA approved 58 new congregational starts. We are moving in the right direction!

The ELCA Evangelism Strategy approved by the Churchwide Assembly, is in various stages of implementation, assisting us to be an evangelizing church.

As you are the Great Commission Synod, indeed, together we are Evangelical.

Together we are Lutheran! Evangelical Lutheran worship resources will be available in paper and electronic versions in October, 2006. As Lutherans together you have contributed to the development of these new worship resources even as we use them in this assembly.

The 2007 ELCA Churchwide Assembly is scheduled to consider a social statement on education. A first draft of this social statement is now available for congregations and members to study, discuss, and offer their comments to the ELCA Task Force on Education.

With your synod's churches operating 48 early childhood centers, 10 elementary schools and 2 high schools and concern for quality public school education this social statement on education is a gift of Lutheran involvement.

Indeed together we are Lutheran.

Together we are the church. This summer youth from our church with youth from around the world will gather in San Antonio for the youth gathering. As of March 21, 228 youth and 73 adults from the Metropolitan New York Synod were registered. Total registration was 36,000 plus.

I and other churchwide staff look forward to greeting your youth and working with them in San Antonio!

Together we are the church with our Lutheran colleges, universities, campus ministries and seminaries and the largest social service organization – Lutheran Services in America of which Lutheran Social Services of New York is a member.

Indeed, together we are the church!

Together we are in America! Our church has now approved five ethnic specific strategies: African Descent Ministry; Arab and Middle Eastern Ministry; Asian and Pacific Islander Ministry; Latino Ministry; and American Indian and Alaska Native Ministry.

The adoption and implementation of these strategies assist us in being faithful in carrying out the Great Commission in our diverse society.

As we develop relationships outside America such as with your companion church – the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Tanzania (North Western Diocese) – Bishop Hanson has some words for such a relationship. He says: "We have opportunity for seeing ourselves as Americans through the eyes of others".

Thank God for this program offered by the Global Mission Program Unit.

Indeed, together we are America!

This day, I profess that I firmly believe:

United in the body of Christ

Together as the ELCA,

Living in God's amazing grace,

We are making a difference.

When you have a chance, please take this magazine in your packet, read it and check it out! By the grace of God, together in the ELCA we are making a difference.

Tomorrow I will greet you again and during that time I will be answering questions you have and talk more about Multicultural Ministry.

To facilitate that process I ask you to write your questions and deliver them to the page's table to my left in the corner. That will assist me in my preparation.

Thank you for your cooperation and thank you for your time this morning.

A video was shown as part of Pr. Hick's address.

It may be viewed at www.elca.org/mosaic/identity2006.

Ecumenical Greetings

The Rt. Rev. Don Taylor Vicar Bishop of the Diocese of New York brought greetings from the Episcopal Church.

Bishop Taylor said that he was delighted to be with us and that this was his first visit to a Lutheran synod. He noted that we looked pretty much like an Episcopal Church convention and he felt at home. Bp. Taylor expressed Bishop Sisk's regret that he couldn't be with us, and read from a letter from Bishop Sisk in which he said that he was happy to see our synod and his diocese working more closely together. He noted that several pastors have been "recruited" to serve congregations in the diocese. "The depths of cooperation that I believe is possible between our communions have yet to be realized but firm and positive steps are being taken..." Bishop Sisk wrote.

Drawing on Bishop Sisk's reference to "recruiting of clergy," Bishop Taylor particularly mentioned marriage between Episcopal priests and Lutheran ministers and observed that indeed we are seeing new depths in our relationships new and amusing ways.

Presentation on Natural Church Development

Pr. Claire Burkat, Bishop-elect of the Southeastern Pennsylvania is a daughter of our synod, a native of Queens and former member of Holy Trinity, Bellrose. She has served as a Mission Director for SE Pennsylvania Synod, and for Episcopal Diocese. She is a member of Holy Communion in Philadelphia. Bishop Bouman said that she has been working with our CEO for about 6 months, participating with them in training events.

Growing God's Church Naturally

What is Natural Church Development?

Jesus used many parable and metaphors of nature to describe the reign of God.

When Jesus spoke about the kingdom of God, he frequently stressed the importance of the Natural world.

Jesus and the Natural World

{ *The lilies of the field*

Matthew 6:28

A Typical example is Matt 6:28. "See how the lilies of the field grow" The word "See", however does not fully cover the implications of the Greek word KATAMATHETE, which means to diligently learn, observe, study, research.

Here are some others:

{ *The mustard seed*

Matthew 13:31-32

{ *The yeast*

Matthew 13:33

{ *I am Living Water*

John 7:37-39

{ *I am Light of the World*

John 8:12

{ *The True Vine*

John 15:1-7

{ *The Fig Tree*

Mark 13:28

{ *The Sower*

Mark 4:1-9

An interesting Bible reflection would be to observe these scriptural examples of the Kingdom of God and God's creative order of the natural world

Likewise Paul also made references to God's Natural Creation in his theological teaching

Paul and the Natural World

{ *One Body, Many Parts*

1 Corinthians 12:13-14

Most memorable is the metaphor of the Church as the Body of Christ. Various parts linked together in Christ, cooperating and healthy growth. When one part hurts the other parts suffer as well.

{ "I planted, Apollos watered, but God give the growth,"	1 Corinthians 3:6
{ The whole body grows in love	Ephesians 4:16
{ You are God's field	1 Corinthians 3:9
{ Gospel bearing fruit and growing	Colossians 1:6

Or the other growth principles of nature.... "Unless a grain of wheat fall into the earth and dies it remains alone, but if it dies it bears much fruit " John 12:24

Natural Church Development uses six universal growth principles and applies them to the Church. We will look at these principles later

All By Itself Growth

"The kingdom of God is as if someone would scatter seed on the ground, and would sleep and rise night and day, and the seed would sprout and grow, he does not know how.

"The earth produces of itself, first the stalk, then the head, then the full grain in the head. But when the grain is ripe, at once he goes in with his sickle, because the harvest has come." (Mark 4:26-29)

The term, "All by itself growth" comes from Jesus teaching in Mark 4

This parable shows what people can and should do, and what they cannot do. They should sow and harvest...they may sleep and wake up. What they can never do is bring forth the fruit.

That is God's job. The grain grows all by itself In Greek the word is AUTOMATE

Since all by itself growth is organic growth, it takes time. Just as any organic process takes time.

We cannot expect to sow and harvest in a month. Natural Church Development takes time!

NCD takes at least a year, then another cycle

Typical church programs start up and stop with no consistency...then we say the idea is not working. Think about how many interruptions there are in a typical program year Summer/Thanksgiving/Advent/Christmas /Winter/Lent /Easter/Graduations/ Summer again. One small congregation could have 8 seasonal interruption sin one year.

The NCD coach will help the congregation Health team to integrate organic growth and principles into the whole church year.

About 15 years ago Christian Schwartz began a PhD project on Church Growth

This was his thesis question

Key Question of Natural Church Development

*What church growth principles are true,
regardless of culture and theological persuasion?*

He undertook an international research project of 1,000 churches in 32 countries across 6 continents and in 18 languages. Today this project has included over 41, 000 churches in 71 countries.

The ELCA is using natural Church development for our new Mission -- for Transformational congregations and for established congregations that desire revitalization.

A potted plant is an illustration of the NCD process. You plant the plant in a pot and your notice the plant is not doing well. It is not growing...the leaves are turning brown and you say what is wrong with this plant? You test he soil and the soil is dry...so you water it.

The plant starts to grow again but it stops again after a while. If you think water is the solution again without testing the soil you will rot the roots. Rather the plant needs to be repotted to give it more room to grow.

Then it stops again this time it needs to be relocated because the change of season has changed the intensity of the sun., You need to move it to a Southern exposure.

You have to figure out what is the limiting factor and know WHEN a change is needed. It this way the potential growth of the plant is released.

How can we release the potential that God has placed within every church?

Natural Church Development measures 8 Quality Characteristics

{ Empowering	----->	Leadership
{ Gift-oriented	----->	Ministry
{ Passionate	----->	Spirituality
{ Functional	----->	Structures
{ Inspiring	----->	Worship
{ Holistic	----->	Small Groups
{ Contextual	----->	Evangelism
{ Loving	----->	Relationships

The Adjective is the key!

1. Empowering Leadership –

"...pastors and teacher to prepare God's people for the works of service, so that the Body of Christ might be built up..." Ephesians 4:11-12

This characteristic is not so much noting what we personally do as leaders but what we do as leaders to prepare other people to be leaders.

Effective leadership begins with a spiritual life that is nourished by word, sacrament, by prayer, by discernment that is both comforting and challenging.

As the people mature in their faith, effective pastors and leaders multiply, guide, empower and equip disciples to realize their leadership potential and work together to accomplish God's vision.

Leaders consider it as one of their most important tasks to help others develop greater degrees of empowerment. They equip, support, motivate, and mentor individuals to become all that God wants them to be.

Empowering Leadership measures how well the leaders empower others

Good leaders show people here's where we are going and invite people to go along.

Most of the time when I notice leadership is not empowered it is because I was too busy to take the time to equip those I was working with. Every leader, lay and clergy needs to put aside a percentage of time in one's monthly schedule to train and equip others, otherwise you will see no leadership empowerment in several years. This describes a Clergy dependant congregation.

Through the Congregational Evangelical Outreach Team the Metro NY Synod is making a plan to equip lay and clergy leaders to empower others for the sake of the mission of Christ.

This will take time.

This NCD process is only one tool, one way of equipping churches to for mission.

Some considerations for empowering leadership

How do leaders...

- { Develop strategies to multiply leadership?
- { Seek out the strengths of others to empower them?
- { Embrace and welcome others with complementary strengths?

Bob Logan taught me these basics ...

Equipping Leaders 101

{ I do...	You watch
{ I do...	You help
{ You do...	I help
{ You do...	I watch
{ You do...	Someone else watches

Prayers for growth are those which

- { Thank God
- { Acknowledge

- { Confess
- { Ask God

Increase and empower leadership through prayer:

Thank God.....

- for the people who have mentored you in leadership through modeling and equipping.

Acknowledge....

- it is God who causes growth in people.

Confess....

- the times you have failed to model godly leadership.

Ask God....

- as "Lord of the Harvest" to send forth laborers.
- to help you lead others as God leads you.
- for vision that empowers others for ministry.
- for leadership eyes to spot emerging leaders.
- for wisdom to raise up more leaders.
- for faith to believe that many more potential leaders are in your congregation.

2. Gift-oriented Ministry –

"Each one should use whatever gift that has been received to serve others, faithfully administering God's grace in its various forms." 1 Peter 4:10

The Holy Spirit gives to every Christian spiritual gift(s) for the building of God's kingdom. Church leaders have the privilege of helping believers discover, develop and exercise their gifts in appropriate ministries so that the Body of Christ "grows and builds itself up in love."

The role of church leadership is to help its members identify their gifts and integrate them into ministries that match their gifts. When a person lives according to their spiritual giftedness, they are not longer working in their own strength, but the Holy Spirit works in them. Studies show that most Christians are either not involved in ministry or they function in a ministry that does not match their gifts.

Some considerations for gift-oriented ministry

How are spiritual gifts taught and promoted?

- { How many members know about and intentionally use their gifts?
- { Where is there room made for widely creative expression of giftedness?
- { Are tasks distributed according to the criterion of gifting?

In the SEPA Synod Evangelism committee members took the spiritual gifts assessment. Not one had the gift of evangelism. They were good workers and event planners but no evangelists. The next three people we asked to join the committee had the gift of evangelism.

Gift-oriented ministry measures how closely gifts are matched to task.

Increase Gift-Oriented Ministry through prayer:

Thank God.....

- for the way God has gifted people around you to compliment and balance your gifts.
- that we are privileged to share in the partnership with God of growing the church.

Acknowledge....

- the work of the Holy Spirit in giving gifts to us.

Confess....

- the times you have repressed the release of gifts in yourself and in others.

Ask God....

- for understanding in how a person's gifts, passion and calling work together.
- to release the gifts of the Spirit that are needed in your congregation.
- for discernment to see the gifts in people,
- for wisdom for implementing a gift mobilization system in your congregation.

3. Passionate Spirituality –

Jesus replied, "Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind." Matthew 22:37

Effective ministry flows out of a passionate spirituality. Spiritual faithfulness leads to a strong conviction that God will act in powerful ways. A Christ like vision is accomplished through an optimistic faith that views obstacles as opportunities and can recognize that defeats can turn into victories by the power of God. The important issue is not the style in which spirituality is expressed, but the fact that faith is actually lived out with commitment, fire and enthusiasm.

Passionate spirituality

measures the level of passion within the spirituality of the church family.

Another way of understanding passionate spirituality is to identify in yourself and in your congregations how faith in Jesus Christ makes a difference. Generosity, excellent stewardship, a passion to advocate for justice, a desire to visit or heal the sick, to pray and work for peace, to protect the weak, to be hospitable to the stranger, these are all examples of spirituality passionately lived out among the faithful Christian community: In short- Loving God "with your whole heart, mind, body, soul"

Some considerations for passionate spirituality

- { How strongly do spiritual considerations factor when making decisions?
- { What evidence is there of lives being transformed because of a relationship with Jesus Christ?
- { Where does vital spirituality show itself in deeds of love and service?
- { How has infectious faith touched the hearts of the church family?

Increase Passionate Spirituality through prayer:

Thank God.....

- for loving you unconditionally and for blessing you with the word and sacraments and other treasures of the Christian life.

Acknowledge....

- God's daily presence in your life and ministry.

Confess....

- where you have been negligent in your spiritual discipline.

Ask God....

- to stir up a holy passion for God, and live for God's children.
- for discipline in walking wholly and holy before God.
- to help you express your passion through faithful service to others.
- to help you be more generous in love and giving.

4. Functional Structures

"...the whole body, joined and held together by every supporting ligament, grows and builds itself up in love, as each part does its work." Ephesians 4:15-16

The metaphor for the Church is the living Body of Christ.

Like all healthy organisms, it requires numerous systems that work together to fulfill its intended purpose.

Each must be evaluated regularly to determine if it is still the best way to accomplish the intended purpose.

Functional structures measures the ways in which the structures facilitate ministry.

The most important criterion for forms and structures in the church is if they fulfill their purpose or not.

Church structures are never an end in themselves but always only a means to an end.

With the change of administration in the SEPA Synod we will look at reorganization of Synod ...benefiting from a fresh opportunity now that there is a natural change in leadership

Some considerations for functional structures

How do current structures...

- { Give ministry a track to run on and keep red tape to a minimum?
- { Prepare the way for multiplication?
- { Creatively manage change dynamics?
- { Funnel resources toward new ministry initiatives?
- { Network ministries to accomplish greater vision?

Increase the Functionality of your Congregation through prayer

Thank God...

- for structures that facilitate the building of the Kingdom.

Acknowledge....

- God's leading in the way your church has developed over the years.

Confess....

- any resistance to making necessary changes in the structures of your church in order to help promote the Gospel.

Ask God....

- to show you the difference between flexible structures and rigid, restricting structures.
- for wisdom to evaluate current ministries for effectiveness and reproducibility.
- to show you the way to healthy, balanced, life-giving systems to nourish the church for effective ministry.
- for courage to implement necessary changes.
- for resources to carry our ministry.

5. Inspiring Worship --

"I rejoiced with those who said to me, 'Let us go to the house of the LORD.'" Psalm 122.1

Inspiring worship is a personal and corporate encounter with the living God.

Both personal and corporate worship is infused with an awareness of the presence of God resulting in times of joyous exultation as well as times of quiet reverence. Inspiring worship is not driven by a particular style or ministry focus group — but rather the shared experience of God's awesome presence.

Is the worship service an inspiring experience for those who attend? It is not so much about the target audience as it is what happens when we gather for worship.

Is there a sense of the presence of the divine? Are people's hearts touched and minds stretched? Is the music and the singing stirring and inspiring? Are newcomers welcomed and included?

Inspiring worship measures the quality of inspiration found in corporate worship experiences.

In a congregation in Chicago this was their low score and they were distraught because they had worked on inspiring worship for over a year with their new pastor. After the NCD coach helped them investigate why this came out low, it turns out it was the nursery was abysmal. The worship wasn't child friendly and the nursery wasn't child friendly so parent so young children found it very difficult to enjoy and be fed by the worship service. If children aren't cared for it distracts parents and others. If you are being distracted you cannot connect as well.

It doesn't mean children aren't welcome in worship, the question is are they cared for in the service or in the nursery?

Some considerations for inspiring worship

How does corporate worship...

- { Capture and build on the spiritual energy in the sanctuary?
- { Involve many varied creative expressions?
- { Inspire participants?
- { Open a wide front door for new people?
- { Touch mind, heart and spirit?

Make your congregation's worship more inspiring through prayer

Thank God.....

- for the freedom to worship God in many settings.

Acknowledge....

that God rejoices in the prayers and praises of God's people.

Confess....

those things in your life that sometimes prevent you from being spiritually present at worship.

Ask God....

- to help you walk in such a way that you continually demonstrate the love of Jesus Christ.
- to teach you how to model worship as a leader.
- to help you "get out of the way of the Holy Spirit."
- for wisdom in preparing culturally relevant services.
- for a worship team that delights to lead the congregation into heart-felt worship.

6. Holistic Small Groups –

"And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds. Let us not give up meeting together... let us encourage one another." Hebrews 10:24-25

Holistic small groups are disciple-making communities which endeavor to reach the unchurched, meet individual needs, develop each person according to their God-given gifts and raise leaders to sustain the growth of the church. Like healthy body cells, holistic small groups are designed to grow and multiply.

Growing churches have developed a system of small groups where individual Christians can find intimate community, practical help and intensive spiritual interaction. In the groups, not only scripture read and discussed, but biblical insights are applied to everyday issues.

In the 21st Century pastoral care is increasingly done for members BY members in small group which attend to faith formation, and spiritual support systems

Holistic small groups measures how well small groups minister to the "whole" person.

Some considerations for holistic small groups

In what ways are small groups...

- { *Ministering to all areas of life?*
- { *Welcoming diversity among members?*
- { *Seeking to serve in outside ministries?*
- { *Developing next generation leaders from within?*
- { *Participating with the local church to build up the whole body?*

Increase Holistic Small Groups through prayer:

Thank God.....

- for those who will be pioneering the small group ministry.

Acknowledge....

God's desire to see everyone receive unconditional love and acceptance.

Confess....

your congregation's inability to give adequate pastoral care and attention to faith formation to everyone in your church.

Ask God....

for a vision for a reproducing small group ministry.

- for small group leaders and apprentices.
- for small group coaches
- to help you do "small" well.
- to help you be a family to those without a family.
- for wisdom for implementing a small group ministry.

7. Contextual Evangelism –

*"Go, therefore and make disciples of all nations,
baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit,
and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you.
And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age." Matthew 28:16-20*

We Lutherans are very good at identifying the needs and concerns in our communities and making plans to attend to these needs. We have many twelve step groups, food pantries, after school services, immigration assistance, health service and child and elder care in our congregations.

We are not so great at inviting the people these programs touch into our faith communities. By extending an invitation in a warm and friendly manner we are able to share the gospel in word and deed in a way that opens the door to people outside the church to feel welcome and for whom their questions and concerns can be addressed.

Contextual evangelism measures how well evangelism efforts connect with human need, and neighborhood context.

Some considerations for need-meeting evangelism

How do evangelism efforts...

- { *Connect with the real needs of people?*
- { *Invite and disciple new believers?*
- { *Involve people of all stages of spiritual and natural development?*
- { *Teach those who are new to the Christian faith to invite others to their new community?*
- { *Create a spirit of servanthood within the whole church?*

Increase Evangelism efforts through prayer:

Thank God.....

- for God's saving grace that brought you into the communion of Saints.

Acknowledge....

- God's command to go into all the world and make disciples.

Confess....

- your congregation's lack of interest for those who do not know Jesus Christ.

Ask God....

- to open your eyes to see opportunities to witness to God's love.
- to enlarge people's hearts to include newcomers into their circle of friends.
- for effective outreach strategies that will invite others to the Christian community.
- for the growth of new Christians to maturity.
- to help you be open to serving those in your community through word and service.

8. Loving Relationships –

"Everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another." John 13:35

Loving relationships are the heart of a healthy, growing church. Jesus said people will know we are his disciples by our love. Practical demonstration of love builds authentic Christian community and brings others into God's kingdom.

Unfeigned, generous love endows a church with a much greater magnetic power than all the marketing efforts of this world. Growing churches manifest a measurably higher "love quotient" than stagnant or declining ones.

Besides who wants to join a cranky church? Conflict and church fighting shrinks a congregation faster than any other factor

Loving Relationships measures how well participants in church life show love to one another.

Why loving relationships are a low factor for some congregations

Very often it relates to how a congregation attends to conflict resolution

Sometimes congregations are like battle fields, or they bury conflict because they value niceness and peace at any cost. They won't deal with conflict

Some considerations for loving relationships

- { *Where is there evidence of an inclusive spirit?*
- { *How are relationships interdependent?*
- { *In what ways is the sharing of lives multi-dimensional?*
- { *How is love and joy experienced within the church?*
- { *How are newcomers intentionally incorporated into the networks of the church?*

Increase Loving Relationships through prayer:

Thank God.....

- for the many loving people God has brought into your life.

Acknowledge....

- the love of God which flows through you to others.

Confess....

- any broken relationships which need God's healing love.

Ask God....

- to help you develop authentic friendships with others.
- to create loving, open community within your church.
- to infuse your worship service with unity in Christ .
- to show you ways to demonstrate the love of God to those you meet in daily life.
- to show you your neighbors and help you to let God love them through you.

Natural Church Development measures 8 Quality Characteristics

- { *Empowering Leadership*
- { *Gift-oriented Ministry*
- { *Passionate Spirituality*
- { *Functional Structures*
- { *Inspiring Worship*
- { *Holistic Small Groups*
- { *Contextual Evangelism*
- { *Loving Relationships*

No Quality Characteristic Can Be Missing

Three things can be said with a high degree of certainty:

1. These are universally valid qualities.
2. They can be transferred to our own situation.
3. Each of these has a positive relationship with both the quality and the quantitative growth of the church.

No one single factor leads to growth in churches; it is the interplay of the eight elements as they relate to the biotic principles.

Biotic Principles of Natural Church Development

Biotic = Life *Biotic Principles are simply the life principles upon which God's creation operates.*

Biotic Approach *Seeks to apply God's creation principles to the life, health and reproduction of the church.*

Six Biotic Principles

- { *Interdependence*
- { *Multiplication*
- { *Energy transformation*
- { *Sustainability*
- { *Symbiosis*
- { *Fruitfulness*

Interdependence = Connecting

Individual units are connected to each other in a larger system. Changes in one ministry will affect other ministries in the church and community. Critical question: What are the short and long-term effects of this action?

Multiplication = Reproducing

Healthy organisms do not grow endlessly but reproduce themselves. The true fruit of an apple tree is not an apple, but another tree. The true fruit of a small group is not a new Christian, but a new group. The true fruit of a church is not a new group, but a new church. Critical question: How does this contribute to multiplication, not just addition?

Energy Transformation = Harnessing

Momentum or energy already flowing, whether positive or negative, can be redirected to accomplish God's purposes. Examples: Crucifixion of Jesus, Paul's Mars Hill address (Acts 17), Growth of the church in the midst of persecution (Acts 8). Critical question: How can we utilize positive and negative resources to fulfill God's purpose?

Sustainability = Sustaining

Resources used should increase the capacity for on-going growth and development, as well as serve multiple purposes. Critical question: How do these actions contribute to future ministry cycles?

Symbiosis = Cooperating

Different ministries can cultivate cooperative relationships so the mutual benefit is greater than operating separately. Symbiosis is a relationship of cooperation, mutual benefit, and produces greater results than the individual parts could. Critical question: How can we work together to enhance ministry effectiveness?

Fruitfulness = Evaluating

Each ministry needs to produce discernable results in line with its intended purpose. "Every good tree bears good fruit; you will know them by their fruits." Matthew 7 Measuring results includes removing, pruning, and cultivating. Critical question: How can we maximize the fruitfulness of this ministry?

When to address an issue?

When the health of the minimum factor increases, the health of the whole church is likely to increase as well.

The Rev. Claire Schenot Burkat
Mission Director SEPA Synod
June 2006

At the conclusion of her address, Pr. Burkat closed her remarks with prayer for the synod.

Greetings from Bishop Rudolph Ressemeyer

The Rev. Rudolph Ressemeyer, retired bishop of the former East Coast Synod of the Association of Evangelical Lutheran Churches, greeted the assembly and was warmly received.

Instructions and Distribution of the First Ballot

Mr. Litke reported that Mr. Steipp was again unable to be in attendance due to illness. In preparation for the ballot he asked assembly to look at the new nominating report and instructed them to cross out ticket 18 due to errors. A new ticket will be printed. He announced that the general ballot should be available by the end of the breakout sessions and instructed that ballots should be returned by the end of the afternoon session.

Bishop Bouman called upon members of the synod staff to be recognized by the assembly.

The Rev. Dr. Gary Mills, Executive Assistant to the Bishop
Ms. Mary Tennermann, Administrative Assistant to Pr. Mills
The Rev. Dianne O. Loufman, Assistant to the Bishop for the Vacancy and Call Process
The Rev. Robert Wollenburg, Assistant to the Bishop for Giving
Mr. Branden Dicks, Administrative Assistant to Pr. Wollenburg
Ms. Sarah Gioe, Director of Mission Interpretation
Ms. Constance Duever, Assistant to the Bishop for Candidacy, Synod Resources & Tanzanian Ministry
Ms. Lily Wu, Assistant to the Bishop for Immigration Outreach
Mr. Tony Aguilar, Assistant to the Bishop for Synod Life
The Rev. David Anglada, Assistant to the Bishop for Outreach
Ms. Pat Lawrence, Administrative Assistant to Pr. Anglada, Computer Administrator
Ms. Gloria Torres, Staff Accountant
Ms. Wendy Healy, Communications Consultant
Ms. Joanne Strunck, Administrative Assistant to the Bishop

Recess

Following announcements Chaplain Arias led the assembly in prayer. The assembly recessed at 11:08 a.m. for a period of breakout sessions on Natural Church Development and for lunch.

PLENARY SESSION III

The assembly came to order under the call of the bishop at 2:11 p.m. Mr. Litke gave some clarifications about the ballot forms as an initial announcement. Pr. Arias then offered the prayer.

Candidacy Report

Pastor Jeffrey Kolbo [Trinity, Rocky Point], chair of the synod candidacy, committee gave a report of the number of candidates in various stages of preparation. He announced those candidates approved for ordination this past year and invited those present to come forward for recognition by the assembly.

Napoleon Plaza approved 03/12/05
comes from Trinity-Brooklyn, called to Ascension, Deer Park
Brennen Guillory approved 05/14/05
comes from St. Peter's-Manhattan, assigned for call to the Eastern Washington-Idaho Synod
Brenda Jack approved 05/14/05
comes from New Hope-Jamaica, called to Prince of Peace, Cambria Heights
Adeliz Mendez approved 06/11/05
comes from Trinity-Brooklyn, called to Salem, Brooklyn
Roldano Auguste approved 12/10/05
comes from St. John's Valley Stream, assigned for call to the New England Synod
Jessica Merchant approved 12/10/05
comes from Emanuel-Pleasantville, assigned for call to the Eastern North Dakota Synod
Kit Robison approved 12/10/05
comes from Trinity-Rocky Point, assigned for call to the MNYS
Robert Speirs approved 12/10/05
comes from Trinity-Brooklyn, assigned for call to the MNYS

The Rev. Nancy Wright, previously ordained in the United Church of Christ, approved on 12/10/05, served as interim pastor Trinity-Brooklyn, assigned to the New England Synod

Three additional person have been approved and are awaiting assignment
Tobias Anderson of Christ-Woodstock
Adrienne Ingram of Transfiguration-Bronx
Giovanny Sanchez of Espiritu Santo-Brooklyn

The committee is working with 15 other candidates in the preparation of ministry.

Recognition of Social Ministry Leaders

Pastor Gary Grindeland, Executive Director of the Seafarers and International House, brought greetings from the Lutheran Services New York Alliance.

Following Pr. Grindeland's remarks Bishop Bouman called the attention of the assembly to the banner on the stage. The banner was designed and made by Bobbie Paulik.

Asian Ministry

Ms. Lily Wu of the synod staff was asked to review for the assembly our synod's eight Asian ministries. Her presentation featured a slide presentation to display the wonderful bouquet of ministries we have. Each of the congregations was featured.

Her report concluded with a text from John "Apart from me you can do nothing." Read in Korean and Telugu.

Pr. Sarah Geddada [Redeemer-Queens Village] noted that this year is the 300 anniversary of the Lutheran Church in India.

Pr. Mary Chang [St. Jacobi-Brooklyn] read both in Mandarin and Cantonese.

"How Great Thou Art" was then sung in each of these three languages and then the assembly joined, singing the final stanza in English.

Report of the Vice President

In calling on Mr. John Litke, synod vice president and chair of the synod council, to give the report of the Synod Council, Bishop Bouman thanked Mr. Litke for his dedicated service to the synod as vice president. He then announced to the members that Mr. Litke would be joining the synod staff.

Mr. Litke gave the following report.

Reclaiming the Great Commission

We are in our third year of our journey to reclaim the Great Commission. We began this journey in 2003 when the Bishop declared

"The Metropolitan New York Synod is, and will be a Great Commission Synod. That must be our highest priority and the source of our deepest joy."

We recognized in 2003 that Reclaiming the Great Commission is a journey we all must take, as a synod, as a congregation, and as persons beloved of God and struggling with our own discipleship.

A notable part of that beginning for the synod was the chartering of the Commission for Evangelical Outreach, but many other things have also changed as we focus on that single objective: to reclaim our Great Commission.

We are not there yet, we are on the way. I pray we will be on the way for the next three years, and the three years after that. However, when we are on a long journey, it is important to assess the path where we have already travelled and the road ahead or else we may become enamoured of the passing parade of our journey and forget our goal. Our Reclaiming of the Great Commission could become a trite slogan instead of the driving passion for our travels.

Today I will speak about where we have been and where we are going in broad terms. I leave the details to my written report and to the Synod Council minutes on the web site.

So first, what have we been doing?

At the synod level, we have striven to engage all the leaders and all the organizations of the synod in this reclaiming journey. The role of the deans and conferences has been expanded. Conferences are encouraged to form collaborations between congregations for mutual action and support. Deans are more responsible for communication within the conferences and communication with the Office of the Bishop. The E-letter is a new means to communicate more quickly and more broadly throughout the synod. It not only provides efficient notice of synod events but a means for congregational and conference publicity.

We have devoted significant effort to training, and teaching. The Evangelical Outreach Commission provides focused help for congregations, training events for leaders, opportunities for prayer and renewal gatherings. We will be training coaches to help congregations with specific skill development, and training proposal evaluators to help assess Mission Reinvestment Proposals. The learning process has been designed into this Synod Assembly as well: our theme is congregational change and how that might be effected to reclaim our mission and ministry. One major part of our journey last year has been working on building teamwork, at engaging the whole community in the journey.

A second emphasis has been to set expectations for ourselves. Clearly one cannot sincerely ask others to set goals for change if one is not willing to change oneself, so synod leadership is holding ourselves accountable to each other for renewal and Reclamation of the Great Commission. Some new accountability changes during this past year include these:

- The Bishop is committed to meet individually every year with every rostered person to listen, to speak, and to understand how the synod and the local congregation can help each other.*
- The Mission Development process will ensure that our mission reinvestments are made transparently, with proper authorization and appropriate debate and comment.*
- A personnel policy was adopted and a personnel committee formed to ensure that synod staff are treated equitably and that annual reviews are performed.*
- The financial management processes of the synod were reformed, and the Financial Management committee empowered. Our finances are now reported regularly and examined by responsible people. Accountability for meeting financial goals is expected. We developed long-range plans that inform our staffing and financial planning.*
- Last, we have examined the benevolence behavior of the synod and reformed our processes for encouraging and tracking the benevolence of our congregations.*

So, what shall we do next? We are on a journey; we have a longer way to go than we have come so far. So, shall we strike off in new directions, try something different? No, not yet. We have not finished growing in the areas of Interdependence and Accountability. These two aspects of our journey together are where we still have a lot of growing to do.

Interdependence and Accountability

Interdependence means living in community, being willing and able to count on each other, being willing and able to help each other. It is a quality of life, one that independent, do-it-yourself North Americans find difficult, but a quality of life that can be spiritually transforming. I commend to you Dietrich Bonhoeffer's book "Life Together" where he describes the deeply soul-transforming experience of learning to truly live in community.

It is easy to deceive ourselves about interdependence. We have not reached interdependence when we can tolerate each other. Toleration travels with the head held high, not deigning to take note of those less fit, or less wise, or less noble of purpose. That is not interdependence. Interdependence means active love as the joining fiber of our relationships. When we grow into interdependence (and we are not there yet), we are able to ask each other for aid, to give that cup of water even unasked. Interdependence is to work at a neighboring congregation to repair their building even when our own needs serious repair. Do you know we have many missions in our own synod that could sorely use your skills and your muscle power to repair their church? These are our own missions that your benevolence supports. If any of you are willing to help your Lutheran brethren in this synod in a service project, let me know and we will develop some opportunities for a soul-enriching experience.

So how are you living out your interdependence within your community? Do you help the other congregations in your neighborhood or in your conference? Have you ever worshipped together with your neighbors? Do you even know who your neighbor's are? Are you so intent on reaching your Jerusalem that you cannot stop to help your fellow travelers by the side of the road? Our journey together is not a race for

the swift but a journey for the whole community. The strong must help the weak. We must encourage the foot sore, care for the sick and indeed, we must sit with the dying.

If the challenges of interdependence are on our right hand today, on our left is the equally challenging accountability. If we are to grow into an interdependent community, we must be able to count on each other. If I say I will do so and so, I must do it and in the same way, if I cannot, I must say I cannot rather than leave you to depend on a straw in the wind. We are all expert at this game of helping without helping, of delaying or 'forgetting' until the deed is obsolete by the passage of time. This is our favorite strategy when we must confront a fellow traveler – the problem will go away or maybe we will not have to deal with the distressing issue, it will be someone else's problem. We cannot be interdependent unless we hold ourselves and each other accountable. If we are the president of the congregation, we must be the president to the best of our ability, not just the anxious chair of a meeting. If we are the treasurer, we must keep the books well, and clearly communicate the financial circumstances to the council. And if we are not able? Do not accept the responsibility! And if no one will do so? Then the organization, whether synod or congregation, must confront the problem rather than hide it by coercing an unwilling or unskilled person.

Accountability is not just doing what we say we will or should do, but it also means not denying our responsibility for one another. For example, as followers of the Christ, we are called into discipleship. If not for God's sake or our own sake, then for the sake of our witness to our brothers and sisters, we must begin to hold ourselves accountable for growth in discipleship. One component of our witness as disciples is our financial support for the poor, the immigrant, and the seekers after God. How can we feel ok with our marvelous vacations, fancy cars, and entertainment nights out when the immigrant has no home, and the mission congregation cannot pay its pastor? Benevolence is a commitment to the other, an accountability to community; it is not a donation of the leftovers!

Interdependence and Accountability are still before us on our journey. This year, make these twin challenges part of your congregational conversations as we walk together.

How And Why Are We Are Traveling This Road?

I have been speaking about organization: about synod and about congregations, and we are naturally inclined to see the Great Commission as the charge to the church. So you and I can relax, cheer on the pastor and the bishop, and hope they can get our mission going a bit.

But Jesus' Great Commission was given to the disciples, that's you and me. The Great Commission is about deeper things than organization; it is about you and me and about our relationship to God. For the next few minutes, I want to talk with each of you, as individuals, not as a synod or a congregation surrogate, but to you – the individual created by God.

Now if a word of scripture is directed to us as individuals, and if it suggests we actually do something, then the staunch Lutheran reaction is "you can't ask people to do anything, that's Law and not Grace". Well, I am going to ask you to do something, and I think it is Lutheran to the core.

You and I are on the road as disciples, but it is not a very comfortable situation. Most of us are not comfortable with where we have been; we are not sure where we are going. We are variously lost, confused, challenged, impoverished, wishful, and maybe even hopeful. We are called to be people on the way, but we really like staying still. We are called to become fully committed to God, but we much prefer being committed to career and family. The two forces of commitment to God and commitment to self tug at each other and feelings of guilt over how we respond to these two impulses are never far away.

Consider the scripture text we call the Great Commission. That text is at the core of our resolve as a synod. It is a text so familiar we can all quote it but we do not hear it very well. We hear it as a set of impossible-to-measure-up-to instructions, suitable only for the pastor, but the scripture describes our already relationship to our Redeemer, how God wishes us to live in an already established relationship. It is not a set of instructions on how to qualify as a disciple, but rather from the perspective of our already relationship to God, Jesus has given us good advice for how we live out our relationship as Jesus' disciple.

Let's reflect on the text a bit and see what it might be saying to each of us. You know the text well,

Go therefore and disciple disciples of all nations,
baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit,
and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you.
And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age." (Mat 28:19-20)

Suppose we hear this great commission as describing our already relationship to God, and not as a challenge to a disciple's commitment? What then do we hear?

The first step in any scripture reflection is context, what is before the focus text? Here it is:

Then the eleven disciples went to Galilee, to the mountain where Jesus had told them to go.
When they saw him, they worshiped him; but some doubted. (Mat 28:16-17)

So the disciples obeyed a command and went. We think of a command as something we do under duress, but we should think of a command as an instruction from someone who has the right and the capacity and the authority to lead, not so as to compel our will, but to make sure the whole community is working together for the common goal. We North Americans value individual self determination as the highest possible good, so we see commands as an infringement on our imagined freedom, whereas scripture sees God's and Jesus' commands as the natural exercise of high office and leadership.

Matthew reports that Jesus states what is to happen and the disciples responded by traveling, explicitly acknowledging his leadership. It is interesting that when they see Jesus again in Galilee, some are convinced and worship him, but not all. Yet they are all there, they all made the journey. The connection of disciple to master is not one of acknowledging the truth of what Jesus said or did, but acknowledging by obedience the leadership of Jesus. The disciples are not all there because they believe him, but because they are his disciples, they learn from him, they are his students, they believe in him.

So they get to Galilee, and now what?

Then Jesus came to them and said,
"All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. (Mat 28:18)

The right to command is given to Jesus. Jesus explicitly claims the divine right to lead. Isn't this a shocking thing for the modern ear? We are ordered, we are not asked, we are not invited, cajoled, or promised rewards for, but ordered! For those that cherish the romantic image of Jesus loving us into a cuddly nest of consoling rest – for those folks this is a real jarring statement. Authority? How un-modern, how un-American!

What are our orders?

Go therefore and disciple disciples of all nations,

To go, to go on a journey, to travel, to set out. Jesus is not speaking about the day-to-day incidental travel like a business trip, or a vacation, or maybe a humdrum trip to the supermarket. Jesus is speaking about the trip of a lifetime, your life's journey.

What does it mean to go on a life journey with Jesus?

Do not take along any gold or silver or copper in your belts; take no bag for the journey,
or extra tunic, or sandals or a staff; for the worker is worth his keep. (Mat 10:9-10)

Our life's journey with Jesus is to be without regard to normal human prudence and planning. It is a step into the void, into the unknown, into the dangerous over-against the world. It is an act that defies the plan ahead, watch your back, be sure of the risk approach of modern life. Are we maybe too attached to our comfortable, safe, sure and arid present? Jesus' orders are for us to set out in confidence and without all the safety nets to which we passionately cling. Rather cling to God and to God's presence, not to our pensions and our large houses and our familiar sanctuaries.

And when we go, we are to disciple disciples. This is a strange expression to the modern ear, but one that aptly says: show them, don't tell them. If you want someone to commit to learn from Jesus, do so yourself. Become a student with them, become one who studies with the Master, become one who obeys the Master,

who, in the company of others, continually seeks to hear God's voice to us, to all of Us, not just to me, but to Us and to me. Discipling disciples is a whole body experience, not an affair for just the heart or just the head.

What else are we to do?

...baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit,

When we disciple disciples, part of that process is baptism. Baptism as an expression of God's acceptance of the person as disciple is part of the deal. We are disciples not because we passed the introductory course to junior grade disciple, but because God accepts us without regard to our grades in the disciple entrance exam. In Baptism God accepts us as disciples, each and every one of us.

The text does not stop with baptism:

...teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you;

Isn't it interesting that discipling disciples and teaching them surround baptism in the text? Baptism, the God-given grace of acceptance, is the core but learning, development, following, teaching, obedience are the skeleton and the clothing of the disciple's life.

There are two notable emphases in this part of our instructions from Jesus: first teaching (and to expect to learn) and second, the goal of the teaching: obedience, not just thoughts or knowledge, but action, doing, a changed life. We are not to be about Bible study, but about God-awareness. The Bible is not God, but a window through which we might glimpse God. We are not studying God as an ancient artifact; we are listening to the Spirit, every day, every week, in the company of others who are also seekers, who are also disciples, who are also learners. The text commands us to learn and obey because a disciple is a changed person, who acts differently and whose loyalties have changed. Being a disciple, following after, is not an expenses-paid trip but a costly re-orientation of one's whole life and actions toward God.

Jesus says: I have all authority, therefore: Go, disciple, baptize, teach, obeys.... Isn't this scary? You bet it is. For those who highly value this life 'of ours', it's a waste, it's a risk, it's foolish. But you know, you don't own your life, it's God's life on loan to you. It's 1 talent or 2 talents or 5 talents, whatever is gifted to you – on loan while the Lord entrusts it to you, but ultimately due to be returned, with interest.

And are we not now really anxious? Absolutely! But Jesus has not finished speaking:

...and surely, I am with you always, to the very end of the age.

Look, says Jesus, I am with you, I am incarnate, until the reign of God is fully manifest. The One who has all authority is not a give the orders and head for the golf course type of leader. We follow the One who said:

*...the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve,
and to give his life as a ransom for many. (Matt. 20:28)*

This is a comfort, but it is also a challenge. Jesus is with us in the going, the discipling, the baptizing, the teaching, and the obedience. Jesus is also the one to whom all authority is given, the one who commands us to disciple, to baptize, to teach, to obey. This is the One traveling with us

Summary

I have spoken about Interdependence and Accountability – two important challenges for the synod and our congregations in this coming year. We are reclaiming the Great Commission as a synod, and these two emphases are part of our shared journey.

I have also spoken about you and your Great Commission. I did this for two reasons:

First, you are children of god, and the commission was first given to the disciples, not to the organization. This text is written to and for you and me, not for the pastor or the bishop or the congregation council.

Second, you in this room are the leadership of your congregation, and you are the leadership of this synod. If we are to reclaim this Great Commission, it begins with us. Jesus has told us how to be in relationship – set out on a journey and disciple disciples. We develop other disciples by example, by following Jesus, by

doing his work. It is not a matter of developing a bible study on the great commission for your congregation; it is a matter of discipling by discipling.

You are leaders. If you and I stand at our podia and in our pulpits and tell people where to go, well you can imagine the result. But, if we each set out on our own journey into discipleship, if we then invite others – follow me, others will follow.

It starts with you and with me. We have our instructions from our Lord:

Go into the unknown – take a step into the future of God

Disciple by discipling

Bring the grace of God in baptism

Learn at the feet of Jesus, every day, every week so you are equipped to teach

Obey, consider the commands of Jesus seriously, and begin to re-form the parts of your life where Jesus would have you change

It is truly a great commission, to be an emissary of God to the world. God incarnate really does travel with us. So let's hit the road, together.

John Litke, Vice-President

Report of the Synod Council

The following is the written report of the activity of the Synod Council.

The annual report of the Synod Council is a report of the Board of Directors of the Synod, documenting the significant actions taken on your behalf during the last year. Actions, by themselves, document the ebb and flow of synod life but give scant clues as to the why of things, the course we have set for ourselves and the challenges before us. Therefore this first section reports on that course, where we have been and where we are going. The second section documents the significant actions from the past year, and the third sections reflects on the most important challenges for the next year.

Our Synod has dedicated itself to Reclaiming the Great Commission. The commitment is serious, but can be perceived as trite, as favoring motherhood and apple pie. So what *have* we gotten ourselves into?

The source of our commitment is well known:

“Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, to the close of the age.” (Matt 28:19-20)

The first word we usually hear is ‘baptize’ as the result of ‘making’ disciples. That certainly sounds good – preachers are to preach to the unbaptized so they become baptized and we are done. This is a serious misunderstanding. Matt 28:19-20 deserves a more extended study and reflection than I have space for, but let me note some of the ideas that are as important as the more familiar *baptize*:

- The text commands proclamation, both in word and deed.
- The text commands us to teach all disciples. This implies both learning and growth as an expectation of all disciples, not just those new to the God-disciple relationship.
- The text commands us to obey. A disciple is a changed person, who acts differently and whose loyalties have changed. Being a disciple, following after, is not a free vacation trip but a costly re-orientation of one's whole life and actions toward God.

These words apply to us all, lay or ordained, congregation, conference or synod. They challenge us to be a changed people, a different people whose loyalties are radically re-oriented toward God.

What does this imply for the synod? How do we begin to Reclaim the Great Commission?

First, reclaiming means changing ourselves, our habits, our behaviors, all of us. Our old habits are indeed habits, and changing of habits takes time. So the dedication to Reclaiming the Great Commission is a dedication to a long period of persistent change. In this process new, uncomfortable habits are formed and old reliable methods are shed. Discomfort, uncertainty, and inconsistency are part of the process and stress of such a re-formation.

Second, we must plan. We are many, our connections, organizations, habits, working groups, and finances are complex, and nothing changes easily. So planning is essential to achieve a strategic goal. Plans, of course, are only useful if they provide a steady guide toward our reclamation goal so we must depend upon each other to hold ourselves accountable to our plans for Reclaiming the Great Commission.

Third, we must invest our money, our resources and our selves in transformed mission. Where are we using our people, our buildings, our benevolence well, and where could we do better? This means not only committing resources where needed, but moving resources from unproductive endeavors to more productive ones. This latter resolve is particularly difficult for church people more comfortable with charity than accountability, more comfortable with patience than with expectations.

If Reclaiming the Great Commission means change, planning and investment, what has happened since 2004 when we resolved to begin this journey?

First, we have striven to engage all of the leaders and all of the organizations of the synod in the reclamation process. The role of the deans and conferences has been expanded. Conferences have a more direct role in nominations and are encouraged to form collaborations between congregations for mutual actions and support. Deans are more responsible for communication within the conferences and communication with the Office of the Bishop. The E-letter was adopted as a means to communicate more quickly and more broadly throughout the synod. It not only provides efficient notice of synod events but a means for congregational and conference publicity. This Synod Assembly, our theme will focus on congregational change and how that might be effected to improve our mission and ministry.

Second, we have focused significant effort on training, teaching, and leading our people to Reclaim the Great Commission. The Evangelical Outreach Commission provides focused help for congregations, training events for leaders, opportunities for prayer and renewal gatherings. We will be training coaches to help congregations with specific skill development and proposal evaluators to help assess our Mission Reinvestment Proposals.

Third, we are setting expectations for ourselves. Clearly one cannot sincerely ask others to do what one is not willing to do oneself, so synod leadership is holding ourselves accountable to each other for renewal and Reclamation of the Great Commission.

- The Mission Development Board process will ensure that our mission reinvestments are made transparently, with proper authorization and appropriate debate and comment.
- The Bishop is committed to meet individually every year with every rostered person to listen, to speak, and to understand how the synod and the local congregation can help each other.
- A personnel policy was passed and a personnel committee formed to ensure that synod staff are treated equitably and that annual reviews are performed.
- The financial management processes of the synod were reformed, and the Financial Management committee empowered to direct our financial management. Our finance management is now reported regularly, examined by responsible people, and accountability for meeting goals expected. We have developed long-range plans that inform our staffing and financial planning.
- We have examined the benevolence behavior of the synod in the recent past and reformed our methods for encouraging and tracking the benevolence of our people.

We have not reclaimed the Great Commission, but we are reclaiming it. We resolve to continue to change, to grow, to challenge ourselves to become re-formed.

Significant Synod Council Actions for March 2005 – Feb 2006

In the context of our resolve, these are the significant actions of the Synod Council during the past year. Details can be found on the Synod Web site where the full minutes of each council meeting are posted. Abbreviations note the year and month of a synod council action, hence (SC05:3/1) indicates a motion in 2005, March (3rd month), and the first motion of that meeting.

Calls

- SC05:3/1) Ms. Nadine Cordes, AIM – the Conference of Bishops approved her call to non-stipendiary ministry to St. Paul's, Brooklyn as Director of Education, effective 2/1/05
- SC05:3/1) the Rev. Annemarie Noto as part-time interim pastor at St. David's, Massapequa Park, effective February 1, 2005.
- SC05:6/1) the following calls were approved:
The Rev. Tom Peterson to serve St. Luke Lutheran Church in Woodhaven, Queens as part-time interim pastor, effective June 1, 2005
The Rev. Lyn Mehl to serve as Vice-pastor at St. Paul Lutheran Church in East Northport, effective June 1, 2005
Mr. Napoleon Plaza to serve as mission developer at Holy Trinity Lutheran Church, New Rochelle.
The Rev. Gary Grindeland to serve as Executive Director of Seafarer's International House, effective August 1, 2005
- SC05:7/3): the following calls were approved:
Ms. Sarah Geddada as Vice-pastor at Redeemer, Queens Village, effective September 12, 2005;
The Rev. The Rev. Alan Bentz Letts as Pastoral Care Counselor/Chaplain at Hospice Care Network effective April 11, 2005.
- SC05:9/1) to call Ms. Janet Blair as half-time interim pastor to the Columbia University community, through Lutheran Ministries in Higher Education, effective September 1, 2005.
- SC05:11/1) the following calls were approved:
The Rev. Patt Margolis to serve as Assistant to the Rector at Grace Episcopal Church in Nyack, New York, effective September 25, 2005.
The Rev. Gary Mehl to serve as part-time Interim Pastor at St. Luke's Lutheran Church in Woodhaven, NY, effective December 18, 2005
Ms. Mary Leake, AiM, to serve as Director of Education at Holy Trinity Lutheran School in Hollis, NY, effective September 1, 2005.
- SC06:1/5): to call Adeliz Mendez as Mission Developer at Salem Lutheran Church in Brooklyn, effective January 22, 2006.

Appointments

The Rev. Christine Bohr Anderson as chaplain of 2005 Synod Assembly.
Reference and Counsel Committee (2005): Pr. Ed Barnett, Pr. Paul Johnsen, Pr. John Jurik (chair), Pr. Barrie Lawless, Mr. David Napitupulu, Esq, Ms. Madelyn Sousoudis.
The Rev. David Elseroad (LCMS), Interim at United, Mt. Vernon.
Lutheran Statewide Advocacy Board. The Rev. Rose Ann Vita to first term.
Financial Management Committee. Re-appointment of the Rev. John Heller, Mr. Dick Case, and Mr. Paul Jensen to second terms.
Candidacy Committee. 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
Mission Planning Team. Appointment of the Rev. Rich Hill as chair.
Gay and Lesbian Commission. the Revs. Robert Rimbo and Jane Gaeta to first term. Re-appointment of Ms. Janet Blair and Mr. Mark Erson to second term.
Elections Committee: Ms. Ellen Jetto, Mr. James Steipp, Ms. Norma Malfatti, Mr. Hans Vogel
Compensations Guidelines Committee: Mr. Robert Hastedt – chair, Mr. Gabriel Maioli, Pr. Gary Schulz, Pr. Jane Gaeta, Ms. Eileen Weber.
Assembly Site Selection Committee: Mr. Patrick O'Brien, Pr. Ed Barnett, Pr. Jack Malfatti, Ms. Pat Lawrence.
Personnel Committee: Mr. Paul Jensen – chair, Pr. Brenda Smith, Ms. Maria Del Toro
Lutheran Social Services Board: The Rev. Mark Chen

Motions

- SC05/3:1: RESOLUTION OF SUPPORT: RESOLVED, the Metropolitan New York Synod Council commends the vision developed by Bishop Bouman in consultation with Presiding Bishop Hanson for directing

- our title to the ELCA toward the areas of Leaders in Mission, Ethnic Specific Strategies, Lutheran Schools Association, and Lutheran Immigration & Refugee Service.
- SC05/3:2 RESOLVED that synod council approve the budget for FY2006 (with permission for the Financial Management Committee to make adjustments)
- SC05/3:3 RESOLVED that synod council approve the 2004 Synod Assembly minutes.
In response to 4 draft resolutions from congregations that suggested appropriate responses to the recommendations from the Study on Human Sexuality, the synod council:
- SC05:3/4 RESOLVED that synod council forward the resolutions to the Church Council as information with a cover letter.
- (SC05:3/5): RESOLVED that the MNYS 2006 Synod Assembly be held at St. John's Lutheran Church in Poughkeepsie for worship and plenary and that the local Sheraton will be used for sleeping accommodations. (This decision was eventually set aside when it became clear the St. John's did not have sufficient space for the expected requirements for the 2006 assembly.)
- SC05:4/1: RESOLVED that synod council grant permission to sell the Hope Scarsdale property, including consideration of a land lease if someone should propose such an offer.
- SC05:4/2: RESOLVED that synod council is aware of a letter from Pastor George Muenich to some congregations of the synod. Synod council asks the bishop to respond pastorally. When synod council receives a copy of the letter it will consider the matter.
- SC05:4/3: RESOLVED that the Synod Council direct the staff to develop a comprehensive 10 year operating budget plan, which will lead to break-even performance within 10 years without the undue use of unrestricted fund balances for the achievement. The first such plan should be presented to the Financial Management Committee for evaluation of reasonableness by September 1 of 2005, and updates for subsequent annual reviews should occur by the same September 1 date.
- SC05:4/4: RESOLVED that the apportionment of voting members for the 2005 Synod Assembly be as follows:
"authorized worshipping communities" 1 lay voting member
Up to 699 baptized members 2 lay voting members
700-999 baptized members 3 lay voting members
1,000 and more baptized members 4 lay voting members
- SC05:4/5: RESOLVED that synod council recommend the 2005 synod council agenda, as printed, to the Assembly for adoption, noting that it is subject to change.
- SC05:4/6: RESOLVED that Synod Council approve the dates of May 18-20 for the 2006 Synod Assembly, to be held at St. John Lutheran Church in Poughkeepsie.
- SC05:4/7: RESOLVED that Synod Council accept the auditor's report for FY2005.
- SC05:4/8: RESOLVED, that the secretary will respond to the letter from St. Luke's Lutheran Church, Bay Shore to inform them we will grant them peaceful release from membership in the ELCA. Since they have submitted a registration of voting members for the Synod Assembly, we will set their release date as of June 1, 2005.
- SC05:4/9: RESOLVED that Synod Council approve the Rev. Robert Hoffman's housing allowance for FY2005 in the amount of \$75,000.
- SC05:4/10: RESOLVED that Synod Council approve the following Samuel Trexler grants.
Eggers, William \$650
To attend the Interim Ministry Network Annual Convention June 6-9 in Danvers, MA
Lu, Abraham \$750
To support retention of a professional proofreader for his D.Min thesis (since English is not his first language)
Gaeta, Jane \$300
To help cover expenses to attend Churchwide Assembly this summer as volunteer on Eric Shafer's team
Kennedy, Tim #500
To attend the Ecumenical Institute at Tantur, Occupied West Bank, Israel, June 27-August 4 to enhance course preparation for a series on ecumenism in the Middle East
Havrilla, John \$500
To participate in a study trip in October, 2005 to Vienna and Bratislava to study 16th and 17th century Lutheran history
- SC05:6/2 RESOLVED that the Synod Council explore a synod-wide fundraising capital campaign in order to support financially the work of reaching out with the gospel.
BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that Synod Council allocate \$150,000 for the explicit purpose of

- conducting a study that will determine the feasibility of a capital campaign.
BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the cost be taken from the Bishop's Mission Fund.
- SC05:6/3: RESOLVED that Synod Council take no exception to the sale of the second parsonage of Saint Peter's Lutheran Church, Huntington Station. The parsonage is located at 74A Hazard Avenue, Huntington Station, NY.
- SC05:6/4: RESOLVED, that the certain written Agreement of Purchase and Sale between HOLY TRINITY LUTHERAN MINISTRY REALTY MANAGEMENT LLC, as Seller, and PRADIP SAHA and LOURDESMARY SIKDER, as Purchasers, for the sale of the real property known as and by street address 90-26 191st Street, Hollis, New York, in consideration of the sales price of \$375,000.00 to be paid by the Purchasers 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 and/or as the sole member and Manager of HOLY TRINITY LUTHERAN MINISTRY REALTY MANAGEMENT LLC, 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 Premises, 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 Premises; 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 Contract of Sale be fulfilled and the transactions contemplated therein be effectuated; and it is further RESOLVED, that HOLY TRINITY LUTHERAN MINISTRY REALTY MANAGEMENT LLC, each and every officer of the Synod, and the Synod as sole member and Manager of HOLY TRINITY LUTHERAN MINISTRY REALTY MANAGEMENT LLC be and they hereby are authorized, empowered and directed to utilize the net proceeds from the sale of the Premises, 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 it is further RESOLVED, that the dissolution of the Synod is not contemplated following the transfer of the Property.
- SC05:6/5: RESOLVED, that HOLY TRINITY LUTHERAN MINISTRY REALTY MANAGEMENT LLC, as Seller, is authorized to enter into a certain Purchase and Sale Agreement dated May 23, 2005 with PRADIP SAHA and LOURDESMARY SIKDER, as Purchasers; and it is further RESOLVED, that the Officers of the Synod, acting on behalf of the Synod and as sole member of the LLC, shall be and hereby are authorized and empowered 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 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.
- SC05:6/6: RESOLVED that Synod Council permit the secretary to correct the final Report on Attendance at the 2005 synod assembly.
- SC05:7/1: RESOLVED that Synod Council approve the Discernment Report for Zion Lutheran Church, 199th Street, Manhattan.
- SC05:7/2: RESOLVED, that the SYNOD is hereby authorized, empowered and directed, pursuant to Section 18 of the Religious Corporations Law of the State of New York, to take all actions necessary or desirable to effectuate the dissolution of ST. PAUL'S and to transfer all of ST. PAUL'S assets, including, but not limited to, the real property known as and by street addresses 74-78 So. Grove Street, Valley Stream, New York to the SYNOD and/or a Limited Liability Company in which the SYNOD is the sole member; and it is further

- RESOLVED, that Bishop Stephen P. Bouman of the SYNOD be and hereby is authorized, empowered, and directed to designate in his sole discretion a Special Assistant to act in the name of and on behalf of the SYNOD in effectuating the dissolution of ST. PAUL'S as a congregation, and transferring any and all of the assets of ST. PAUL'S to the SYNOD; and it is further RESOLVED, that the Special Assistant designated by Bishop Stephen P. Bouman shall be and he hereby is authorized, empowered and directed to execute, verify [if necessary], acknowledge [if necessary] and cause to be filed such Petition as may be required by law to effectuate said dissolution and transfer of assets; and it is further
- RESOLVED, that the Special Assistant designated by Bishop Stephen P. Bouman be and hereby is authorized, empowered and directed to execute, acknowledge and deliver, any and all documents required to convey title to all of the assets owned by ST. PAUL'S to the SYNOD and/or a Limited Liability Company in which the SYNOD is the sole member; and it is further
- RESOLVED, that the Special Assistant shall take all such further actions as may be required or desirable to effectuate the purpose of these resolutions, as well as the resolutions of ST. PAUL'S concerning its dissolution and the transfer of its assets to the SYNOD.
- SC05.7/4: RESOLVED that the Metropolitan New York Synod Fund performs its functions as:
Working capital to the General Operating Fund. To this extent it fulfills the constitutional mandate in S15.14. (See below)
General budget support as adopted by Synod Assembly.
An offset to any accumulated general operating fund deficits, as directed by the Synod Council.
For other Synod mission related uses as directed by Synod Council.
S 15.14. "Except when such procedure would jeopardize current operations, a reserve amounting to no more than 16% of the sum of the amounts scheduled in the next year's budget for regular distribution to synodical causes shall be carried forward annually for disbursement in the following year in the interest of making possible a more even flow of income to such causes. The exact number of dollars to be held in reserve shall be determined by the Synod Council".
The Financial Management recommended adoption by the Synod Council of the following policy statement regarding the acceptance of gifts:
That the Metropolitan New York Synod (MNYS) may accept unrestricted gifts for its general program and restricted gifts whose use is for a program or project approved by the Synod Assembly or Synod Council. The MNYS will not accept gifts, which it believes, may result in a violation of applicable law or regulation, whether by the Synod or the donor, or which violate the Synod's constitution, bylaws or continuing resolutions, or which are judged to be inconsistent with the Synod's values. Gifts of property such as real estate or closely held stock must have approval of the Financial Management Committee before acceptance.
The MNYS welcomes gifts that are temporarily or permanently restricted by the donor as to the use of principal and/or income, as long as the restrictions are consistent with its mission and programs. All gifts, whether outright or planned, in which the donor restricts the purpose for which funds are to be used, must be designated for a project approved by the Synod Council and for which the council has determined that the gift would be in furtherance of the synod's exempt purpose.
There was discussion as whether this resolution includes mission support. This was not the intention of the FMC.
- SC05.7/5: RESOLVED that synod council refer this resolution back to the Financial Management Committee with the amendment that "from persons" be added to the end of the first paragraph.
- SC05.9/2: RESOLVED that the 2006 Synod Assembly be held at the Mid-Hudson Civic Center on June 8-10.
- SC05.9/3: RESOLVED that synod council accept the development report on St. Paul/Trinity congregation.
- 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.

- 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.
- SC05:9/6: RESOLVED that synod council approve the *Official Notice* [of the Special Synod Assembly] provided by Secretary James Krauser.
- SC05:9/8: RESOLVED that the Executive Committee serve as Reference and Counsel.
- SC05:11/2: RESOLVED that the Synod Council of the Metro Synod shall apply synodical administration over St. John's and shall take charge and control of the property of St. John's to hold, manage, and convey the same on behalf of the Metro Synod and shall administer synodical administration to St. John's and its members.
- SC05:11/3: RESOLVED that synod council authorize the bishop, in consultation with Vice President Litke, to appoint an administrator or committee of administrators for St. John's, Bronx.
- SC05.11/4: RESOLVED that synod council postpone indefinitely consideration of Resolution D from the *Special Meeting of the Synod Assembly*
- SC05:11/5: RESOLVED that synod council take no exception to the sale of the church building and property of Christ Lutheran Church, 355 East 19th Street in Manhattan, and to request continued consultation with synod leadership as its plans evolve.
- SC05:11/6: RESOLVED that synod council approve the 2006 Compensation Guidelines.
- SC05:11/7: RESOLVED that the following grants were approved from the Samuel Trexler Fund
- | | |
|--|---------|
| Taylor, Thomas | \$1,000 |
| To continue work towards his Masters of Social Work at Wurzweiler School of Social Work to support the counseling work he has done and continues to do since 9/11 | |
| Diver, Betsy | \$750 |
| To support the completion of her Doctor of Ministry from Drew University and because of expertise gained from that study, participation in a special Academy at the ELCA Youth Gathering in 2006 | |
| Luper, Terri | \$750 |
| To support coursework at Lutheran Theological Seminary at Philadelphia towards her Masters of Sacred Theology | |
| Kershner, Scott | \$500 |
| To participate in a study trip to Guyana with Pr. Bob Fritch to enable him to better understand and serve the Guyanese membership of his congregation | |
- SC06:1/1: WHEREAS, the Feasibility Study of a Capital Campaign, as directed by the Synod Council, has been concluded, and a report from the consultant received and presented to the Council, and WHEREAS, valuable information has been secured and presented to the Council, not only with respect to a prognosis of a campaign, but also identifying some of the areas that demand attention of the Synod, and,
 WHEREAS, several concerns have been expressed related to the campaign, the lack of identification of substantial initial gifts, and the need to improve relationships between the Synod and its congregations,
 RESOLVED that
 A capital campaign not be initiated at this time, and that the possibility be revisited within 2 years; In the interim the synod devise and implement a program to improve its communication and relationship with its congregations, which would be a prerequisite to a future campaign, and that

The synod emphasize improvement of its efforts to secure increasing mission support.

SC06:1/4:

RESOLVED that the synod council recognize Spoken Word Café as an authorized worshipping community of the Metropolitan New York Synod.

[Text of Revised resolution (originally SC05:11/2) adopted by mail ballot: WHEREAS, the ST. JOHN'S EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH (St. John's) located at 1343 Fulton Avenue, Bronx, New York is a congregation of the Evangelical Lutheran Church Of America (ELCA) rostered with the Metropolitan New York Synod Of The Evangelical Lutheran Church In America (Metro Synod), and

WHEREAS, St. John's has adopted its Constitution following the Model Constitution for Congregations of the ELCA. St. John's Constitution includes Section C15.11, which provides: "When there is disagreement among factions within this congregation on a substantive issue that cannot be resolved by the parties, members of this congregation shall have access to the synodical bishop for consultation after informing the chair of the Congregation Council of their intent. If the consultation fails to resolve the issue(s), the Consultation Committee of the synod shall consider the matter. If the Consultation Committee of the synod shall fail to resolve the issue(s), the matter shall be referred to the Synod Council, whose decision shall be final[.]" and,

WHEREAS, the Bishop of the Metro Synod being unable to assist in resolving substantive issues at St. John's, appointed a Consultation Committee. After being duly empanelled, the Consultation Committee for St. John's Evangelical Lutheran Church, upon completion of its investigation, rendered its report, made and dated April 27, 2005, a copy of which is annexed hereto, made part hereof and designated as Exhibit "A"; and

WHEREAS, the report of the Consultation Committee has recommended to the Bishop, among other suggestions, that he place St. John's under the administration of the Metro Synod, which recommendation has been referred to the Synod Council for its consideration and action; and WHEREAS, many members of St. John's have petitioned the Synod Council of the Metro Synod for its consideration and action to apply synodical administration and to take charge and control of the property of St. John's to preserve it for the congregation and take such measures as may be necessary to restore the pastoral care, governance, and management of the congregation to be in accord with the governing documents of the synod congregation, for the reasons set forth in such Petition, annexed hereto, made part hereof, and designated as Exhibit "B"; and WHEREAS, the Synod Council has reviewed the facts and circumstances at St. John's on its own to further consider and take action, some of such facts and circumstances are set forth in the paragraphs which follow; and

WHEREAS, St. John's is lacking in its ability to do its mission and ministry. St. John's is located in a thriving community and notwithstanding has a current worshipping community of only around 15 and a membership now below 50. Evangelical outreach, active membership cells, and pastoral leadership are missing keys at St. John's; and

WHEREAS, the property of St. John's is experiencing waste and deterioration. The structure of the building is being damaged by roof leaks that are not being attended to. Heat is not being supplied to the premises, which can cause severe damage if pipes burst and other events occur; and WHEREAS, failure to fulfill their duties and responsibilities have resulted in the congregation's Officers and Council allowing a default judgment to be entered against St. John's, which will result in penalties and fines. See Exhibit "C" annexed hereto, made part hereof and incorporated herein; and

WHEREAS, the Congregation Council has failed to produce documents necessary to conduct an audit of St. John's finances; and

WHEREAS, St. John's has failed to submit the required parochial reports since 2001, to provide mission support since 2003, and to provide benevolence for the last 8 years; and

WHEREAS, members have provided benevolence to the Metro Synod, which the Congregation Council has not turned over, violating their covenant of mission and ministry; and

WHEREAS, the Congregation Council of St. John's has violated its Constitution in that it has accepted Pastoral leadership from Wilford Morris as supply pastor, without approval of the Metro Synod (see Section C9.06). His acceptance by St. John's further violates the Constitution of St. John's in that he is not a pastor rostered in the ELCA (see Section C9.02); and

WHEREAS, such unauthorized actions of St. John's, through its Council, jeopardize the mission and ministry of both the ELCA and the Metro Synod, both of which are interdependent upon all congregations fulfilling their constitutional duties and responsibilities, which such congregations have obligated themselves to perform and observe; and

WHEREAS, a functionally necessary trust relationship between St. John's, as led by its current Council, and the Metro Synod no longer exists; and
WHEREAS, the Council of the Congregation refuses to permit required member meetings, hold elections, and otherwise act in a manner that recognizes the Christian principles upon which St. John's is founded and has existed for years; and
WHEREAS, the Synod Council: having read and reviewed the report of the Consultation Committee; having read and reviewed the petition of the members of St. John's; and having reviewed and considered the facts and circumstances at St. John's, some of which are set forth above and in the documents attached, pursuant to the power and authority vested in it, has placed before itself this resolution for consideration to determine if synodical administration is to be imposed in order to take charge and control of the property of St. Johns' to preserve it for the congregation and take such measures as may be necessary to restore the pastoral care, governance, and management of the congregation to be in accord with the governing documents of the synod and the congregation; now therefore, it is
RESOLVED, after due deliberation and consideration, that the Synod Council, for all of the reasons that have been stated above and which are incorporated by reference herein, shall apply synodical administration and take charge and control of the property of St. John's to preserve it for the congregation and take such measures as may be necessary to restore the pastoral care, governance, and management of the congregation to be in accord with the governing documents of the synod and the congregation.

- SC06:1/6: RESOLVED that the registration fees for the 2006 synod assembly be set as follows: voting members, \$205; Guests, \$25; Guests with meals, \$125.
- SC06:1/7: RESOLVED that the following persons be elected to the Nominations Committee: the Rev. Scott Kershner, the Rev. Janet Blair, the Rev. Annemarie Noto, Mr. Ron Horna, the Rev. Peter Rustico, Ms. Dorothy Scholz, AIM.
- SC06:1/8: RESOLVED that the following persons be elected to the Reference and Counsel Committee: Ms. Madelyn Sousoudis; Mr. David Napitupulu, the Rev. Barrie Lawless, the Rev. James Krauser (ex-officio), the Rev. Brenda Smith, the Rev. Paul Johnsen.
- SC06:1/9 RESOLVED that the executive committee be given the authority to elect more members to the Nominations and Reference and Counsel Committees so as to provide a better balance of lay to clergy.
- SC06:1/10: RESOLVED that the following housing allowances be approved for 2006:

David Anglada	\$25, 000
Gary Mills	\$64,186.00
Robert Wollenburg	\$85,500
Stephen Bouman	\$56,500
Fabian Arias	\$18,000
Dianne Loufman	\$5,000 (furnishings allowance)
- SC06:1/11: RESOLVED that The Bishop and his staff be commended for their effort in long range planning, and
The Council receive the current 10 year plan, and specifically concur in the decision to change the allocation percentage of the net proceeds from sales from 10% to 30% for the general mission of the Synod, effective 2/1/06, and
This allocation be reviewed each year as the 10 year plan is updated, with an intent that allocation of net sales to operations be eventually reduced, as mission support, other revenue, and continuing frugality on expenses, warrants.
- SC06:1/12: RESOLVED that synod council approve the mission reinvestment grants in the amount of \$302,600 as noted in Exhibit L.

What's Next?

We have resolved to Reclaim the Great Commission, to embrace change. We have a plan and we have begun new ways and revised old ways to invest ourselves and move toward our goal. What's next? I suggest to you an analogy as we rebuild this Synod, this House of God, as we walk together toward Reclaiming the Great Commission. Think of our Synodical House as a real house that has accumulated a lot of repairs to make. One can't tackle all the jobs at once, there are too many and they are too different. Instead we begin with what seems most important today, and then, each day, ask anew what is the most important part to be repaired

I suggest that there are two repairs to our synodical house that are now the most important for us: accountability and interdependence.

Accountability

If we plan to grow in discipleship, we will have to shed our addiction to our previous ways. It will not come easily, nor without effort and pain. But effort and pain is something we shy from. Remember this Scarlet O'Hara line from *Gone with the Wind*?

"I can't think about that right now. If I do, I'll go crazy. I'll think about that tomorrow."

Our most pressing need today is to hold ourselves and each other accountable to the vision, to each do our part repairing our rooms in the synodical house. For example, for our sake and for the sake of our brothers and sisters, we must begin to hold ourselves and each other accountable for our growth in discipleship.

Now accountability is not easy for Lutherans. It seems we are fatally allergic to expectations, to accountability, lest we commit that most cardinal of cardinal sins – works righteousness. Sexual peccadilloes, financial abuse, sloppy theology, all these sins are forgivable, but works-righteousness? No, NEVER! But shall we let our self-conscious fear of impure motives void Jesus explicit call to obedience? Because some spiritual disciplines like tithing can be advocated for improper reasons, does that thereby deny their valid place in a life directed toward God?

Acknowledging and accepting Jesus' instructions to us to teach discipleship is a beginning, but we also must be clear about what discipleship is. It is often assumed that baptism 'makes' a disciple, or that a congregation member 'is' a disciple, so we seek more sacred acts or more attendance. Discipleship is not these (though they may mark a disciple) but rather discipleship is a process of following-after, of walking in Jesus' footsteps, of learning from the Master. It is a lifelong process of learning and forgetting, growth and decline, as we struggle with our humanity that is nevertheless loved by God. We must re-vision discipleship as a life-long following-after process rather than a membership-in label and hold ourselves accountable to that vision.

A renewed reflection on accountability is important to us Lutherans, and we must talk in our gatherings about accountability and expectations as a normal and healthful part of our walk with God.

Interdependence

The essence of discipleship is being part of a community, and so community is essential to nurturing discipleship. We cannot go it alone, the Christian faith is not a solo performance, and congregations are not islands of sanctity. Remember Jesus' prayer:

My prayer is not for them alone. I pray also for those who will believe in me through their message, that all of them may be one, Father, just as you are in me and I am in you. May they also be in us so that the world may believe that you have sent me (John 17:20-21)

The oneness that Jesus prays for is not unanimity, but for unity as of a woven fabric. A fabric is not strong because it has strong components. Each thread is weak, limp, and easily broken, but when woven together, each thread contributes to the beauty and strength of the whole. And more interesting yet, threads cross each other, they are at right angles! In this crossing, there is friction between the threads. That strength of attraction between each of us, different threads though we are, is what holds our whole fabric of congregation and synod together. And when the different threads do not stick to each other at their crossings, the whole is very vulnerable.

So we have a very important task: pay attention to the fabric of our interdependent relationships. Be a weaver and a re-weaver of our fabric. This weaving is not magic, it is not dramatic work, we construct a fabric one thread, one crossing at a time. It is this fabric of relationships that Jesus prayed for. It is this fabric of relationships that helped the black church survive oppression in these not very United States. All of us need to be a weaver of this fabric, one relationship at a time, tying each to the other. Don't stop partway through the cloth. Run your threads of relationship as far as your life takes you, connecting to each other in mutual support.

Accountability and Interdependence, two essential improvements we need to make to our synodical house. Like a horse and carriage, you can't have one without the other. How can one depend upon another if one is not accountable for that trust? How can one be accountable if not to the other, to the friend, to the neighbor, to the brother or sister in Christ or to God?

So may we all begin to Reclaim the Great Commission, begin to reinvent your discipleship, plan for change and renewal, and invest yourself in service to God and let accountability and interdependence be your growing edges for the next year or two.

John Litke, Metropolitan New York Synod Vice President

Reference and Counsel (continued)

Pr. Jurik continued the report of the Committee on Reference and Counsel by directing the assembly to look at item D.1 in the revised report.

ITEM D.1

A RESOLUTION ON HOLY SCRIPTURE AND THE LUTHERAN CONFESSIONS

Whereas, The Metropolitan New York Synod (MNYS) is bound constitutionally to the constitution of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA)¹ and shares with that church a common confession of faith; and

Whereas, The MNYS is bound constitutionally and confessionally₂ to the “canonical Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments as the inspired Word of God and the authoritative source and norm of its proclamation, faith, and life”;² and

Whereas, The MNYS is bound constitutionally and confessionally to the three ecumenical creeds—the Apostles’, the Nicene, and the Athanasian—as “true declarations of the faith of this synod,” and to the Lutheran Confessions as “further valid interpretations of the faith of the Church”;³ and

Whereas, According to the Lutheran Confessions “Whatever is contrary to [Holy Scripture, the Creeds, and the Confessions] should be rejected and condemned as opposed to the unanimous explanation of our faith”;⁴ and

Whereas, The MNYS is bound constitutionally and confessionally to faith in and obedience to the one Triune God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit,⁵ whose works of creation, redemption, and sanctification can be distinguished but not separated the one from the other; and

Whereas, The MNYS is bound constitutionally to the proclamation of both Law and Gospel as the Word of God;⁶ and

Whereas, Holy Scripture teaches that the gospel does not free the justified from obedience to God, but rather “frees [them] from sin” so that they may (finally) “become obedient from the heart to the standard of teaching to which [they] have been entrusted”;⁷ and

¹ Synod Constitution §§2.01–02

² ELCA Constitution §2.03; Synod Constitution §4.03; cf. Formula of Concord, Preface to Epitome 7; all references to the Lutheran Confessions are cited according to *The Book of Concord: The Confessions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church* (ed. Robert Kolb and Timothy J. Wengert; Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2000)

³ ELCA Constitution §2.04–06; Synod Constitution §4.04–06; Formula of Concord, Preface to Epitome, 3

⁴ Formula of Concord, Preface to Epitome, 6

⁵ Augsburg Confession 1; ELCA Constitution §2.01; §4.01–02; Synod Constitution §4.01; §6.01–02

⁶ ELCA Constitution §2.02; Synod Constitution §4.02

⁷ Romans 6:17–18

Whereas, Holy Scripture teaches that Christians are “not to be conformed to this world,” but are to be “transformed by the renewal of [their] minds,” so as to “discern what is the will of God—what is good and acceptable and perfect”;¹ and

Whereas, Both Holy Scripture and the Lutheran Confessions teach that the justified live according to the will of God, which is their sanctification in body, soul, and spirit,² and according to the “unchanging will of God, according to which human beings are to conduct themselves in this life”;³ and

Whereas, Holy Scripture teaches that the baptized, created in the image of God,⁴ have been redeemed from sin at the “price” of the death of Christ;⁵ and

Whereas, The baptized are consequently “not [their] own,” but belong to God, are temples of the Holy Spirit, and are called to glorify God in their bodies;⁶ and

Whereas, The ELCA Task Force on Human Sexuality is seeking feedback from and dialogue within the church on matters relating to human sexuality;⁷ therefore be it

RESOLVED, That the MNYS affirms with Holy Scripture and the Lutheran Confessions that the gospel, having freed the baptized from sin, does not free the justified from, but commits them to, obedience to the will of the one Triune God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit; and be it furthermore

RESOLVED, That the MNYS affirms with Holy Scripture and the Lutheran Confessions that the freedom of the baptized does not include the freedom to order their lives “in an arbitrary way of their own choosing” or “according to their own ideas,”⁸ but only the freedom to order their lives according to the will of God;⁹ and be it furthermore

RESOLVED, That the MNYS affirms with Holy Scripture that the baptized are “not [their] own” but belong to God in the totality of their lives and are called to glorify God their creator, redeemer, and sanctifier in the totality of their lives; and be it furthermore

RESOLVED, That the MNYS commends to the ELCA Task Force on Human Sexuality this resolution as a whole, and the specific resolutions stated above, as providing a theological framework that is faithful to both Holy Scripture and the Lutheran Confessions for guidance in preparation of a social statement on human sexuality in 2009; and be it furthermore

RESOLVED, That in view of current disagreements in the MNYS over the authority and interpretation of Holy Scripture and the Lutheran Confessions in matters of Christian ethics, the MNYS, in the next year, will initiate under its own sponsorship an on-going theological dialogue within the synod, to be concluded by Spring, 2009, to include discussion of topics covered in the resolutions stated above (that is, the freedom and obedience of faith; the content of the enduring will of God; the sanctified life of the baptized).

¹ Romans 12:2

² 1 Thessalonians 4:3; 5:23; cf. Romans 6:19, 22

³ Formula of Concord, Solid Declaration 6.15

⁴ Genesis 1:27

⁵ 1 Corinthians 6:20

⁶ 1 Corinthians 6:19–20

⁷ www.elca.org/faithfuljourney/staff/taskforce.html

⁸ Formula of Concord, Epitome 6.4; Formula of Concord, Solid Declaration 6.3

⁹ Formula of Concord, Solid Declaration 6.15

Resolution endorsed by:

Synod Clergy

- The Rev. Stephen J. Hultgren (principal author)
Fordham University, St. Thomas, Central Nyack
- The Rev. Eric J. Swensson, Holy Trinity, New Rochelle
- The Rev. Michael Dickson, Christ, Suffern
- The Rev. Eric Mathsen, St. Matthew's, White Plains
- The Rev. George Muenich, Zion (German), Brooklyn
- The Rev. Frederick J. Schumacher, St. Matthew's, White Plains
- The Rev. Mack H. Smith, Trinity, Wyandanch

Synod Laity

- Sue Currie, St. Matthew's, White Plains
- Dorothea Ferri, St. Matthew's, White Plains
- Ashley Hall, Immanuel, Manhattan
- Fred Hansen (president), Zion (German), Brooklyn
- Dr. Dietrich Hoffmann, St. Matthew's, White Plains
- Ilse Hoffmann, St. Matthew's, White Plains
- Erika K. Muenich, Zion (German), Brooklyn
- Joy Schumacher, St. Matthew's, White Plains
- Roger J. Wieber, Zion (German), Brooklyn
- Dr. Gary Williams, St. Matthew's, White Plains
- Dorothy Zelenko, St. Matthew's, White Plains

Pr. Jurik reported that the committee on Reference and Council presented the resolution to the assembly without prejudice.

Pr. Stephen Hultgren [St. Thomas-Central Nyack] spoke to the purposes of the resolution.

Pr. William Baum [St. Barnabas, Howard Beach] offered a motion on the resolution.

Motion: To refer the resolution to the Synod Council with full power to act.

Pr. Baum spoke to the reasons to refer.

Pr. John McKenzie spoke in favor of going forward with the debate at the assembly.

Pr. Paul Block [Transfiguration-Bronx] spoke against the motion to refer.

Pr. David Rommereim [Good Shepherd Brooklyn] supported the referral.

Eric Swensson [Holy Trinity-New Rochelle] against referral.

Pr. Kip Zimmermann, [Holy Trinity-Brooklyn] against referral

Pr. Betsy Diver [St. Peter's-Port Jervis] moved the previous question on the pending motion.

The motion was seconded. The motion was adopted and debate was closed.

On the motion to refer

Defeated

Returning to the main motion, Pr. Michael Church [Trinity-Long Island City] spoke against the motion, noting that the synod has been engaged in this kind of dialogue for many years.

Pr. Amandus Derr [St. Peter's, Manhattan] offer the following amendment:

To amend (as indicated):

To strike the first four resolves and amend the last resolve as indicated

~~RESOLVED, That the MNYS affirms with Holy Scripture and the Lutheran Confessions that the gospel, having freed the baptized from sin, does not free the justified from, but commits them to, obedience to the will of the one Triune God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit; and be it furthermore~~

~~RESOLVED, That the MNYS affirms with Holy Scripture and the Lutheran Confessions that the freedom of the baptized does not include the freedom to order their lives "in an arbitrary way of their own choosing" or "according to their own ideas,"²¹ but only the freedom to order their lives according to the will of God;²² and be it furthermore~~

~~RESOLVED, That the MNYS affirms with Holy Scripture that the baptized are "not [their] own" but belong to God in the totality of their lives and are called to glorify God their creator, redeemer, and sanctifier in the totality of their lives; and be it furthermore~~

²¹ Formula of Concord, Epitome 6.4; Formula of Concord, Solid Declaration 6.3

²² Formula of Concord, Solid Declaration 6.15

~~RESOLVED, That the MNYS commends to the ELCA Task Force on Human Sexuality this resolution as a whole, and the specific resolutions stated above, as providing a theological framework that is faithful to both Holy Scripture and the Lutheran Confessions for guidance in preparation of a social statement on human sexuality in 2009; and be it furthermore~~

~~RESOLVED, That in view of current disagreements in the MNYS over the authority and interpretation of Holy Scripture and the Lutheran Confessions in matters of Christian ethics, the MNYS, in the next year, will initiate under its own sponsorship an on-going theological dialogue within the synod, to be concluded by Spring, 2009, to include discussion of topics such as covered in the resolutions stated above (that is, the freedom and obedience of faith; the content of the enduring will of God; the sanctified life of the baptized).~~

On the Derr amendment

Adopted

Debate resumed on the amended resolution. Pr. Gary Mehl, [St. Luke's Woodhaven] spoke in favor of the resolution as amended. Pr. Robert Splittgerber [St. John's by the Sea-Long Beach] was in favor of the resolution.

Seeing no persons seeking to speak in opposition the chair called for a motion to close debate, which was adopted

On the motion to adopt the resolution [D.1] as amended.

**Adopted
SA2006.05.05**

RESOLVED, That in view of current disagreements in the MNYS over the authority and interpretation of Holy Scripture and the Lutheran Confessions in matters of Christian ethics, the MNYS, in the next year, will initiate under its own sponsorship an on-going theological dialogue within the synod, to be concluded by Spring, 2009, to include discussion of topics such as the freedom and obedience of faith; the content of the enduring will of God; the sanctified life of the baptized.

Pr. Jurik presented the next item.

ITEM D.2

A RESOLUTION COMMENDING A RESOURCE FOR INTERPRETATION OF THE BIBLE

Whereas, The 2005 Churchwide Assembly of the ELCA, acting on a memorial from the North Carolina Synod, initiated a process for the whole ELCA to consider "foundational issues of the authority of Scripture and principles of biblical interpretation" (CA05.06.27); and

Whereas, The ELCA Church Council has approved a plan for such consideration through a churchwide emphasis entitled "Book of Faith: Lutherans Read the Bible" (Report of Actions of the Church Council (April 1-2, 2006), p. 2); and

Whereas, The Presiding Bishop invited the dean of an ELCA seminary (Dr. Craig L. Nesson) to present a paper on "The Authority of Scripture" to the Conference of Bishops (cf. *The Lutheran* magazine, April 2006, p. 51); and

Whereas, *The Lutheran* has made available, on its website, the paper delivered by Dean Nesson (<http://www.thelutheran.org/doc/extras/nessan.pdf>); and

Whereas, This paper helpfully summarizes many Lutheran principles of biblical interpretation and provides valuable historical analysis of biblical interpretation; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That the Metropolitan New York Synod commends to all its lay and ordained members the paper "The Authority of Scripture," as ~~both a faithful statement of Lutheran principles of biblical interpretation and~~ a valuable beginning for a vital conversation; and be it further

RESOLVED, That this Synod invites all its lay and ordained members to read this paper in preparation for the churchwide emphasis "Book of Faith: Lutherans Read the Bible"; and be it finally

RESOLVED, That the Secretary of this Synod shall express to Dean Nesson the Synod's gratitude for helping the whole ELCA to be "equipped for every good work" (2 Timothy 3.17).

Submitted by
Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Church of Manhattan

Mr. Jeremy Posadas [Trinity-Manhattan] spoke to the resolution on behalf of the makers.

Pr. Swensson [Holy Trinity-New Rochelle] opposed the resolution.

Pr. McKenzie [Advent/St. James-Elmont/Stewart Manor] opposed the resolution.

Mr. Dick Case [St. Paul's-Rye Brook] asked for a clarification of the recommendation of the committee.

Pr. Kip Zimmermann [Holy Trinity-Brooklyn] viewed the motion as unnecessary as we have previous resolution committed ourselves to study and dialogue.

Pr. Lundblad [Advent-Manhattan] spoke in favor of the resolution.

Pr. Pedersen [St. Paul's Liberty/Christ-Ellenville] opposed the resolution.

Ms. Emma Porter [New Hope-Jamaica] spoke for the resolution.

The previous question was ordered following a motion on the same.

On the adoption of the resolution [D.2] as presented.

Defeated

ITEM E.1

A RESOLUTION ADDRESSING THE STATUS OF SA 2005.10.3

Whereas, At its April 2006 meeting the Church Council provided the requested clarification on the special synod assembly resolution SA 2005.10.3 "Giving Guidance in the Exercise of Discipline and the Candidacy Process in the Metropolitan New York Synod" [Resolution C];

Whereas, The ELCA Church Council adopted the following resolution in response to our synod's request:

To convey gratitude to the Metropolitan New York Synod for the resolution by the synod's special assembly on October 29, 2005, seeking the advice of the Church Council of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America in order to be "in concurrence with the governing documents of the ELCA";

To commend the Metropolitan New York Synod's expressed desire "to concentrate on finding ways to live together faithfully in the midst of disagreements, recognizing the God-given mission and communion that we share as members of the body of Christ" (2005 Churchwide Assembly, CA05.05.17);

To affirm the synod's stated commitment to engage with this whole church in ongoing communal discernment on difficult issues within the community of the faithful, including the engagement of all members in the practice of faith, witness to the Gospel, and service in the name of Christ;

To respond with gratitude to the request of the synod for the guidance of the Church Council of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America by providing the extensive background, documentation, and analysis on the resolution (as follows below);

To acknowledge the recognition by the Metropolitan New York Synod that synods do not have the authority to establish their own rosters or their own standards for such rosters, and, further, that synods do not have the authority to adopt their own policies and guidelines for discipline, nor do Synod Assemblies or Synod Councils have the authority to preempt decisions of any duly constituted discipline hearing committee;

To conclude, in response to the request of the Metropolitan New York Synod, that the resolution contains inherently conflicting statements that may be read as being in conflict with the constitution and bylaws of this church and the applicable policies related to rostered ministry and candidacy for rostered ministry in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America; and

To urge continuing dialogue on mission and ministry issues within the life of this church (cf., 2005 Churchwide Assembly, CA05.05.17), at the same time that synodical bishops, Synod Councils, Synod Assemblies, Candidacy Committees, pastors, other rostered leaders, and congregations adhere to the constitution and bylaws of this church, related policies, and existing candidacy and ministry standards.

Therefore be it,

RESOLVED, That Resolution “C” [SA2005.10.3] passed at the Saturday, October 29, 2005 special meeting of the Metropolitan New York Synod at St. Peter’s Lutheran Church in New York City be rescinded.

Pr. Jurik reported the favorable recommendation of the Committee on Reference and Counsel.

Pr. Derr [St. Peter’s-Manhattan] urged members who supported the original October motion not to vote on this question as a protest.

Pr. Splittgerber [St. John’s by the Sea-Long Beach] opposed the resolution

Pr. Joanne Bond [Cross of Christ-Babylon] spoke in favor of the motion to rescind.

Mr. Posadas [Trinity-Manhattan] spoke against the resolution.

Pr. Swensson [Holy Trinity-New Rochelle] spoke in favor of rescinding SA2005.10.3.

Pr. Neumark [Trinity 100th St.-Manhattan] spoke against the resolution to rescind.

Mr. Isaacson [Abiding Presence-Fort Salonga] moved previous question. The motion was adopted.

On the adoption of resolution [E.1].

**Adopted
SA2006.05.06**

RESOLVED, That Resolution “C” [SA2005.10.3] passed at the Saturday, October 29, 2005 special meeting of the Metropolitan New York Synod at St. Peter’s Lutheran Church in New York City be rescinded.

Following a request of a member, all members were granted permission by unanimous consent to request the secretary to enter their names into the minutes as having abstained on the resolution E.1 [SA2006.05.06.] rescinding SA2005.10.3. Those so requesting were Pr. Michael Church [Trinity-Long Island City], Pr. Amandus Derr [St. Peter’s-Manhattan], Gus Dimino [Trinity-Long Island City], Judith A. Dimino [Trinity-Long Island City], John Fritz [St. Luke’s-Manhattan], Ms. Suzannah Gordon [Bethlehem-Baldwin], Pr. Martha Jacobi [Lutheran Counseling Center], Pr. Annemarie Noto [St. David’s-Massapequa Park], Pr. Marianne Tomecek, Pr. Kimberly Wilson [Bethlehem-Baldwin], Cassandra Wilson [St. Luke’s-Manhattan].

ITEM H

A RESOLUTION ON ESTABLISHING A SYNODICALLY APPROVED CALL PROCESS

Whereas, Evangelical Lutheran Church in America provides guidance and materials related to the call process for congregational pastors, and

Whereas, The Metropolitan New York Synod has, since 1988, implemented a variety of approaches and procedures for this process; and

Whereas, One of the consistent priorities members identify as an expectation of the synod is assistance in the call process; and

Whereas, The synod would benefit by having a standard policy that balances the special needs of local circumstances with the need for a policy which is equitable for all; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That the Metropolitan New York Synod adopt as a continuing resolution a call process for the calling of pastors and other rostered leaders by congregations at our next regular assembly in 2007, and

RESOLVED, That a panel consisting of the bishop (or his representative), the secretary of the synod, and twelve additional members appointed by the Synod Council be charged with the review of our present practices, and the preparation of revised policy which it shall recommend to the 2007 synod assembly for adoption, and

RESOLVED, The members of the panel shall be nominated in the following manner: two members of the conference of deans (nominated by the bishop), and two laypersons from each quadrant (nominated by the deans of that quadrant), and two representatives (one lay and one clergy) from the synod council (nominated by the Vice President).

Submitted by
Pr. Edward G. Barnett

Pr. Jurik read the resolves and reported the committee's recommendation in support of the resolution.

Pr. Barnett spoke to the rationale of the resolution.

Pr. Rimbo made an amendment to include "and other rostered leaders" in the scope of the call process. The amendment was agreed to by unanimous consent, and the text altered accordingly.

Ms. Meg Fielding inquired if this process was applicable to synodically rostered deacons. The reply was that the synodical deacons do not fall under this process, only those on ELCA rosters.

Pr. Dianne Loufman of the synod staff told the assembly that the call process is already under revision.

A voting member from St. Paul's Liberty moved the previous question, it was seconded and the motion carried.

On the adoption of the resolution as amended [H]

Adopted
SA2006.05.07

RESOLVED, That the Metropolitan New York Synod adopt as a continuing resolution a call process for the calling of pastors and other rostered leaders by congregations at our next regular assembly in 2007, and

RESOLVED, That a panel consisting of the bishop (or his representative), the secretary of the synod, and twelve additional members appointed by the Synod Council be charged with the review of our present practices, and the preparation of revised policy which it shall recommend to the 2007 synod assembly for adoption, and

RESOLVED, The members of the panel shall be nominated in the following manner: two members of the conference of deans (nominated by the bishop), and two laypersons from each quadrant (nominated by the deans of that quadrant), and two representatives (one lay and one clergy) from the synod council (nominated by the Vice President).

ITEM E.2

RESOLVED, That the Metropolitan New York Synod adopt the following amendment to the bylaws

S7.12.01. The Synod Council shall take care in the scheduling of special meetings of the synod assembly that sufficient time is allowed for the distribution of material in advance of the date of the assembly by mail to all registered voting members.

On the adoption of the resolution to amend the bylaws [E.2]

**Adopted
SA2006.05.08**

S7.12.01. The Synod Council shall take care in the scheduling of special meetings of the synod assembly that sufficient time is allowed for the distribution of material in advance of the date of the assembly by mail to all registered voting members.

Keynote Address Part 2

The second presentation by Pr. Briehl focused on the poem *i thank you God* by e. e. cummings for a tutorial on the “grammar of grace.” She said that “living in God’s amazing grace is the [caught up in the] verb ‘thank’” and that “the grammar of grace exudes a life of gratitude.... Grace evokes gratitude like the voice’s echo and gratitude follows grace like thunder the lightning.”

The text of the address was not available for publication.

Introductions and Recognitions

Bishop Bouman recognized those pastors new to synod and asked them to come forward so that the assembly might greet them.

Pastors New to the Synod First Call

The Rev. Romeo Dabee, Associate pastor, Our Saviour-Jamaica Ordained 10/30/2005
The Rev. Napoleon Plaza, Latino Mission Developer at Ascension-Deer Park Ordained 11/6/05
The Rev. Janet Blair, Interim Lutheran Campus Pastor, Columbia University Ordained 11/12/05
The Rev. Sarah Geddada, Vice Pastor, Redeemer-Queens Village Ordained 11/19/05

The Rev. Adeliz Mendez, Latino Mission Developer, Salem-Brooklyn Ordained 1/22/06
Mr. Ernst Mossl, Resident at Christ-Newburgh, Ordination scheduled for 7/16/06
The Rev. Brenda Jack, Pastor, Prince of Peace-Cambria Heights Ordained 2/26/06

Pastors New to the Synod Transferred to our Roster

The Rev. Dianne Loufman, Assistant to the Bishop for the Call Process. Comes to us from SE Pennsylvania. Her husband Eric is a professor at the Lutheran Theological Seminary at Philadelphia.
The Rev. Robert Rimbo, Pastor, Holy Trinity-Manhattan. Come to us from the SE Michigan Synod where he served as bishop.
The Rev. Lori Kochanski, Pastor, Trinity-White Plains. Comes to us from the NE Pennsylvania Synod.
The Rev. Eugene A. Koene, Pastor, St. Thomas-Bronx. Comes to us from the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod.

Deacons Newly Rostered

Deacon Barbara Bambina, serving Christ-Woodstock
Deacon Richard Ferolito, serving St. John's-Poughkeepsie
Deacon Karen Nurmi, serving Emmanuel-Pleasantville
Deacon Gary Weiler, serving St. John's-Bellmore
Deacon Lynn Weiler, serving St. John's-Bellmore

The congregation of Christ's Lutheran Church in Woodstock, New York celebrated its 200th Anniversary in 2005. As part of their celebration a multimedia presentation was made and shown to the assembly to commemorate this milestone by Mr. Mark Anderson. Members of the congregation in the visitor's gallery were warmly congratulated.

Roster Anniversaries

Pr. Gary Mills [Executive Assistant to the Bishop] read the names of persons recognized for their years of service this year.

Five Years

The Rev. Paul Block
The Rev. Myung Ham
The Rev. Lori Kochanski
The Rev. Terri Luper
The Rev. Patt Margolis
The Rev. Ben Stallings
The Rev. Marianne Tomecek

Ten Years

The Rev. A. David Anglada
The Rev. Mary Chang
The Rev. Michael Church
The Rev. Khader El-Yateem
The Rev. Karen Kuttler
The Rev. Craig Miller
The Rev. Marcia Parkinson-Harrison
The Rev. Audrey Pedersen
The Rev. Andreas Thode
The Rev. Kim Wilson

Fifteen Years

The Rev. Robert Fritch
The Rev. Jack Horner, Jr.
The Rev. Fredi Eckhardt
The Rev. ElizaBeth Nebrasky
The Rev. Ilze O'Hara

Twenty Years

The Rev. Patricia Evant
The Rev. Winfried Hess
The Rev. James Krauser
The Rev. Philip Trzynka
The Rev. Steve Ware
The Rev. Jeanne Warfield

Twenty-Five Years

The Rev. Stephen Beyer
The Rev. Martha Jacobi
The Rev. Eric Mathsen
The Rev. Frederick McElderry
The Rev. Martin Nale

The Rev. Ray Ormand
The Rev. Mack Smith
The Rev. Thomas E. Taylor

Thirty Years

The Rev. James Anderson
The Rev. Richard Gates
The Rev. Jeffrey Kolbo
The Rev. Dr. George Muenich
The Rev. Robert Rimbo
The Rev. Gregory Tennermann
The Rev. Dr. James Thomas
The Rev. Henry John Wuerz

Thirty-Five Years

The Rev. Larry Bailey
The Rev. John Evenson
The Rev. George Lutz
The Rev. Dennis O'Rourke
The Rev. William A. Paulsen, Jr.
The Rev. Mark Wilhelm

Forty Years

The Rev. Serge Castigliano
The Rev. Paul Hagedorn
The Rev. George Matzat
The Rev. Dr. William Rusch
The Rev. Peter Swan
The Rev. Walter Wifall
The Rev. Frank Wilhelm

Forty-Five Years

The Rev. Winston Bone
The Rev. Yasuyuki Fukuda
The Rev. William Gillespie
The Rev. Carl Wayne Leazer
The Rev. Charles Streich

Fifty Years

The Rev. Dr. H. George Anderson
The Rev. Lloyd Berg
The Rev. David Hurty
The Rev. William Lazareth
The Rev. Robert Neilssen

The Rev. Robert Nervig
The Rev. Carl Weaver

Fifty-Five Years

The Rev. Dr. John Damm

Sixty Years

The Rev. Robert Bauers
The Rev. Alvin Messersmith
The Rev. Pentti Palonen
The Rev. Paul Reisch

Sixty-Five Years

The Rev. Reed Greninger

Associates in Ministry

Fifteen Years

Ms. Joanne Strunck
Mr. Paul Wenger
Mrs. Margaret Wenger

Twenty Years

Deacon Robert Wehmhoefer

Twenty-Five Years

Mrs. Judith Hinsch

Forty Years

Ms. Linda Fay

Fifty Years

Dr. Walter Jensen

Synodical Deacons

Five Years

Deacon Hazel Gay
Deacon Robert Hering
Deacon Claire Mehrhoff
Deacon Gayle Ruege
Deacon Joyce Saueracker
Deacon Rory Ann Schoenfeld
Deacon Helen Wernlund
Deacon Hans Wiedemann

Ten Years

Deacon Frank Attanasia
Deacon John Hornung
Deacon Irene Syvertson

Following his recognition for 50 years in the ordained ministry, the Rev. Dr. H. George Anderson, former Presiding Bishop of the ELCA, greeted the assembly; and a letter of greeting from fellow honoree Bishop Emeritus William H. Lazareth was read.

Bishop Bouman was recognized and congratulated for 10 years of service as bishop of the synod.

Presentation of Distinguished Disciple Award

The Rev. Dr. Fredrick Wedemeyer was invited to introduce Ms. Ardath Heard, the 2006 Distinguished Disciple Award recipient. Pr. Wedemeyer, now retired, lives in New England but was delighted to return to pay tribute to Ms. Heard for her years of service in the life of both congregation and synod. He noted that her *“sense of call, to service in Christ’s name, has been a driving force throughout her years. In addition to her work in the local congregation and synod she has been involved with persons who have AIDS or are HIV positive, who wrestle with addictions, and who are homeless.”* She has volunteered in programs in several congregations in both Queens and Manhattan and several agencies, including Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service, the Lutheran World Federation, Lutheran Schools Association and Lutheran Disaster Response—New York. For her work as a volunteer, Pr. Wedemeyer told the assembly, Ardath was recognized with an award by New York City and the Manhattan Borough President. He concluded his introduction of the 2006 recipient of the Distinguished Disciple Award saying:

“It is more than her concern for details.

It is her love of people and the church.

It is her witness to Jesus Christ, the center of life.

It is her living in response to God’s gift.

It is her love of the Lord Jesus Christ that makes her a Servant for Christ’s sake.”

Bishop Bouman then presented the 2006 Distinguished Disciple Award and spoke a few final words honoring Ardath for her dedication to the life and mission of the church.

Ms. Heard thanked the bishop and the assembly and dedicated the award to her parents who first brought her to church. In conclusion she said, *“Throughout my life, I have been truly blessed with many wonderful opportunities to serve our Lord. From visiting the sick and shut-ins, caring for special needs people with HIV-AIDS, the homeless, the physically and mentally challenged...to volunteering at our synod office. I have always received much, much more than I have given. For all of God’s blessings including this award, I am eternally grateful. May the Holy Spirit continue to be with all of us on our faith journeys.”*

Recess

Pr. Arias was called on for prayer. The assembly recessed at 5:01 p.m. for dinner and a Festival Eucharist in the evening.

Saturday June 10
PLENARY SESSION IV

The fourth plenary session came to order at 9:47 a.m. shortly after the conclusion of Morning Prayer.

The report of the elections committee was not ready; Bishop Bouman moved on in the agenda to deliver and gave the second part of his report to the assembly.

Report of the Bishop [part 2]

The Burning Bush: God Calling From the Breach
Exodus 3:1-17

Introduction: The Burning Bush Today

The life of a Christian is a life of unfolding decisions. There comes a time in every discernment process for pastoral ministry, whether or not to enter Diakonia, to take on a leadership position in the congregation, to decide how to be a faithful steward of God's gifts, when we must decide. How often have we said, "if only God would send me a burning bush so I would know what to do." The life of a Christian institution is also one of unfolding decisions. In a time of diminishing resources congregations must decide how best to use them for the sake of ministry. What can be done? What must be left undone? Can we afford a full time pastor? Another staff member? Can we afford not to? Our synod wrestles with these decisions. Our social ministry organizations, outdoor and campus ministries, schools, all of our institutions are always being called on to make hard choices. We want to be faithful. We seek guidance. If only God would send us a burning bush to let us know what to do! We know in our hearts that God still calls people to ministry and vocations to follow Jesus. We believe that God is calling our synod and all its institutions to Great Commission and Great Commandment faithfulness. We hear the call to the Breach. Where is the burning bush today?

1. *Curiosity in the Desert*

Only two people in the Bible were called humble. One was Jesus. "Take my yoke upon your shoulders and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble of heart." (Matthew 11:29)

The other was Moses. "Now the man Moses was very humble, above all the men that were upon the face of the earth." (Numbers 12:3)

Humble Jesus faced the political and religious powers of his day, and the powers of sin, death and the devil and triumphed. Humble Moses stood up to Pharaoh and led his people to freedom. Maybe we need to reassess what true humility is all about.

What was it about the burning bush and this call to ministry in the breach which has made the Moses story so compelling over the centuries? Is it relevant to a synod seeking to be faithful to where God is calling us today? Let's examine this call of Moses together. First we note that this call does not come in a religious place, not from the mountaintop, the temple, the church. It comes in the desert, a non-religious, god-forsaken place. The call finds us where we are at. Today's wilderness has already been noted: a time of financial and spiritual pressure on the church; a time of war; a time when the gulf between the poor and the privileged is deep chasm; a time of disaster; a time when the stranger among us is not welcome; a time when it seems that mainline Protestantism is heading into a perfect storm and its very survival in this post modern culture is up for grabs; a time when ministries feel "at risk." In the wilderness, the call comes. And there is no

display of divine power here. God piques Moses' curiosity and draws him to the bush. A questing, curious spirituality leads to the call.

2. Seneh, The Fire That Doesn't Burn

In verse 2, the Hebrew word for "bush" is seneh which appears only here and in Deuteronomy 33:16 ("the Presence in the bush"). Perhaps this is a word play on "Sinai," pointing toward the revelation on the mountain later in the Exodus narrative. It is a rare biblical word about something very rare indeed, a burning bush that is not consumed. A bush that blazes with the fiery flame of God but does not burn up. It is indeed a strange sight which caught Moses attention. We have too many recent images of flames which burn and consume: in the holocaust, a suicide bomb in Iraq, twin towers turning to fiery furnaces downtown. We know too well the fire that destroys. We have tasted the fire of church fights which threaten to burn a hole right through us. Fires are raging in the breach of our cities, suburbs and towns: fires of teen violence, poverty, abuse, aids, homelessness, hunger, wars around the world. There is the blazing fire of unbelief in our society which cannot tell the old, old story of Jesus and does not know how to call on the Name of the Lord. What will it take to contend with the destroying fires raging all around us? It will take another kind of fire, the kind of fire that Moses saw, a fire of God that burns without consuming, a holy flame that sets the soul on fire for justice and blazing with Great Commission fervor. The fire that Jeremiah felt when he cried out: "If I say, 'I will not mention the Lord, or speak any more in his name,' then within me thee is something like a burning fire shut up in my bones; I am weary with holding it in, and I cannot." I pray for such a fire in our synod which burns within us, tests our worth, and will not let us be.

3. Who is Moses? Who are you?

Well, God is attracted to Moses for several reasons. For one thing he is a murderer. He has commitments and gifts. Three times Moses intervened against instances of injustice: when a slave was being mistreated; when he looked this way and that, saws no man, and killed the Egyptian brutalizing his kinsman; with a woman at a well. God saw that Moses had an intolerance for abuse of the weak by the strong. Verbs used for Moses will be used for God at the Red Sea: he strikes; he saves. And Moses has these gifts in part because of his Egyptian upbringing. Each of Pharaoh's daughter's actions to save Moses parallels God's later actions to save his people: they go to the water, they hear the vulnerable one cry, they take pity and act to save baby Moses. God is affirming the many gifts and experiences Moses has had before the encounter in the wilderness. Who are you? What are your life experiences and gifts? Do you see the road you have traveled, the gifts with which you have been endowed, the carnal particularity of your humanity as the stuff you bring to the burning bush of your own discernment? God is interested in biography, in creation as well as in redemption. God is interested in the sum of who you are and what you bring to the table. How has God been preparing you for the burning bush? Remember that there is an angel in the bush: the flame is the envelope for the one who appears to Moses in human form (like medieval art). God uses created realities as vehicles for revelation. God is embodied in the world. God is near you in the wilderness; calling you to embody the Word in the world.

4. Not Ready For Prime Time

Like a second career candidate for ministry, Moses turns his face from this fire, "for he was afraid to look at God." Moses makes eight objections., among them: What if they don't believe my story about a burning bush? I don't talk so good. Send someone else. The candidacy process has begun.

Why did Moses hide his face? Dennis Jacobsen in his book on community organizing suggests the following: "Rabbi Rashi, the fundamental Torah commentator offers this thought: 'Hashem

(Hebrew for The Name) appeared to Moses in a bush because, as Psalm 91:15 tells us, "I am with them in their suffering."

God is calling from the breach and Moses doesn't want to see it. When the Jewish people were suffering terribly in the land of Egypt, Hashem was with them in their pain. Hashem wanted to show Moses that since the Hebrews were caught in slavery, Hashem was also subjugated in their captivity and abused in their abuse, symbolized by Hashem being caught in the thorns of a burning bush. We will return to this later. What I would simply like to note at this time is that Moses is not alone in turning his face from the God in the breach. Jimmy Carter told us that the hardest thing in the world to accomplish is to put a person in poverty and a person of privilege in the same room or conversation. The fact is that much of the suffering in today's world is a result of the deeds, misdeeds, and non deeds of those who live only for themselves, who turn away from Darfur, the pandemic of AIDS, famine around the world, the poor, the stranger among us, the most vulnerable. This was Bonhoeffer's critique about the church, written from a prison cell: "Our church has been fighting in these years only for its self-preservation, as though that were an end in itself. Now it is incapable of taking the word of reconciliation and redemption to the world." Discipleship and vocation begin here: how then shall we live? Where do we turn our gaze and attention? Will we face the "seneh" and see the God who is afflicted in the sufferings of his people?

5. The Call to Ministry Begins a Holy Conversation and God is Ready With Plan B

In the midst of the eight objections, God honors Moses' side of the conversation. In Exodus 34 (after Baal) we have the first time in the Bible that God forgives because of ongoing dialogue with Moses. Moses' objections move from worshipful response to dialogue. God draws him out and works with him (not demanding a self-effacing Moses). Even though he stutters, is inarticulate, Moses holds his own in this conversation. Moses' persistence occasions further disclosure by God. God honors Moses' questions and insights-these are ingredients for the task ahead with Pharaoh. God goes to plan B. Aaron is dealt in. The leadership circle widens. God has so entered into relationships that God is not the only one with something important to say. And isn't that the gift of prayer, that God truly wants to give us an ear, that God longs for this conversation? Here's the thing: our human response to God's call can contribute to shaping the future. We retain our integrity with God. We are not passive recipients but human partners who have a say.

That is the conversational style we are seeking in our synod: where pastors, lay leaders, congregations, institutions, conferences, bishop and staff all have a part of the conversation, all register with integrity, all shape the future. This is a real God in the real world of real people dealing with real fire that threatens to consume. God's will is resistible for awhile. God works for the best in every situation. Moses isn't ready. Aaron is dealt in. God works with our frailties, our doubts, as well as our strengths. God can work with a synod like ours.

6. The Heart of All Ministry and Every Call: God is Calling From the Breach

God is bound to the promises of the Covenant. One could say that the freedom of God is limited by this promise. The human situation in Egypt is oppression and injustice; the resolution will be freedom from oppression, God's perfect justice. Salvation will come from within the situation. God's goal is not to make life more bearable in the breach of slavery in Egypt. God is about rescue. God sees-"I have seen the affliction of my people...I know their suffering" (not just information, but personal experience). God gets inside the situation. The cross is no stranger to this kind of God. Unlike Pharaoh, whose heart is hardened, God heart melts in the fire which burns but does not consume. (Do some of our pictures of God sound like Pharaoh? "Big boys don't cry"). God is not rendered powerless in the breach, but finds a way to move into Israel's situation to deliver the people. That's why God calls to mission. This is good news to those in the breach, and bad news to the oppressors. God does take sides here, even if that word is offensive to hear.

God will accompany the Word with actions that make the Word work. That is why God is calling you and me and the Metropolitan New York Synod and God's body, the Church on earth. When Moses was able to look into the bush and not turn away from the God in the breach he became a co-participant with God on behalf of this word: "I will send you to Pharaoh to bring out my people." In Exodus 14: 31 we hear that the "people believed in the Lord and in his servant Moses." We hear echoes of Romans 10 as God keeps calling all these centuries over: "How can they believe if they have not heard? And how can they hear without a preacher?"

7. Moses: "Who am I?" and "Who are you?" God: "I am who I am." God Calls to True Identity.

So, Moses, and you and I may initially hide our faces from God but this provides no deterrence from God's persistent call from the breach. "The cry of the Israelites has now come to me; I have also seen how the Egyptians oppress them. So come, I will send you to Pharaoh to bring my people, the Israelites, out of Egypt."

But Moses said to God, "Who am I that I should go to Pharaoh, and bring the Israelites out of Egypt?" The first word Moses speaks to God at the burning bush is "Here I am." The second is "who am I?" And the third is "who are you?" Dennis Jacobson points us to Elie Wiesel, who "cites a midrash that says it took seven days for God to convince Moses to go and become his messenger to Pharaoh. Why seven days? Perhaps it is that Moses had so much stuff to work through. He had killed someone and then fled to the desert of Midian."

"Who am I?" Who, indeed, is Moses? Slave or prince? Hebrew or Egyptian or Midianite? Fugitive or liberator? Unless Moses discovers who he really is, he is of little use in the freedom struggle of those caught in the breach. God challenges Moses to see himself in the way that God sees him: the bold liberator of the Hebrew people. God challenges us to see ourselves as God sees us: not cringing refugees from post Constantinian Christendom, but a movement to reconcile the world in the shadow of the cross: "I, when I am lifted up, will draw all people to myself." Here is how God sees us: "But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God's own people, in order that you may proclaim the mighty acts of him who called you out of darkness and into his marvelous light. Once you were not a people, but now you are God's people," (1 Peter 2:9-10)

It is instructive that the struggle of Moses for his identity at the burning bush also causes God to give Moses God's name and identity: "I Am Who I Am." "I'll be there for you." The giving of the name is as important as the meaning of the name. God is offering a relationship. The Name enables closeness, communication. The God in the breach, in the fire which is does not consume is Abba.

God knows who God is. Moses may have an identity crisis but God is crystal clear about who God is. But who are you Moses? Who are you, my brothers and sisters in Christ? Who are we together as the Metropolitan New York Synod? This struggle for identity is a spiritual struggle. To be in the presence of the burning bush suggests to us that as one comes to know the God in the breach, one comes to know oneself. The process of becoming oneself is not a solitary trek. And that goes against the grain of this present age.

Rabbi Hillel suggested that when Moses "looked this way and that and saw no man and then slew the Egyptian," he wasn't looking to see that the coast was clear. He was looking for help. And that God's call to liberation, the whole Exodus narrative, was about Moses never again being in the position of "looking this way and that and seeing no man." It is about the creation of community. Moses cannot discover his true self in isolation. The God in the breach and the bush called him to his people. Our call to ministry is like the African concept of Ubuntu: "we are, therefore I am."

Who will I become as a bishop of the church? Who will you become as a pastor, AiM, lay leader, deacon? Who will the congregation, the synod, the ELCA become? I am convinced that ministry among people in the breach can reveal to us our lost identity and save the soul of a church that so often lives like a stranger to its calling and to its God. The Great Commission and the Great Commandment will be the refining fire of our true identity.

Moses could not stand in the refining fire of God's burning bush and not be transformed. We are called to that journey. It is, as Nelson Mandela has said, "a long walk to freedom." It took one day to take the people of Israel out of slavery and forty years to take the slavery out of the people. It is the collective walk to which God calls us. "You shall be called healers of the breach, restorers of streets to live in." And God still gives us the, the divine Name. "Go ye therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the Name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age."

Moses learned such truths in his journey to the breach, to justice, a vocation as a light to the nations. It started at the burning bush. It led him to the tribes of Israel and the courts of Pharaoh pointing to the time humble Jesus stood before the Sanhedrin and the courts of the Emperor. It led him across the Reed Sea in the great Exodus even as it pointed us to the waters of baptism. It led him from "seneh" to Sinai and the giving of the Law, and pointed to the Great Lawgiver Jesus and the sermon on the Mount. It led him to the tent of meeting where the Lord used to speak to Moses face to face, as one speaks to a friend, and pointed to the last supper where Jesus washed the feet of those he called friends and shared his body and blood with friends through the centuries to this very moment. It caused his face to shine, so great was the transformation, pointing to the tongues of fire on the heads of those transformed by the resurrection of Jesus from the dead. Moses' face reflected the glory of God and the fire in his own soul, pointing to the resurrection of Jesus which has inflamed hearts and souls at Emmaus, the seashore, the road to Damascus, and the gathered transformed in Poughkeepsie in these latter days. This is a fire that does not consume. This is a fire that offers light in the night of human misery and in the breach of God's afflicted people. This is the fire of the burning bush. May it ignite our synod. Amen.

Elections results

Following the second part of the bishop's report, the committee on elections was ready with their report. Mr. James Steipp [Immanuel-Kingston] announced the results of the first ballot.

Synod Council

Ticket 1 Lay Female	Marion Steadman	120	Hope Card	160*
Ticket 2 Clergy	Perry Kirschbaum	207*	Martin Nale	91
Ticket 3 Clergy	Edward Barnett	272*	Robert Schoepflin	177*
Ticket 4 Clergy	Jeffrey Koenig	113	James Vizzini	115
Ticket 5 Lay Male	F. Eugene (Gene) Hiigel	160*	Stuart Meade	83
Ticket 6 Lay Male	Gerald Erickson	264*	Minerva Melendez	146*
Ticket 7 Lay Male	Charles Germain	194*	Diane Wildow	79
Ticket 8 Lay Male MCL	Earl Marsan	266*	Jonathan Westerlund	146*
Ticket 9 Lay Female	Renee Wicklund	216*		
Ticket 10 Clergy	Annmarie Noto	119		
	Robert Harris	106		
Ticket 11 Youth	Joseph Masciello	135		

Officers

Ticket 12 Vice President	Dorothy Scholz	150	Hans Vogel	160*
Ticket 13 Secretary	James Krauser	292*		

Consultation Committee			
Ticket 14 Clergy Female	Mary Chang	242*	Rose Ann Foege 198*
Ticket 15 Clergy Male	Amandus Derr	226*	Paul Schmiede 223*
Discipline Committee			
Ticket 16 Clergy Female	Jane Gaeta	141	Ann Tiemeyer 164*
Ticket 17 Clergy Male	Lyle Guttu	263*	
Ticket 18 Lay Female	Lydie Raschka	88	Billie Lee Whelan 120
	Debra Pignatelli	64	
Ticket 19 Lay Male	Homer Alexander	265*	
Ticket 20 Lay Male 2 yr.	Joe Giakette	262*	
Mission Development Board			
Ticket 21 Lay Female	Mary Heller	282*	
Ticket 22 Lay Male	Kamy Moghbeli	180*	Paul Lumpkin 124
Ticket 23 Clergy 2 yr.	Audrey Petersen	104	Craig Miller 207*
2007 Churchwide Assembly			
Ticket 24 Lay Female	Maria Bogholtz	166	Christine Connell 196*
	Meg Fielding	178*	Allison Guttu 217*
	Elizabeth Hoffman	207*	Holly Jacobsen 189*
	Billie Lee Whelan	171	
Ticket 25 Lay Male	Homer Alexander	131	Robert Busch 148
	John Litke	235*	Paul Lumpkin 148
	Earl Marsan	141	Manuel Melendez 143
	Jeremy Posadas	188*	John Prosen 99
	Edward Leyser	85	
Ticket 26 Clergy	Mary Chang	177	Katrina Foster 114
	Marva Jenkins	69	Craig Miller 121
	Gary Schulz	58	Diane Wildow 46
Ticket 27 Clergy	James Klockau	80	Jeffrey Kolbo 131
	James Krauser	123	Paul Milholland 99
	Frank Nelson	85	Annemarie Noto 68
	Peter Rustico	72	Eric Swensson 57
	Terry Luper	100	Robert Harris 58

Following Mr. Steipp's report, the bishop declared the following persons elected:

Elected on the First Ballot

SA2006.05.09

Synod Council

Hope Card

The Rev. Perry Kirschbaum

The Rev. Edward Barnett

The Rev. Robert Schoepflin

F. Eugene (Gene) Hiigel

Gerald Erickson

Charles Germain

Earl Marsan

Renee Wicklund

Minerva Melendez

Jonathan Westerlund

Vice President

Hans Vogel

Secretary

The Rev. James Krauser

Consultation Committee

The Rev. Mary Chang

The Rev. Rose Ann Foege

The Rev. Amandus Derr

The Rev. Paul Schmiede

Discipline Committee

The Rev. Ann Tiemeyer

The Rev. Lyle Guttu

Homer Alexander

Joe Giakette

Mission Development Board

Mary Heller
Kamy Moghbeli
The Rev. Craig Miller

2007 Churchwide Assembly

Christine Connell
Meg Fielding
Allison Guttu
Elizabeth Hoffman
Holly Jacobsen
John Litke
Jeremy Posadas

Forms for the second ballot were distributed and members were instructed to vote. After all ballots had been collected, the bishop declared the balloting closed.

Reference and Counsel (continued)

Pr. Jurik was asked to continue the report of the committee on Reference and Counsel. Mr. Richard Erickson, AiM [Holy Trinity-Manhattan] rose to personal privilege. He expressed concern over the action to rescind. The point was ruled out of order.

R & C ITEM F

F.1

ADVISING THE SYNOD CANDIDACY COMMITTEE IN LIGHT OF THE 2005 CHURCHWIDE ASSEMBLY

Whereas, The 2005 Churchwide Assembly of the ELCA voted, by greater than two-thirds, to “welcome gay and lesbian persons into its life” (CA05.05.18); and

Whereas, The same Assembly, also by greater than two-thirds, voted to “trust pastors and congregations to discern ways to provide faithful pastoral care for all to whom they minister” (CA05.05.18); and

Whereas, The same Assembly, prior to such two-thirds vote, considered *and rejected* a substitute motion that would have explicitly restricted such pastoral care to include the solemnization of sexual unions only between a man and a woman (substitute motion from Robert Benne during debate on CA05.05.18); and

Whereas, The same Assembly, prior to such two-thirds vote, considered *and rejected* a substitute motion that would have explicitly forbidden the possibility of the blessing of same-gender unions as one way for pastors and congregations “to provide faithful pastoral care for all to whom they minister” (substitute motion from David Owen during debate on CA05.05.18); and

Whereas, The same Assembly thereby explicitly *did not* exclude or deny the blessing of same-gender unions as one form of pastoral care that pastors and congregations are to be trusted in discerning; and

Whereas, The actions of the 2005 Churchwide Assembly are binding upon this Synod and upon the committees of this Synod; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That the Metropolitan New York Synod hereby advises the Candidacy Committee of this Synod that, following the action of the 2005 Churchwide Assembly, it must “trust pastors and congregations to discern ways to provide faithful pastoral care for all to whom they minister,” including gay and lesbian persons; and be it further

RESOLVED, That this Synod advises the Candidacy Committee that, following the action of the 2005 Churchwide Assembly, it must trust the actions of those pastors and congregations whose faithful pastoral care includes the blessing of the union of two persons of the same gender; and be it further

RESOLVED, That this Synod advises the Candidacy Committee that when a candidate is in a same-gender union blessed by a pastor of the ELCA, the Committee must trust the blessing of that union as a form of faithful pastoral care explicitly *not* forbidden by the 2005 Churchwide Assembly, and must regard and treat persons in that union in light of that trust; and be it further

RESOLVED, That this advice shall continue unless the actions of the 2005 Churchwide Assembly shall be revoked by future action of the Churchwide Assembly.

Submitted by
Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Church of Manhattan

RECOMMENDATION:

The Committee on Reference and Counsel recommends that the chair rule this resolution out of order for the following reasons:

- 1. In affirming the 1993 statement on the blessing of homosexual relationships by the Conference of Bishops, the 2005 Churchwide Assembly did not grant any official recognition or status to acts of pastoral care which might be extended to same-gender couples.*
- 2. This proposed resolution seeks to assert an advisory role for the Synod Assembly over the Candidacy Committee which is not provided for in the governing documents of the ELCA.*

Pr. Mills informed the assembly that the sponsors of this resolution asked that it be withdrawn. Bishop Bouman inquired if this was also true of Item F.2. Pr. Mills said that was their intent. The chair then asked the assembly to grant permission for the two resolutions in Item F to be withdrawn.

The chair put the question to the assembly.

On permission to withdraw items F.1 and F.2 from the agenda

Adopted

F.2 [WITHDRAWN]

ADVISING THE SYNOD'S BISHOP IN LIGHT OF ACTION BY THE ELCA CHURCH COUNCIL

Whereas, The ELCA Church Council has affirmed that synods of the ELCA “do not have the authority to establish their own rosters and their own standards for such rosters” and that “discipline hearing committees are charged by the ELCA Constitution with determining whether a rostered person is subject to discipline under bylaw 20.21.01. or 20.22.01., or whether a congregation is subject to discipline under 20.31.01.” (Report of Actions of the Church Council (April 1-2, 2006), p. 12); and

Whereas, The ELCA Church Council has further affirmed that “when there are indications that a cause for discipline may exist, and before charges are filed with the secretary of this church [the ELCA], the synodical bishop must seek to resolve the matter by consultation as required by bylaw 20.21.04.” (Report of Actions of the Church Council (April 1-2, 2006), p. 13); and

Whereas, Along with these absolute requirements of the discipline process, the ELCA Church Council has also affirmed that it is explicitly “in the bishop's discretion how much investigation to do” (Report of Actions of the Church Council (April 1-2, 2006), p. 13); and

Whereas, Along with the above absolute requirements of the discipline process, the ELCA Church Council has also affirmed that the synodical bishop explicitly retains “discretion about the following: (1) Whether to censure and admonish under ELCA constitutional provision 20.18. (2) Whether to appoint an advisory or consultation committee. (3) Whether to file formal disciplinary charges against the pastor, rostered layperson, or a congregation. (4) Whether to request resignation from call or from the roster” (Report of Actions of the Church Council (April 1-2, 2006), p. 13); and

Whereas, The discretion explicitly granted to the bishop includes responses that may legitimately vary – and in practice actually have varied – from watchful waiting to the formal disciplinary process; and

Whereas, “Many gay and lesbian persons, partnered and single, already serve in the rostered ministry in

congregations of this church” (Metropolitan New York Synod Resolution SA2005.10.02); and

Whereas, This Synod has called for and endorsed “restraint in the administration of those policies that address the full service of partnered gay and lesbian persons in rostered ministry” (MNYS Resolution SA2005-11-02); and

Whereas, The source of a synodical bishop’s call is the synod in assembly, and that call “involves mutual service, support, accountability, supervision, and discipline” (cf. ELCA Constitution 7.44. and 7.44.A96., especially 7.44.A96.b., line 2.1); now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That the Metropolitan New York Synod in Assembly, as the calling body of this Synod’s bishop and in its relationship of both mutual support and mutual accountability, hereby advises the bishop of this Synod that, in exercising the discretion explicitly granted by the ELCA’s governing documents, the bishop should be guided by the Assembly’s call to restraint in the administration of those policies that address the service of rostered leaders partnered with a person of the same gender; and be it finally

RESOLVED, That this advice shall continue to be the advice of the Synod in Assembly (as the calling body) to this Synod’s bishop (as its called pastor) unless specifically revoked at a future Assembly by a vote of the same percentage as (or a greater percentage than) the vote by which it was originally enacted.

*Submitted by
Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Church of Manhattan*

RECOMMENDATION:

The Committee on Reference and Counsel recommends that the chair rule this resolution out of order for the following reason: This proposed resolution seeks to assert a role for the Synod Assembly, which is not provided for in the governing documents of the ELCA, in the bishop’s exercise of his discretionary powers in the administration of the discipline processes of the ELCA.

ITEM G

A RESOLUTION ON PASTORAL CARE

Whereas, St. Paul affirms the collective ministry of all believers, saying: *Just as our bodies have many parts and each part has a special function, so it is with Christ’s body. We are all parts of his one body, and each of us has different work to do. And since we are all one body in Christ, we belong to each other, and each of us needs all the others* (Rom 12: 4-5, NLT); and

Whereas, Being in the metropolitan area of New York City causes ministry in the public sphere to be of vital importance for our Synod and for the wider ministry of the ELCA; and

Whereas, The Metropolitan New York Synod of the ELCA is in a unique setting in which to engage in mission and ministry, especially because of its great ethnic diversity, requiring Synod staff members to have expertise in many diverse ministry specialties as well as assisting congregations which are challenged through inadequate financial resources and declining attendance; and

Whereas, Our bishop clearly articulates the theological and pastoral concerns for all, especially the poor, the immigrant, and the disenfranchised in our Synod and around the world, and is thus called to represent us in the larger arena of ministry; and

Whereas, Our bishop and staff, in pursuit of these vital ministries, being pulled in many directions, often face overwhelming demands upon their time; and

Whereas, It is not reasonable to expect the bishop and his staff to be able to meet all the individual pastoral needs of rostered persons, their families and the over 230 congregations of this synod; and

Whereas, Our bishop is a pastor who **deeply cares** about the needs of the whole flock, especially the attendant needs and pressures facing rostered persons, their families, and congregations of our Synod on a daily basis; and

Whereas, Pastoral care of individual rostered persons, their families, and congregations builds up the spiritual and mental health of those being held in such care, and ultimately strengthens the collective ministry of our synod, building it up as the local expression of the Body of Christ (Eph 4:12); therefore be it

RESOLVED, That the Metropolitan New York Synod of the ELCA, meeting in assembly, request that the bishop, his staff, the synod council, and the conference deans, after examination of existing programs in other ELCA synods and in other church bodies, consider ways to provide a person and/or team of people, ~~paid or unpaid,~~ to effectively represent the bishop in providing pastoral care to rostered persons, their families, and congregations in our synod; and be it further

RESOLVED, That rostered persons in their conferences discuss among themselves ways in which they might address these pastoral care needs collegially, and

RESOLVED, That the bishop, his staff, the synod council, and the conference deans develop a plan to and implement such a supplemental pastoral care program ~~prior~~ to report to the 2007 Synod Assembly.

Submitted by:

Pr. Dennis O'Rourke, Ascension, Deer Park
Pr. Paul B. Milholland, St. John's, Lindenhurst
Pr. Mack Smith, Trinity, Wyandanch
Congregation Council of Abiding Presence, Ft. Salonga
George Bonn, Lay Voting Member, St. John's, Lindenhurst
Dorothy Bonn, Lay Voting Member, St. John's, Lindenhurst
Joyce Kellermann, Lay Voting Member, St. John's, Lindenhurst
Pr. Lyn Mehl, St. Paul's, E. Northport
Pr. Brenda Smith, New Hope, Jamaica
Rev. Anthony Stephens, PhD., Our Savior, Croton-on-Hudson
Congregational Council of St. John's, Lindenhurst

Pr. Jeffrey Koenig, King of Kings, Melville
Pr. William Munz, Christ, Islip Terrace
Rev. Dr. Gary L. Mehl, St. Luke, Woodhaven
Pr. Robert Schoepflin, Abiding Presence, Ft. Salonga
Pr. Joanne Bond, Cross of Christ, Babylon
Deacon Robert Rainis, Chaplain, Our Lady of Consolation LTC
Pr. Paul Britton, Gloria Dei, Huntington Station
Congregation Council of Cross of Christ, Babylon
Pr. Kristina V. Ahlman, Calvary, Hauppauge
Pr. Albert Triolo, Ascension, Deer Park

Pr. Jurik reported that the committee reports the resolution as amended without prejudice.

Pr. Paul Milholland [St. John-Lindenhurst] addressed the rationale for the resolution offered and expressed appreciation for the addition of the second resolve by the committee.

Pr. Craig Miller [Our Savior-Brooklyn] raised some concerns about the expectations raised in the resolution. Pr. Betsy Diver [St. Peter's-Port Jervis], Pr. Mary Chang [St. Jacobi-Brooklyn], Pr. Richard Hill [Hope-Selden] spoke in favor of the resolution.

On the adoption of the resolution as amended by the committee [G]

**adopted
SA2006.05.10**

RESOLVED, That the Metropolitan New York Synod of the ELCA, meeting in assembly, request that the bishop, his staff, the synod council, and the conference deans, after examination of existing programs in other ELCA synods and in other church bodies, consider ways to provide a person and/or team of people, to effectively represent the bishop in providing pastoral care to rostered persons, their families, and congregations in our synod; and be it further

RESOLVED, That rostered persons in their conferences discuss among themselves ways in which they might address these pastoral care needs collegially, and

RESOLVED, That the bishop, his staff, the synod council, and the conference deans develop a plan to implement such a supplemental pastoral care program ~~prior~~ to report to the 2007 Synod Assembly.

At the conclusion of his report Pr. Jurik offered a courtesy resolution and invited the assembly to affirm it by acclamation.

RESOLVED, That the Metropolitan New York Synod in assembly in Poughkeepsie, June 8-10, express deep appreciation for those who enabled us to meet and work the church's business to reclaim the Great Commission:

**Registration and Attendance Committee
Nominating Committee
Elections Committee
Reference and Counsel
Synod Officers and Support Staff
Assembly Planning Committee
Partners in the Gospel**

**Leaders of Worship
Chaplain Eduardo Fabian Arias
The Rev. Susan Briehl
The Rev. Sherman Hicks
The Rev. Claire Burkat
Parliamentarian Dorothy Demarest**

And all volunteers who have helped made this a wonderful assembly.

On adopting the resolution

**Adopted (by acclamation)
SA2006.06.11**

Adoption of the Budget for Fiscal Year 2007

The bishop announced that the next order of business would be on the adoption of the budget for fiscal year 2007. Seeing no one rise to address the assembly, he called for a vote to approve the spending plan.

To adopt the spending plan for F.Y. 2007

**Adopted
SA2006.06.12**

Pr. Barbara Lundblad [Advent-Manhattan] offered a resolution of thanks on the preparation of the budget. Her motion was seconded.

RESOLVED, That the 2006 MNYS Assembly give thanks to the Synod Council and staff for providing the comprehensive information presented in "Congregational Partnership Report for the Period 02.01.05 to 01/31./06" (pages C-14 through C-20), and that parish pastors and lay voting members distribute this information to their congregation councils.

On the Lundblad motion

**Adopted (unanimous consent)
SA2006.05.13**

RESOLVED, That the 2006 MNYS Assembly give thanks to the Synod Council and staff for providing the comprehensive information presented in "Congregational Partnership Report for the Period 02.01.05 to 01/31./06" (pages C-14 through C-20), and that parish pastors and lay voting members distribute this information to their congregation councils.

Companion Synod Report

Pr. Carol Fryer with Pr. Robert Wollenburg reported on what is taking place in the Northwest Diocese of Tanzania, our companion synod. Pr. Wollenburg spoke on our commitment to fund an Endowment for Education in Tanzania and our progress to our \$1,000,000 goal. The presentation included a video and slide show. Some excerpts from Pr. Fryer's report follow:

It is with great delight that I bring you greetings from our companion synod, the North Western Diocese of the Lutheran Church of Tanzania. I greet you in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ on behalf of Bishop Buberwa and the staff of the diocese; on behalf of the pastors of the diocese, especially the newly ordained pastors including Faith Lugazia and Alice Kabugumila, and all the people of the North Western diocese. They all greet you in the name of Jesus and ask me to tell you that they pray for you, and ask that you continue to pray for them.

I was given the great privilege of representing the Metro NY Synod, (all of you) at the ordination of the first two women of the diocese this past January. I was also tremendously honored to be invited to be the preacher for that ordination service. The ordination service at the Cathedral in Bukoba was five hours long with 6 choirs!

Kibeta English Medium Primary School – we need a new teacher to start in January of 2007. If you know anyone who might be interested please let us know.]T]he families of the first class of children who have graduated from KEMPS are clamoring for a Secondary school at the same academic level as KEMPS for the sake of their children's education – and how the diocese is responding.

...[M]utual hopes for the future – that we might establish one on one partnerships between our congregations and the parishes of the North Western diocese – a project that we are eager to pursue as soon as we know that the Tanzanian Endowment will secure our ability to fulfill the commitments we have already made to our companions.

...Pastor Lermy Lwankomezi has successfully received his certification as a CPE Supervisor, as a Chaplain and as a Pastoral Counselor. ...[W]hen he returns to Bukoba at the end of July he will set to work to establish a Clinical Pastoral Education program in the diocese to train pastors, deaconesses, and other church workers to care for those who are suffering in their communities and parishes.

What I really want to tell you about is Alice. Ma Alice, as she is called – now Muchungaji (or Pastor) Alice – was one of the 2 women ordained in January. She had been faithfully and quietly waiting for a long time. I had met Ma Alice in July of 2002. She served as my primary interpreter during my six weeks in the diocese and at the cathedral. She and I together led Morning Prayer at the Synod assembly in Kigarama – I preached, she interpreted – she led the liturgy. At that assembly a vote was taken regarding the readiness of the diocese to ordain women. The vote at that time was 54% yes, but the leadership decided that that was not strong enough to support the women in ministry so they said we'll wait two more years and vote again. I could see the disappointment in Ma Alice, but she did not complain. She held her head up and continued to faithfully serve her Lord as she could. She said, "If God wishes, I will be ordained."

In January, while I participated in the preparations for the ordination, I learned that at the age of 18 Ma Alice had gone to the Bishop and said, "I want to work in the church." The ELCT had just made the momentous decision to allow women to study theology – so the bishop sent Alice off to the seminary in Arusha – to Makumira. It was 1968! She was the first woman to study theology there, and in fact, it is said about Ma Alice that she is the "First Woman Theologian in Africa!" From 1968 until January 8, 2006, nearly 40 years Alice prepared and worked and waited, and waited, and waited to be ordained as a pastor in Christ's Church. Her conviction that she was called to the ordained ministry never wavered. Her dedication and devotion to the work of the diocese never waned. And, as I have been told by those who know her best, and witnessed it myself, she never, never complained.

The joy and celebration that surrounded Ma Alice's ordination was beyond anything I have ever known. Women pastors from other dioceses came to witness it. Many of them said they knew Alice from seminary – she was ahead of them and they always thought she would be ordained first. Retired Missionaries from Germany and Sweden who had worked with Ma Alice years ago came all the way to be there for her. And the women of the diocese were so excited they could hardly contain themselves. The women got together and collected to money to present Mchungaji Alice with a gift – no small feat! They presented her with her own motorcycle so that she could have the means to get around her new parish. Ma Alice herself, well, she was just radiant! I have never seen anyone so dignified, so happy, so beautiful!

Mchungaji Alice is a gift to the whole Church of Christ – to the whole people of God! She is an inspiration to me and that is why I wanted to share her story with you.

The people of our companion synod – the North Western Diocese of the ELCT – have many gifts to share with us. I hope that you will be inspired to be as actively involved as you can with our brothers and sisters in Tanzania. You will be enriched beyond measure in coming to know them and sharing your lives with them as together we praise and serve God with faithful devotion, with holy joy, with the power of the Holy Spirit, and in the name of Jesus. Amen!

Servant to Servant Event

Mr. Charles Germain [Trinity-Brewster] Youth and Family Ministry and Pr. Ann Tiemeyer [Koinonia NY] and Pr. Romeo Dabee [Our Savior-Jamaica] reported on the synod to synod servant to servant exchange which took place between youth of our synod and our sister synod, the Arkansas - Oklahoma Synod. There are 33 of us who took part, 9 young people and 5 adults from Arkansas – Oklahoma and 14 young people and 5 adults from the Metropolitan New York Synod.

The participants chosen from MNYS were diverse geographically, racially and economically. Partnership in funding was through a Thrivent *Youth Leadership Grant*, MNYS, Koinonia NYC and LDRNY funds. While in New York the participants participated in the Koinonia NYC *Faith Walk at Ground Zero*, discussing how the church responded and continues to respond. While in A-OK synod, the students visited the Oklahoma Memorial Bombing site and continued to address the church's role in disaster response.

In New York participants took part in food ministries going to “soup kitchens” at Trinity – Lower East Side, Epiphany – 206th St (Bronx), St Luke's – W.46th St. In A – OK synod they visited Oaks Indian Mission for 3 days where they painted and did “clean-up” and then baled hay at a farm in Cushing, OK.

A slide presentation accompanied their report. Mr. Germain also the following read excerpts from participant journals in which participants described their experiences.

Sarah Crean: Our mission work there (Arkansas-Oklahoma) was working in the Indian Oaks Reservation. That was one of the most exciting and amazing experience I've had. We repainted playground equipment for the kids who were starting their first day of school the following day (when we were leaving) and we moved mattresses and boxsprings into buildings where they were to be housed... The experience was awesome. It was a lot of fun to meet new people and do mission work both in New York and Oklahoma. It was fun to experience the difference between how much diversity we have in NY and how that compares to the diversity in Oklahoma. The group formed very strong bonds with each other and we hope to reunite at the National Youth Gathering in 2006....

Rebecca Ruckdashel: This summer a small town girl got as lesson in life from the people of NYC. The community of friends I became part of is something I could never even think to ask for. From Epiphany I learned about love, from Trinity (Lower East Side) I learned about strength but both of them showed me how different people in the same circumstances, easily written off, can be. My reason for writing this is not to ask for money or anything of the like, but to encourage all of you to give your time to be part of something greater than yourself....

Address of the ELCA Representative – Part 2

Pr. Hicks returned to the stage to take questions from the assembly on the work of the ELCA. Two questions had been submitted to him.

A question was asked if there were any new procedures which would be in place for the next election of the presiding bishop in 2007.

He said that there were no changes being developed to replace the usual ecclesiastical ballot. Why has Bishop Hanson refused to appoint an official representative to the Interfaith Coalition Against Torture?

Pr. Hicks said that he attempted to get an answer to this question but was unable to do so, but that he would continue to research this matter and follow-up, with the questioner or with Joanne Strunck. He noted further that the ELCA does have committee related to the United Nations emphasis "A Decade of Peace." The work of this committee may address issues of torture, but was not sure.

Pr. Paul Milholland [St. John's-Lindenhurst] asked Pr. Hicks to comment on the Multicultural Strategies adopted by the Churchwide Assembly.

The ELCA has a two-fold vision: In the restructuring of the ELCA Ministers is now one of five program committees. Pr. Hick articulated the goals of the Multicultural Ministries Committee.

1. Ethnic communities will reach the potential God has given them in full membership, participation, acceptance, and contribution. Emphasis on leadership development.
2. For us to have a church where every member wants/desires to and seeks to be a multi cultural anti racist church. This is particularly important as our nation becomes more and more ethnically and culturally divers.

Pr. Mary Chang [St. Jacobi-Brooklyn] asked "How is the ELCA helping local congregation work with local communities?"

The Multicultural Ministries committee is carrying much of the work of the multicultural commission. One new resource for congregations is a book written by Lily Wu of the MNYS staff, *Many members, one body*.

He noted that resources for congregation in multicultural ministry is also to be found in other departments of the church as there is much collaboration and cooperation with other departments in this area. This committee is not intended to address this alone but is to be addressed by other committees as well.

Pr. James Krauser [St. Paul's-Port Jefferson Station] noted that the MNYS established a Commission for Gays and Lesbians a number of years ago, and wondered if the ELCA was giving any thought to a possible strategy for sexual minorities at the present time, or contemplating it in the future.

Pr. Hicks said that he did not know of any strategy like that under development but that he could certainly bring that idea back to Chicago and advocate for it.

Pr. Martha Jacobi, [Lutheran Counseling Center] asked about the ELCA's support for specialized care ministries. She expressed a concern for decline and support in the number of CPE supervisors as an example. How is the vocational development staff addressing these needs?

"Financial recession has contributed unfortunately to staff reductions in many areas," Pr. Hicks said. This is has also been true of many of the agencies and hospitals where such care is located. He said that he was not aware at this time of what Vocation and Education is doing in regard to that issue. He would be in contact with Joanne Strunck with what he able to find out.

Bishop Bouman expressed his thanks to Pr. Hicks for his presence and sharing the mission and work of the ELCA with us.

The bishop acknowledged the presence of Pr. Bill Preuss of Eger Home.

Registration and Attendance

Pr. Braithwaite reported the registration as of 10:30 a.m. Saturday.

Registered:	136	Ordained Ministers
	163	Lay Voting Members
	8	Associates in Ministry
	425	Total Voting Members
	17	Registered Visitors

She asked that the registry of voting members be approved. Without objection the chair declared the registry approved.

Elections Report

Mr. Steipp gave the results of the second and final ballot.

Synod Council			
Ticket 1 Clergy At Large	Robert Harris	113	Annemarie Noto 155*
Discipline Committee			
Ticket 2 Lay Female	Lydie Raschka	92	Billie Lee Whelan 159*
Churchwide Assembly			
Ticket 3 Lay Male	Robert Busch	144*	John Prosen 105
	Homer Alexander	119	Paul Lumpkin 140*
	Earl Marsan	114	Manuel Melendez 139*
Ticket 26 Clergy	Paul Block	88	Craig Miller 174*
	Mary Chang	141*	Perucy Butiku 127
	William Baum	156*	Katrina Foster 115
Ticket 27 Clergy	James Klockau	96	Jeffrey Kolbo 172*
	James Krauser	134	Frank Nelson 136*
	Terry Luper	119	Paul Milholland 147*

Bishop declared the following persons elected.

Elected on the Second Ballot

SA2006.05.09

Synod Council

The Rev. Annemarie Noto

Discipline Committee

Billie Lee Whelan

2007 Churchwide Assembly

Robert Busch

Paul Lumpkin

Manuel Melendez

The Rev. Craig Miller

The Rev. Mary Chang

The Rev. William Baum

The Rev. Jeffrey Kolbo

The Rev. Frank Nelson

The Rev. Paul Milholland

Adjournment

Ms. Litke gave a final batch of announcements, and thanked the assembly staff.

The chair ordered that the bulletin of pre-assembly reports be attached to the minutes as an appendix.

At 11:10 a.m., Bishop Bouman asked if there was any further business to come before the assembly, hearing none he said there would no need for Plenary Session V and declared the assembly adjourned *sine die*.

Following adjournment the assembly concluded with a Eucharist service. The Rev. Lermi Lwankomezi of Tanzania gave the sermon and Bishop Bouman presided.