

***Minutes of the 32nd Assembly of the Allegheny Synod
Blair County Convention Center
June 14 – 15, 2019***

Friday - June 14, 2019

Morning Prayer / Opening of the Synod Assembly
Worship Leader – Rev. Ryan Viands

Plenary Session I¹

Bishop Rhyne declared the opening of the 32nd annual Allegheny Synod Assembly at 8:35am

Registration Report/Quorum

Delegate Count	
Clergy.....	56
Deacons	2
Laity	
Male.....	45
Female.....	76
Officers.....	4
Synod Council.....	6
Total Delegate Count ²	189
Visitors.....	39
Total Present.....	228

Adoption of Agenda

Upon motion by Pr. Paul Tomkiel, seconded from the floor of the Assembly

- **SA19.06.02** – that the Synod Assembly agenda be adopted... the motion is adopted

¹ All Bulletin of Reports page references in the 2019 Minutes refer to the “2019 Bulletin of Reports”

² In accordance with provision **SA1.14** of the Allegheny Synod Constitution, a quorum is deemed to be present

Presentation of 2018 Minutes

Upon motion by Pr. Jono Adams, seconded from the floor of the Assembly

- **SA19.06.03** – that the minutes of the 2018 Synod Assembly be accepted as presented... the motion is adopted

Adoption of the Rules of Procedure

Upon motion by Deacon Alicia Anderson, seconded from the floor of the Assembly

- **SA19.06.04** - to adopt the 2019 Rules of Procedure... the motion is adopted

Upon motion by Pr. Toby Holland, seconded from the floor of the Assembly

- **SA19.06.05** - to adopt the amendments to the Rules of Procedure... the motion is adopted

Upon motion by Pr. Linda Thomas, seconded from the floor of the Assembly

- **SA19.06.06** – to grant “voice & vote” to the following; Pr. Julie Holm, Kathy Stump, Mark Fisher, Pr. Dick Henry, Pr. James House... the motion is adopted

Introductions

- Greetings from retiring Bishop Jessica Crist of the Montana Synod
- Greetings from the Kenya Evangelical Lutheran Church
- Mrs. Jennifer Johnson – Program Director for Synod Support, Office of the Presiding Bishop / ELCA representative
- President Louise Johnson, Wartburg Seminary – our bible teacher at this Assembly
- Kathy Stumpf & Dan Warntz – Ordinands at this Assembly
- Officers of the Allegheny Synod
- Bishop’s Staff; Pr. Paula Schmitt & Pr. Joshua Rinas
- Pr. Glen Foster – elections
- Dr. Patricia Savage – President/CEO Allegheny Lutheran Social Ministries
- Bishop Emeritus Gregory Pile
- Pr. Phyllis Diamond – Assembly Nurse
- Pr. Dick Henry & Pr. Bob Way – Ministers of Word, Sacrament & Photography
- Dr. James Lakso – United Lutheran Seminary Board of Trustees
- Deacon Chelle Huth - United Lutheran Seminary; Director of Lifelong Learning, Certificate Studies & Adjunct Faculty
- Pr. Kent Peterson – Mission Investment Fund

- The Synod Assembly Planning Team & Michelle Bossler
- The Allegheny Synod Worship Team

Report of Synod Officers

Bishop Rhyne's Report (2019 Bulletin of Reports - pages 36 – 46)

- We have this treasure in clay jars...
- Paul might say today that we are plastic buckets
- God has poured into clay jars the life, death & resurrection of Jesus Christ
- Synod – on the road together (from the Greek)
- Jesus is on the road with us... the road to Emmaus
- God's work is in progress here in the Allegheny Synod
- ELCA 2020 Youth Gathering, Houston, TX
- Service of Remembrance – Tree of Life Synagogue
- Celebrating ministries – We're in this together
 - Military share food program – Cassville Lutheran Church
 - Meals on Wheels – Grace Lutheran/State College
 - Community Care Worker - Moxham Lutheran/Johnstown
 - Clothing closets at multiple locations
 - Can Challenge 222,839 cans 5-year total
- Moving Forward
 - Leadership Initiative – training & supporting our leaders
 - Recognition of our Deacons
 - 50th Anniversary of the Ordination of Women in the ELCA
 - Beloved Community
 - Jesus Loves You... you are loved

Vice President Sam Dunkle's Report – (2019 Bulletin of Reports - pages 77-78)

Bishop Rhyne announced the resignation of Vice President Dunkle at the end of June 2019, due to health & family reasons

Secretary Dave Finney's Report - (2019 Bulletin of Reports - page 86)

Upon motion by Synod Council **SC18.03.11**

- **SA19.06.07** - that Synod Council accept & convey to the 2018 & 2019 Synod Assembly proposed language changes (inserting the term Deacon as a replacement for all former references to Deaconesses, Associated in Ministry &

Diaconal Ministers) to Constitutional Provision **S7.23**. over the signatures of ten voting members of the 2018 Synod Assembly, along with a recommendation to adopt... the motion is adopted by unanimous vote

Treasurer Spence Garvin's Report

- Offers thanks to the Assembly for ask him to serve as Treasurer once again
- Spoke of the care & support that the Congregations provide to the Allegheny Synod & the ELCA

Introduction of New Treasurer

- Mr. William Layton – Mt. Calvary Lutheran/Johnstown

Staff Reports

Rev. Paula Schmitt – Assistant to the Bishop – (2019 Bulletin of Reports - pages 47-48)

We are as the World Is

- The only right way is the way that helps you make the change you seek
- Thank you for the confidence you have placed in me, allowing me to serve you in this call

Clay Jars Bible Study 1 President Louis Johnson – Wartburg Seminary

Isaiah 43:15-21... I am the Lord, your Holy One, the Creator of Israel, your King.

- This scripture is about the Exodus
- A story about deliverance, about being set free
- I am about to do a new thing; now it springs forth, do you not perceive it?
- What are the stories that make you a congregation?
- I will make a way in the wilderness & rivers in the desert
- We ask God for the ability to let go of our stories & see what God has in store for us

Election First Ballot Pr. Glenn Foster

Panel A – Synod Council (Lay Female) Elect 1

- Joyce Long
- Brenda Marriner

Panel B – Synod Council (Lay male) Elect 1

- Marlin Plymette
- Tim Albright

Panel C – Synod Council (Clergy; Male or Female) Elect 1

- Rev. Rebecca Horn
- Rev. Faron Johnson
- Rev. Jamie Olsen

Panel D – Synod Council (Youth; Male or Female) Elect 1

- Olivia Day

Panel E – Consultation Committee (Lay Female) Elect 1

- Lori Dunkle
- Joyce Long

Panel F – Mission Endowment Committee (1-year term) Elect 1

- Lori Dunkle

Synod Council Report I Pr. Scott Klimke

- Proposed Mission Spending Plan - *(2019 Bulletin of Reports – pages 110 - 113)*
- Beer Ream Co. CPA (Somerset) has been retained as our new auditor
- Transferred our investments from the ELCA Foundation Fund A, to the Trust Dept. at AmeriServe Corp... thus minimizing our exposure to the risk inherent with alternative investments (private equity or venture capital funds, hedge funds, managed futures, art and antiques, commodities, derivatives contracts & the like).
- In light of positive news, a revised budget adopted by Synod Council
- We are currently in a period of revenue stability
 - Four consecutive years of Mission Support from the congregations greater than \$800,000
- Our identity of church comes first... our identity as a congregation comes second

Upon motion by Synod Council ***SC19.05.12***

- ***SA19.06.08*** - to accept the Proposed Compensation Guidelines *(2019 Bulletin of Reports – page 115)* as presented... the motion is adopted

ELCA Report - Jennifer Johnson – ELCA Program Director for Synodical Support in the Office of the Presiding Bishop

- 2 Corinthians 4: 13-15 – Thanksgiving to overflow to the glory of God
- 2018 was a banner year for ELCA outreach support
- Allegheny Synod gives 50% of Mission Support annually, totaling \$350,554 during the last fiscal year

A Celebration of Life in the Church & Remembrance of Those Who Have Died

Congregation Anniversaries

- Trinity/Bedford - 250
- St Peters/Osterburg – 200
- St John/Bellefonte – 175
- Pine Hall/State College - 175
- Mt. Calvary/Johnstown - 75

Pastors who retired during the past year

- Pr. Peter Helmers
- Pr. Steve Lynn
- Pr. Donna Wolfinger

Recognition of ordination & congregational anniversaries

- Lee Gable, Katie Maul, David Weinhold – 5 years
- Jeff Bassette, Michael Rhyne, Ryan Viands – 10 years
- Scott Klimke, Rick Klotz – 15 years
- Amy Godshall-Miller - 30 years
- Greg Harbaugh, Robert Kaltenbaugh – 40 years
- Ken Diable – 45 years
- Clarence Caldwell, Gerald Myers – 50 years
- David Fetter – 60 years

Walden Holl Award

- Presented to the Rev. Ed Harshbarger

Remembrance of Departed

Pr. Kevin Shock

- Rev. Susan Palmquist
- Rev. John Schueltz
- Rev. Luther Gotwald
- Rev. Chris Ramsey
- Rev. Alex Anklan

Isaiah 41:10 – Do not be afraid, I am with you

Romans 14:7-9 – Whether we live or whether we die, we are the Lord's

John 1:1-5, 9-14 – The light shines in the darkness

Plenary Session II

Bible Study II

President Louis Johnson – Wartburg Seminary

Isaiah 43:1-3b

- Do not fear, for I have redeemed you; I have called you by name, you are mine.
- I am the Lord your God, the Holy One of Israel, your Savior.

Partner Ministries...

United Lutheran Seminary

Deacon Chelle Huth

- We are now in our second year of existence as United Seminary
- Offering free tuition for all full-time students
- Including students from 28 different denominations
- Three ways to support
 - Recognize people in the Synod with gifts for ministry
 - Consider a monthly personal contribution
 - Encourage members of the Synod Council to increase giving by 3% annually
- Thank you for all of your support of United Lutheran Seminary

TEEM member candidates – Certificate in Theological Studies

- Curt Wingard
- Kathy Popp

- We Touch Lives... children in their growing years, seniors in their autumn years
- Dr. Savage shared stories of two residents... examples of lives being touched

Reference and Council Report I

Memorial - SA19.06.01

Increasing Awareness of the Unaltered Augsburg Confession

Whereas, The Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (“ELCA”) confesses “This church accepts the Unaltered Augsburg Confession as a true witness to the Gospel, acknowledging as one with it in faith and doctrine all churches that likewise accept the teachings of the Unaltered Augsburg Confession” (2.05.); and,

*Whereas, The ELCA requires its synods to accept and only recognizes congregations that accept the Unaltered Augsburg Confession as a true witness to the Gospel (9.21.b, †S4.05., *C2.05.); and,*

Whereas, The ELCA requires Ministers of Word and Sacrament and Ministers of Word and Service accept and adhere to the Confession of Faith of this church (7.22. and 7.52.); and,

Whereas, The Unaltered Augsburg Confession is what gives our diverse church its Lutheran identity and its unity by grounding us in the proper proclamation of the Gospel (Unaltered Augsburg Confession Article VII); and,

Whereas, The Church Council of the ELCA, the presiding bishop, and the Conference of Bishops have stated that “Our values are grounded in faith, in our biblical and Lutheran confessional sources and our love of God and neighbor. They speak to the way this church lives and practices our faith, and they will guide how we journey forward in Christ as church together” (ELCA Future Directions, 2016); and,

Whereas, The ELCA celebrated the 500th anniversary of the start of the Reformation in 2017, in part, by promoting the study and knowledge of Luther’s Small Catechism while working to increase access to it (elca500.org); and,

Whereas, The 500th anniversary of the Presentation of the Augsburg Confession will be June 25, 2030; therefore,

Resolved, That the Allegheny Synod Assembly memorialize the 2019 Churchwide Assembly to call for all three expressions of this church, the churchwide organization, synods, and congregations, to refresh and renew their knowledge of the Unaltered Augsburg Confession;

Resolved, That the Allegheny Synod Assembly memorialize the 2019 Churchwide Assembly to request 1517 Media to produce affordable resources to help individuals and congregations in their study, application, and appreciation of the Unaltered Augsburg Confession;

Resolved, That the Allegheny Synod Assembly memorialize the 2019 Churchwide Assembly to invite and encourage the seminaries of the ELCA to broaden their use of and references to the Unaltered Augsburg Confession in coursework, particularly (but not exclusively) in homiletics and liturgics, as well as offering workshops on the Augsburg Confession;

Resolved, That the Allegheny Synod Assembly memorialize the 2019 Churchwide Assembly to direct the ELCA churchwide organization to promptly begin negotiations with 1517 Media to determine a means by which members of the ELCA could have online access to the translation of the Unaltered Augsburg Confession found in the Book of Concord edited by Robert Kolb and Timothy Wengert after which the potential cost will be considered in the budget presented at the 2022 Churchwide Assembly; and

Resolved, That the Allegheny Synod Assembly memorialize the 2019 Churchwide Assembly to direct the ELCA churchwide organization to recommend, encourage, and equip the synods, particularly for the 2030 synod assemblies, as well as congregations, agencies, and institutions of this church to celebrate the 500th anniversary of the Presentation of the Augsburg Confession.

Resolved, That the Allegheny Synod Assembly memorialize the 2019 Churchwide Assembly to increase awareness of the Unaltered Augsburg Confession.

*Respectfully submitted on behalf of the Nittany Conference/Allegheny Synod:
The Rev. Paul Tomkiel
The Rev. Rebecca Horn
The Rev. Scott Schul*

This **Memorial SA19.06.01** (*a main motion*) was submitted to the Synod Assembly, the Memorial was seconded from the floor of the assembly

- Pr. Tomkiel, author of the Memorial spoke to the Assembly about the genesis & meaning of this Memorial
- The Memorial was adopted & conveyed to the *Manager for official documentation / Office of the Secretary – ELCA*

Lutheran Campus Ministry at Penn State

Deacon Alicia Anderson

- Alicia shared with us a short video of campus ministry, described the function & role of campus ministry at Penn State & thanked the Assembly for their continued support.

Report of First Ballot

Pr. Glenn Foster

Panel A – Synod Council (Lay Female) Elect 1

184 - number of ballots

2 - abstentions/invalid ballots

182 - number of valid ballots

92 - minimum number to elect

- Joyce Long - 104
- Branda Marriner – 78

Joyce Long is elected to a three-year term on Synod Council

Panel B – Synod Council (Lay Male) Elect 1

184 - number of ballots

2 - abstentions/invalid ballots

182 - number of valid ballots

92 - minimum number to elect

- Tim Albright - 80
- Marlin Plymette – 102

Marlin Plymette is elected to a three-year term on Synod Council

Panel C – Synod Council (Ordained) Elect 1

184 - number of ballots

1 - abstentions/invalid ballots

183 - number of valid ballots

92 - minimum number to elect

- Rev Rebecca Horn - 106
- Rev. Faron Johnson – 40
- Rev. Jamie Olson – 37

Rev. Rebecca Horn is elected to a three-year term on Synod Council

Panel D– Synod Council (Youth) Elect 1

184 - number of ballots

4 - abstentions/invalid ballots

180 - number of valid ballots

91 - minimum number to elect

- Olivia Day - 180

Olivia Day is elected to a two-year term on Synod Council

Panel E– Consultation Committee (Lay Female) Elect 1

184 - number of ballots

3 - abstentions/invalid ballots

181 - number of valid ballots

91 - minimum number to elect

- Lori Dunkle – 92
- Joyce Long - 89

Lori Dunkle is elected to a six-year term on the Consultation Committee

Panel F– Mission Endowment Committee - Elect 1

184 - number of ballots

7 - abstentions/invalid ballots

177 - number of valid ballots

89 - minimum number to elect

- Lori Dunkle – 177

Lori Dunkle is elected to a one-year term on the Mission Endowment Committee

Saturday - June 15, 2019

Plenary Session III

Morning Worship with Pr. Nathan Pile & and the Sequanota Staff

Blessings for those attending the 2019 Churchwide Assembly / Milwaukee, WI

- Casey Colledge
- Ryan Custead
- Dave Finney
- Flor Hernandez
- Pr. Drew McCaffery

Introduction of New Pastors to the Allegheny Synod

- Pr. Faron Johnson – called to serve St. David’s in Davidsville (Johnstown Conference)
- Pr. Amanda McCaffrey – called to serve St. Luke in Roaring Spring (Blair/Huntingdon Conference)
- Pr. Carolyn Hetrick – called to serve Grace in State College (Nittany Conference)
- Pr. Felecia Schwartz – called to serve the Stonycreek Parish (Laurel Highlands Conference)
- Pr. Kathy Stump – called to serve Faith in Somerset (Laurel Highlands Conference)

Words of appreciation & farewell from departing Vice President Sam Dunkle

Synod Council Report III Pr. Scott Klimke

The proposed 2020-21 Mission Spending Plan is conveyed to the 2019 Synod Assembly by Synod Council motion **SC19.05.11** along with the recommendation to adopt.

- **SA19.06.09** – the 2020-21 Mission Spending Plan is adopted

Leadership Team Pr. Kevin Shock

- Developing a *Model of Communities of Trust* beginning with Rostered Leaders
- Building resiliency
- Building a community of trust in our Synod & in our congregations

Bible Study III President Louise Johnson – Wartburg Seminary

1 Corinthians 3:10-13 & 1 Peter 2:4-5

- Both scriptures speak about building the body of Christ in this world
 - Living stones built on the foundation of Jesus Christ
- How do we communicate the Gospel in the world?
- What kinds of communities do we need to do this?
- How can we be the church in the world?
- God's work in & thru you is why we have this conversation
- Give God the time that you think you don't have & watch what God will do with it – begin a personal devotional life with God
- How can you can become a living stone?

Synod Ministry Teams

Global Mission Pr. Karen Ward

- Thank you for your support of these global ministries
- Lutheran Immigration & Refuge Service
 - For 80-years, LIRS has been a champion for refugees and migrants from around the globe
- How do we respond to the refugee crisis?

Mission Interpretation Coordinator Pr. Traci Bowman

- Faith formation doesn't just happen
- It is the work of the Spirit
- It is the work of the three expressions of the church
- Telling the story of God's action in the world
- A Mission Interpreter (a story teller) tells this story
- Share the story of what God is doing with your congregations

Candidacy/ Leadership Pr. Paula Schmitt

- 2019 Bulletin of Reports – page 114

Allegheny Synod Women's Organization Carol McClure

- September 28th – Day of Renewal

Youth Team Ryan Custead/Pr. Karen Ward

- Making It Mine Youth Event; November 22-24, 2019 in State College

Reference & Counsel Report II Pr. Ron Miller

Resolution of Appreciation –**SA19.06.10**

WHEREAS, the Allegheny Synod has met in Assembly and fulfilled its business;

WHEREAS, the Holy Spirit has enabled the Assembly in its action to fulfill its theme of II Corinthians that reminds us that we have this treasure in clay jars to show that the all - surpassing power is from God and not from us;

THEREFORE, be it resolved that the Allegheny Synod Assembly convening in Altoona June 14 and 15 express its gratitude:

- *to Bishop Rhyne for reminding us that God is working through us;*
- *to the Assembly Planning Committee for once again fulfilling the details of the Assembly at the “frozen” Blair County Convention Center and accomplishing its task of organizing an agenda of business, education, worship, and meals;*
- *to Jeanne Fleagle for her leadership of the Assembly Planning Committee;*

- *to Bishop Rhyne for calling to our attention that even the “Lone Ranger” was not alone;*
- *to Spence Garvin for stepping up to serve as the synod’s interim treasurer and to Bill Layton for agreeing to serve in this role going forward;*
- *to the Assembly worship team who prepared a well-rounded and joyous program of worship experiences;*
- *to our synod partners for their ministries among us;*
- *to our Synod Secretary Dave Finney, for walking us thru the revisions to constitutional provision S7.23. - one more time;*
- *to the technology crew for making sure the microphones were in working order;*
- *to Pastor Amanda and Pastor Becca for their willingness to tutor voting members on the benefit of social media;*
- *to Regina Holliday for sharing her beautiful art work with us...what a talented artist;*
- *to the “pages” who distributed all the papers needed to conduct business;*
- *to the Bible Study leader President Louise Johnson of Wartburg Seminary who reminded us of Isaiah 43:18-19 that calls on us to “forget the former things and do not dwell on the past and to do a new thing and to make a way in the wilderness and streams in the wasteland;”*
- *to Pastor Dick Henry for taking photos of the rostered persons for the synod directory;*
- *to Pastor Joshua who is joining our Allegheny Synod staff. Welcome to our synod. We hope you will find your ministry with and among us to be fulfilling;*
- *to the new ordinands, Pastor Daniel Warntz and Pastor Kathy Stump for their commitment to pastoral ministry;*
- *to the new pastors in the synod who have begun their pastoral ministry journey with us in the Allegheny Synod;*
- *to Pastor Paula for sharing the insight of author Seth Godin that “change almost never fails because it is too early” and for introducing us to writer and literary critic Maria Popova of “Brain Picking” whose message is “that we are how the world is” and challenges us to do an inventory of a meaningful life;*
- *to Bishop Rhyne who reminded us that it is the 10th anniversary of the ELCA decision on LGBTQ equality;*
- *to the rostered persons who celebrated anniversaries of ordination;*
- *to the retired rostered persons for their many years of ministry among us;*
- *to the congregations who celebrated anniversaries. May your ministry continue for many more years;*

- *to the workshop leaders for sharing their knowledge with us and stimulating our thinking;*
- *to the staff team of Camp Sequanota for a lively worship service. We wish you a blessed camping season:*
- *to Jennifer Johnson, our ELCA representative, who reported that the World Hunger appeal has raised the largest amount of money in the past year and for recognizing the benevolent support from the Allegheny Synod;*
- *to Presiding Bishop Eaton for her message that we are “called to be peacemakers and helping hands in the world;”*
- *to Pastor Klimke who reminded us that “we are better together than we will ever be apart;”*
- *to Bishop Matthew Riegel of the West Virginia/Western MD Synod for being with us;*
- *to Vice President Sam Dunkle for his leadership. We thank you for your service and wish you Godspeed;*
- *to the voting members who will be attending Church wide Assembly. May your travel be safe, and your experience be enriching;*
- *to Bishop Rhyne for encouraging us to be the “devil stomping synod” and reminding us that God will never turn away from us and loves us; and*
- *to some behind-the-scenes assistants among us (to name a few)...Michelle Bossler for her clerical expertise; to the Assembly counter, Hugh Wake; the chief information officer, Otto Delupe; to the Eucharistic Assistants, Maney Shevits and Lotza Crumbs; to the photography consultant, Len Scapon; to the food taster, Howard M. Burgers; to the lighting expert, Shanda Lear; to the parking attendant, Rick O’Shea; to the proof reader, Erin Spelling; and to the Bishop’s dry cleaner, Preston Creases; and to all those persons who once again enabled us to conduct a prayerful assembly filled with good fellowship and discussion.*

This Assembly called upon us to remember that Jesus loves us always. May we go forth and share the good news of Jesus Christ with our neighbors.

Order for closing of Assembly

Bishop Rhyne declared the 32nd Allegheny Synod Assembly is closed at 11:53am