

February 5, 2008 – Bishop’s Road Show

Highlights of January 26, 2008 Synod Council Meeting

Dear Friends:

Your Synod Council held its winter meeting at the Ramada Inn, Morgantown, WV on Saturday January 26.

In discussing the minutes from the November retreat, we discovered that in dissolving the Learning Ministries Committee that we must change the Bylaws. Action on this Bylaw will take place in April and then be forwarded to the Synod Assembly.

Synod Council (from here on SC) greeted guests in Pat Schillings, the Director of Camp Luther and Sarah Soltow, the Director of Community Lutheran Partners, Inc. Both brought reports of activity to SC. Pat Schillings noted that she is in the process of forming a Camp Luther Board that will consist of the five Deans, Pastor Wendy Richter, Mike Propst and Pastor Matthew Riegel. It has been discovered that Camp Luther does not have a constitution. Pr. Riegel has secured constitutions from other church camps. Phil Melick, Pr. Jeff Wick, Pat Schillings and Jason Felici have agreed to work on Bylaws via the internet. These might be available for action during the April meeting of SC. One of the major questions that they will wrestle with is what is the relationship between Camp Luther and the Synod?

Sarah Soltow discussed the wide variety of trainings that are taking place across this synod because of the ministry of CLP. CLP is looking to create a new graphic to represent who they have become. A quilt has been donated to CLP that will be raffled off at the Assembly. Tickets are now available. This drawing will take place on Saturday, May 31st at the Synod Assembly.

During the Bishop’s Report, he noted that Tamara Riegel has agreed to serve on this synod’s Candidacy Committee and that George Friedline will fulfill an unexpired term at Lutheran Senior Life and begin his own term in June.

The Rostered Leaders Debt Reduction Fund received gifts of \$13,693.81 in 2007. To this amount we added \$3,600 from the Synod Budget for a total of \$17,293.81. Twelve of our leaders who applied for debt reduction will find that their lender has reduced their debt by \$1,330. One individual had their debt reduced by \$1,333.81. From 2001 through 2007, this synod has assisted 52 rostered leaders with a total of gifts of \$100,078.91 paid directly to their lending institutions. We thank you for your commitment to our leaders who come to this synod with debt.

SC learned that Pastor Richard Moll has transferred his synod membership to the Virginia Synod, and that Pastor Dan Nascembeni, who transferred to this synod last November, had no notation in his paperwork that he had been given the ecclesiastical status of “retired.” SC voted to extend this status.

Pastor Judy Marlow announced her plans to retire on June 1, 2008 as the pastor of Messiah, Moundsville and Good Shepherd, New Martinsville Lutheran Churches. She also announced that she has a tumor that is growing on her ovaries. SC was invited to pray for Judy. Ms Briana Richardson, a lay church worker, has announced her plans to leave Calvary and Mt. Olive Lutheran Churches on March 31, 2008.

SC reviewed the requests of three congregations who applied for budget funds from Congregations with Special needs. Cross of Grace, Hurricane; Resurrection, Weirton and St. John’s, Harper’s Ferry were all granted funding in 2008.

Income/expenses of the 2007 Synod Assembly were compared as SC attempted to set fees and prices for the 2008 Synod Assembly. In 2007, this synod made a "profit" of \$4,900 on the Assembly. Much of this amount will be used in 2008 to hold down costs. The Assembly registration fee will be reduced from \$65 to \$50. The Assembly mailing will take place in February to our congregations and leaders.

For the 2008 Synod Assembly the Nominations Committee will be seeking Nominees for the following offices:

1) 2009 Churchwide Assembly: One clergy, one lay female, one lay male and one person of color or whose primary language is other than English.

2) For Synod Council: a pastor from the Potomac Conference; a pastor from the Ohio - Kanawha Valley Conference; a lay person from the Upper Ohio Valley Conference; a Lay Female at large and a youth representative.

For all of the above categories the Nominating Committee will be seeking at least two nominees.

In a quick review of the 2008 Synod Assembly agenda, SC requested that the hearing on the first draft of the Social Statement on Human Sexuality come at the end of the Assembly on Saturday. SC worked upon a suggested process for this hearing. This information will be printed among the many documents needed for the Assembly.

The new Synod Office Suite was discussed. When SC met, this space was to be ours on Feb. 1. It became ours on Feb. 4. Plans are underway for a moving date. We will be in the same building, only in an upstairs suite. It is our goal that the April 26 SC meeting will be held in the new Synod Office.

Annually, SC votes to use the interest from the Warwood Lutheran Church Scholarship Fund to assist two of our seminarians. In Nov. we voted to share \$1,500 with two seminarians and to reinvest \$300 to purchase new shares of the Vanguard Balanced Index Fund. We now own 5,440 shares of this fund.

Treasurer Riegel presented to SC a Synod Bequest Policy. This policy was adopted with just two very minor word changes. This policy will be placed on the Synod web site once we have received a clean copy.

SC will next meet on Saturday, April 26. This will be our last meeting prior to the 2008 Synod Assembly.

Should you have any questions about this report of SC activities, do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours in our Lord's service,

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