

*Minutes of the 2016 Allegheny Synod Assembly
June 3 – 4, 2016*

Friday, June 3 2016

Plenary Session I

Morning Prayer Opening of Assembly

Bishop Michael Rhyne opened the Synod Assembly at 8:27am

Registration Report & Quorum

Delegate Count

- 62 - Clergy
- 0 - Diaconal Ministers
- 3 - AIM's
- 144 - Laity
 - Male - 49
 - Female - 95
- 4 - Officers
- 3 - Synod Council Members
- **216 - Total Delegate Count**
- 39 - Visitors
- 255 - Total Present

In accordance with provision *SA7.14* of the Allegheny Synod Constitution, a quorum is deemed to be present

Adoption of Agenda

Upon motion by Spence Garvin, seconded from the floor of the Assembly

- *SA16.06.03* – that the agenda as presented in the Bulletin of Reports (pg. 6) be adopted... the motion is adopted

Presentation of 2015 Minutes

Upon motion by David Finney, seconded from the floor of the Assembly

- *SA16.06.04* – that the minutes of the 2015 Allegheny Synod Assembly as presented in the Bulletin of Reports (pgs. 58 – 74) be accepted... the motion is adopted

Adoption of the Rules of Procedure & 2 Amendments to the Rules of Procedure

Upon motion by Spence Garvin, seconded from the floor of the Assembly

- **SA16.06.05** – that the Rules of Procedure as presented in the Bulletin of Reports (pgs. 7-8) be adopted... the motion is adopted

Upon motion by Spence Garvin, seconded from the floor of the Assembly

- **SA16.06.06** – that the Amendments to the Rules of Procedure as presented in the Bulletin of Reports (pg. 8) be adopted... the motion is adopted

Upon motion by Bishop Rhyne, seconded from the floor of the assembly

- **SA16.06.07** – that the Rev. Julie Holm & Mr. Jonathan Adams be given both *Voice and Vote* at this Assembly of the Allegheny Synod... the motion is adopted

Introductions

- Greetings are extended from the Montana Synod – Bishop Jessica Crist
 - Greetings were sent to the Montana Synod by Bishop Rhyne
- There are 16 ELCA Synod Assemblies taking place this weekend
 - Bishop Rhyne offered prayers for all of these Synods
- Rev. Michael Stadie - Director of Lutheran Disaster Response is our ELCA representative
- Rev. Dr. Jane Strohl is our Theological presenter
- Elizabeth Hendrickson - the Communications Coordinator for Kenya Evangelical Lutheran Church (KELC) in Nairobi, Kenya (ELCA Global Mission)
- Bishop Emeritus Gregory Pile
- Synodical Officers; Vice President Spence Garvin, Secretary David Finney, Treasurer Todd Hammaker
- Mr. Sam Clapper – Parliamentarian
- Mr. Sam Dunkle – Nominations Committee Chair
- Rev. Glen Foster – Elections Committee Chair
- Dr. Pat Savage – Reference & Counsel Committee Chair
- Ms. Tere Rill – Assembly Committee Chair
- Rev. Bob Way – official photographer of the Synod Assembly
- Ms. Becky Maser – official time-keeper of the Synod Assembly
- Ms. Marjorie Ellis - liaison representing the ELCA Church Council
- Rev. Dr. Angela W. Zimmann - Vice President for Advancement representing Gettysburg Seminary
- Dr. James Lakso - Chair of the Board; Gettysburg Seminary
- Ms. Alicia Anderson, AIM – Lutheran Campus Ministry; Penn State University
- Mr. Kurt Fee - Vice President and Chief Investment Officer at Portico Benefit Services

- Rev. Liz Polanski - Regional Gift Planner/ELCA Foundation
- Mr. Kent Zelesky the 2016 LAMPa Summer Intern
- Thanks to the Mission Investment Fund for graciously underwriting our coffee breaks
- Thanks to our Synod Worship Team
- Thanks to our Tech Team (Rev. Knauss, Rev. Osman)
- Thanks to our Pages

Report of Synodical Officers

Bishop Rhyne's Report (Bulletin of Reports pgs. 40 – 45)

Our ministry together...

- Pentecost 2016 – The Wild Goose is Loose... praying for the Spirit
- 61,703 items collected in the 40,000 can challenge
- Motorbikes for Kenya
- Blanket Sunday (w/Linus Van Pelt) Lutheran World Relief > \$17,000
- Mission Support – we made the \$800,000 goal in FY 2015-16
- ELCA support was increased to 75% for the Director for Evangelical Mission position
- We celebrate what God has done thru you
- Led by the spirit, there is still work to be done
- Thank You

Vice President Spence Garvin's Report (Bulletin of Reports pg. 50)

- Report of Synod Council Actions (Bulletin of Reports pgs. 51 – 55)

Secretary David Finney's Report (Bulletin of Reports pg. 56 – 57)

Treasurer Todd Hammaker's Report (Bulletin of Reports pg. 75)

- The proposed Mission Spending Plan (2017-18 Budget) (Bulletin of Reports pgs. 76-78)
- From 2015 thru 2016 we have seen a financial momentum change
- Let us remain focused on God's mission for the Allegheny Synod

Reformation Study & Conversation 1 - Rev. Dr. Jane Strohl

Who was Martin Luther?

- Joined a very austere order of Monks, the Augustinians
- Do what is in you & God will meet you with God's Grace
- Living here & now in the certainty of our Salvation – this is what Luther found freeing

- Luther tells us that whatever route you take, they are all going in the same direction... in the loving arms of God
- Look up, look your fellow sinners in the eye... do not turn inward
- Look up & live

Election First Ballot - Rev. Glenn Foster

We are voting for open positions in Synod Council Officers, Synod Council, Discipline Committee, and Consultation Committee & ELCA Churchwide Council

- A plurality of votes are needed to be nominated to ELCA Church Council
- A majority of votes are needed to be elected to Synodical positions

Panel A – Synod Council Lay Female – elect 2

- Ann Ferry
- Victoria Hrivnak

Panel B – Synod Council Lay Male – elect 1

- Sam Dunkle
- Marlin Plymette II

Panel C – Synod Council Clergy Male or Female – elect 1

- Rev. Denise Arpino
- Rev. Drew McCaffery
- Rev. Jamie Olson
- Rev. Terryann Talbot-Moses

Panel D – Synod Council Youth Representative (age 15-21) – elect 1

- No nominees

Panel E – Consultation Committee Clergy Male – elect 1

- Rev. Drew McCaffery
- Rev. Robert Way

Panel F – Consultation Committee Clergy Female – elect 1

- Rev. Terryann Talbot-Moses

Panel G – Discipline Committee Lay Male – elect 1

- Thomas Horn

Panel H – Discipline Committee Lay Female – elect 1

- Kim Vandevander

Panel I – Discipline Committee Clergy Female – elect 3

- Rev. Judith Simonson
- Rev. Jennifer Soltis

- Rev. Terryann Talbot-Moses

Panel J – Synod Vice President – elect 1

- Samuel Dunkle
- Marlin Plymette II

Panel K – Synod Secretary – elect 1

- David Finney

Panel L – Synod Treasurer – elect 1

- Todd Hammaker

Panel M – ELCA Churchwide Council Nomination Clergy Male – elect 1

- Rev. Jamie Olson
- Rev. Kevin Sock
- Rev. Robert Wagner
- Rev. Robert Way

Panel N – ELCA Churchwide Council Nomination Clergy Female – elect 1

- Rev. Dense Arpino
- Rev. Dena Gable
- Rev. Terryann Talbot-Moses
- Rev. Susan Williamson

Synod Council Report 1

Upon recommendation of Synod Council **SC16.04.04** (Bulletin of Reports pg. 54) & in consideration of Resolution **SA16.06.01** (Bulletin of Reports pg. 116)

- That the Northern Somerset & Southern Somerset Conferences be permitted to merge. Having received preliminary approval from the congregations of these two conferences at the Spring 2016 Conference Caucus meetings & having the Rev. Ed Devore speak in favor of the merger from the floor of the Assembly.
- That this newly created conference shall henceforth be known as the Laurel Highlands Conference.
- There is a seconded from the floor of the assembly... the motion is adopted

Upon recommendation of Synod Council **SC16.05.04** (Bulletin of Reports pg. 55)

- That the nomination of the Rev. David Weinhold to the Sequanota Board be approved. There is a second from the floor of the assembly... the motion is adopted

Upon recommendation of Synod Council **SC16.04.11** (Bulletin of Reports pg. 55)

- That the Leadership Committee's Compensation, Benefits & Reimbursement Report & Guidelines for 2017 be adopted. There is a second from the floor of the assembly... the motion is adopted

Installation of New Deans

- Pr. Dena Gable was installed as Dean of the Laurel Highlands Conference
- Pr. Karen Telyea was installed as Dean of the Blair/Huntingdon Conference

A presentation by Elizabeth Hendrickson (Communications Coordinator)– Director of Evangelical Mission (DEM)/ Kenya Evangelical Lutheran Church (KELC)

- KELC: 180 congregations – 20,000 members
- Worship in KELC is a traditional Lutheran Liturgy, with Kenyan flourishes
- Elizabeth spoke about the variety of ministries associated with KELC
- We were able to see photos of the Pastors, Deacons & Evangelists who have received Motor Bikes funded by the Allegheny Synod
- See more at the Global Mission Display here at Synod Assembly

Hymn & Prayer

- Hymn: Lord, listen to your children praying
- Prayers for the Holy Spirit to guide us, prayer for the food we are about to partake.

LUNCH

Recognition & Anniversaries

Recognition of Fred & Arleen Fluke - Shawnee Campground Ministry

- 10-year anniversary & retirement
- Rev. Toby Holland will be taking over the Shawnee Campground Ministry

Congregational Anniversaries

- Trinity Lutheran in State College: 50 years - Rev. Ron Miller
- Gatesburg Lutheran: 200 years - Rev. Susan Williamson

Retirements

- Rev. Larry Hoover
- Rev. Terry-Ann Talbot Moses ¹

Ordination Recognitions

- Nancy Gable (Diaconal Minister – 37 years of service)
 - The 3rd Diaconal Minister ever consecrated by the ELCA
- Rev. Rebecca Horn – Interim at St Luke's - Center Hall
- Rev. Scott Schul – Grace-State College – 5 years
- Rev. Kevin Shock – 10 years
- Rev. Larry Hoover – 10 years

¹ On May 1st, 2016 the Rev. Terry-Ann Talbot Moses retired following 33-years of active ministry. Pastor TM was called home into the Church Triumphant on August 5th, 2016

- Rev. Linda McElroy Thomas – 15 years
- Rev. Bob Way – 15 years
- Rev. Greg VanDyke – 20 years
- Rev. Ray Short – 30 years
- Rev. Carol Custead – 35 years
- Rev. Scott Custead – 35 years
- Rev. Ed DeVore – 35 years
- Rev. Hans Peter Helmers – 40 years
- Rev. James Rill – 40 years
- Rev. Nelson Ilgenfritz – 40 years
- Rev. Bill Triebe – 40 years
- Rev. John Klingemen – 50 years
- Rev. Dean Rupp – 60 years
- Rev. Ed Harshbarger – 60 years
- Rev. Dr. D. Wilbert Boerstler – 60 years

Presentation of the 2016 Walton Holl Award to the Rev. Dr. D. Wilbert Boerstler

Remembrance of those who have departed: Rev. Ron Reed & Mr. James Beener

- Psalm 121
- Isaiah 49:15-16
- Hebrews 12:1-2
- John 11:25-26

Plenary Session II

ELCA Presentation

Rev. Michael Stadie – Program Director: Lutheran Disaster Response US

The mission support dollars of the Allegheny makes these things possible thru Churchwide Organizations...

- 62 new congregation began in 2015
- Renewal efforts in 134 congregations
- Supported 235 students at the eight ELCA Seminaries
- Supporting 224 missionaries in more than 40 countries
- ELCA World Hunger in 60 countries & more than 347 programs in the US
- \$6.8 million in gifts put to use by Lutheran Disaster Response responded to eight states & twenty-three countries
- 100% of our support to Lutheran Disaster Response is passed along to those in need

Partner Ministry Presentations

ALSM – Dr. Pat Savage & Marty-Jo Stellabotte

- How ALSM touches lives
- We touch lives with human service programs that span the generations

Penn State Campus Ministry – Alicia Anderson

- Campus Ministry is our presence (as the Allegheny Synod) on campus
- Thank you for your support

Portico – Kurt Fee

- A ministry of the ELCA – the benefits arm of our church
- Spearheading a wellness reformation throughout the ELCA

LAMPa – Rev. Scott Schul (Chairman of the LAMPa Policy Council)

- LAMPa spans the state of Pennsylvania, including two ELCA regions & seven ELCA Synods
- The state's oldest Public Policy Office (37-years)
- LAMPa is very active in the areas of...
 - Hunger
 - Affordable Housing
 - Education

Planned Giving – Rev. Liz Polanski

- Demystifying how... when a Christian dies leaving a legend of love & peace, while leaving a legacy thru gift planning

Synod Council Report II

Budget Present - Rev. Greg VanDyke

- You, the congregations of the Allegheny Synod are now the Narrative Budget by what you have accomplished

Upon motion by Spence Garvin, seconded from the floor of the Assembly

- **SA16.06.08** – the 2017-18 fiscal-year budget is brought before the Assembly

Formula of Agreement

A presentation by Rev. K. Joy Kaufman – General Presbyter of the Huntingdon Presbytery bringing us Ecumenical greetings from the Presbyterian Church USA

- Rev. Kaufman spoke on the Seven points of the *Formula of Agreement*²
 - Recognize each other as churches
 - We will withdraw condemnations
 - We recognize each other's baptisms
 - We recognize each other's ordered ministries
 - Exploring partnering
 - Enter into continual public dialogue
 - Offer each other mutual admiration & admonition to build our relationship

Reformation Study & Conversation 2 - Rev. Dr. Jane Strohl

- At it's very root, Lutheran Theology understands that life is complicated
- We Lutherans are a mixed body – simultaneously saint & sinner
- Martin Luther was not Little Miss Sunshine, but he was in-fact a treasure & maybe not in an earthly vessel
- Faith & Works was the great dilemma of the reformation
 - Love your neighbors as yourselves... that is unbelievably hard work & it involves a lot of works
- Read the Large Catechism for more insight into Martin Luther
- It's because God first loved us that we know what it looks like, we know what it feels like
- You are justified by faith, apart from works under the law
 - Know that you don't have to do anything... what are you going to do?
 - This is a call to freedom that is breathing, taking & also very daunting
- At the side of the grave we have nothing to rely on aside from the salvation promised by Jesus Christ
 - As we walk away from that grave, we walk away, because we know that our loved-one is safe
- We need to work, work, work for our neighbors
- We know & we trust & we do... and we become the kind of person that we don't mind going out to have a beer with.

² *As churches of the Reformation, the ELCA, Reformed Church in America, United Church of Christ, and the Presbyterian Church U.S.A., signed an ecumenical proposal of historic importance in 1997. After 32-years in the making, and in light of identified doctrinal differences and consensus, these churches worked together to form a foundational document titled a "Formula of Agreement". The agreement declared these four churches together in full communion on the basis of a common calling, a desire to bear visible witness to the unity of the church, and a need to engage together in God's mission.*

Reference and Counsel Report I

SA16.06.02 – Memorial for Military Personnel, Veterans & their Families (Bulletin of Reports pg. 117)

- Seconded from the floor of the Assembly... the motion is adopted
- This Memorial was forwarded to the ELCA Churchwide & will be placed on the agenda (combined with several other similarly worded Memorials) at Churchwide Assembly in New Orleans (August 2016)³

Upon motion by Rev. Ron Miller, seconded from the floor of the Assembly

- **SA16.06.09** – A resolution Recognizing the Work of Agencies and Institutions in Ministry... the motion is adopted⁴

Gettysburg Seminary Report Rev. Dr. Angela Zimmann

- Since the January consolidation announcement – work continues on the new venture, combining the strengths & legacies of two of the great Seminaries
 - Thank you for your gifts, prayers, contributions
 - Thank you for sending your students to Seminary
 - This is an exciting & hopeful time
 - This is a disruptive time
 - We feel called into act, in response to the decline of entry into the ministry
 - This new concept provides a more sustainable model for seminary education
- Three hopes for this new enterprise
 - Educate leaders for the church
 - Continue the tradition of excellence at both Seminaries, in a financially sustainable way
 - Accessibility & affordable to new students (including a distance distributed learning environment)
- A student first approach
- Steering Committee + 8 working groups --- a unanimous vote by both boards to move forward... coming together by July 1, 2017
- 3 requests... newschooloftheology.info
 - Come to the source for credible information
 - Keep us in prayer
 - Keep supporting Theological Education
- Together we can respond to God's call to provide creative leaders in God's Church

³ See Item #1 in the *End Notes* of these minutes to read the disposition of this Memorial at the 2016 Churchwide Assembly

⁴ See Item #2 in the *End Notes* of these minutes to read the text of this Resolution

Report of First Ballot/Second Ballot - Rev. Glenn Foster

Panel A – Synod Council Lay Female – elect 2

- 430 Number of ballots
- 30 number if invalid/abstain votes
- 400 Number of valid votes
- 101 Minimum number needed to elect
 - *Ann Ferry* - 204
 - *Victoria Hrivnak* – 196

Ann Ferry is elected to a three-year term on Synod Council

Panel B – Synod Council Lay Male – elect 1

- 215 Number of ballots
- 4 number if invalid/abstain votes
- 211 Number of valid votes
- 107 Minimum number needed to elect
 - *Sam Dunkle* - 141
 - *Marlin Plymette II* - 70

Sam Dunkle is elected to a three-year term on Synod Council

Panel C – Synod Council Clergy Male or Female – elect 1

- 215 Number of ballots
- 2 number if invalid/abstain votes
- 213 Number of valid votes
- 108 Minimum number needed to elect
 - *Rev. Denise Arpino* – 77
 - *Rev. Drew McCaffery* - 76
 - *Rev. Jamie Olson* - 42
 - *Rev. Terryann Talbot-Moses* - 18

There is no election on ballot #1. The Rev. Denise Arpino & the Rev. Drew McCaffery will move on to ballot #2.

Panel D – Synod Council Youth Representative (age 15-21) – elect 1

There were no nominations; therefore there is no election⁵

Panel E – Consultation Committee Clergy Male – elect 1

- 215 Number of ballots
- 2 number if invalid/abstain votes
- 213 Number of valid votes
- 108 Minimum number needed to elect
 - Rev. Drew McCaffery – 85
 - Rev. Robert Way – 128

The Rev. Robert Way is elected to a six-year term on the Consultation Committee

Panel F – Consultation Committee Clergy Female – elect 1

- 215 Number of ballots
- 1 number if invalid/abstain votes
- 214 Number of valid votes
- 108 Minimum number needed to elect
 - Rev. Terryann Talbot-Moses – 214

The Rev. Terryann Talbot-Moses is elected to a six-year term on the Consultation Committee

Panel G – Discipline Committee Lay Male – elect 1

- 215 Number of ballots
- 1 number if invalid/abstain votes
- 214 Number of valid votes
- 108 Minimum number needed to elect
 - Thomas Horn – 214

Thomas Horn is elected to a six-year term on the Discipline Committee

⁵ Upon motion by Bishop Rhyne, seconded by Todd Hammaker at the July 2016 Synod Council meeting **SC16.07.05** – that Josh Dunkle be appointed to fill the vacant seat on Synod Council as a Youth Representative effective thru the 2017 Synod Assembly... the motion is adopted

Panel H – Discipline Committee Lay Female – elect 1

- 215 Number of ballots
- 1 number if invalid/abstain votes
- 214 Number of valid votes
- 108 Minimum number needed to elect
 - Kim Vandevander – 214

Kim Vandevander is elected to a six-year term on the Discipline Committee

Panel I – Discipline Committee Clergy Female – elect 3

- 645 Number of ballots
- 53 Number if invalid/abstain votes
- 592 Number of valid votes
- 100 Minimum number needed to elect
 - Rev. Judith Simonson - 210
 - Rev. Jennifer Soltis - 197
 - Rev. Terryann Talbot-Moses – 194

The Rev. Judith Simonson, the Rev. Jennifer Soltis & the Rev. Terryann Talbot-Moses are each elected to a six-year term on the Discipline Committee

Panel J – Synod Vice President – elect 1

- 215 Number of ballots
- 4 number if invalid/abstain votes
- 211 Number of valid votes
- 106 Minimum number needed to elect
 - Samuel Dunkle - 147
 - Marlin Plymette II – 64

Sam Dunkle is elected to a 4-year term as Synod Council Vice President

In light of Mr. Dunkle’s election as Synod Council Vice President, he will vacate his election as a member of Synod Council (Panel B). Bishop Rhyne has appointed Marlin Plymette II to fill that three-year term on Synod Council.

Panel K – Synod Secretary – elect 1

- 215 Number of ballots
- 5 number if invalid/abstain votes
- 210 Number of valid votes
- 106 Minimum number needed to elect
 - David Finney – 210

David Finney is re-elected to a second four-year term as Secretary of the Allegheny Synod Council

Panel L – Synod Treasurer – elect 1

- 215 Number of ballots
- 4 number if invalid/abstain votes
- 211 Number of valid votes
- 106 Minimum number needed to elect
 - Todd Hammaker – 211

Todd Hammaker is re-elected to a second four-year term as Treasurer of the Allegheny Synod Council

Panel M – ELCA Churchwide Council Nomination Clergy Male – elect 1

- 215 Number of ballots
- 0 number if invalid/abstain votes
- 215 Number of valid votes
- Plurality of valid votes needed to nominate
 - Rev. Jamie Olson - 33
 - Rev. Kevin Shock – 103
 - Rev. Robert Wagner – 48
 - Rev. Robert Way – 31

The Rev. Kevin Shock has been nominated for election to serve on Churchwide Council

Panel N – ELCA Churchwide Council Nomination Clergy Female – elect 1

- 215 Number of ballots
- 3 number if invalid/abstain votes
- 212 Number of valid votes
- Plurality of valid votes needed to nominate
 - Rev. Dense Arpino - 69
 - Rev. Dena Gable - 70
 - Rev. Terryann Talbot-Moses - 12
 - Rev. Susan Williamson – 61

The Rev. Dena Gable has been nominated for election to serve on Churchwide Council⁶

A second ballot was cast to decide Panel C – Synod Council Clergy Male or Female – elect 1

⁶ The Rev. Dena Gable of the Levansville/Bakersville parish was elected by the 2016 Churchwide Assembly (New Orleans, LA) to serve on the ELCA Churchwide Council.

Hymn & Prayer

Saturday, June 4 2016

Morning Eucharist

Plenary Session III

Morning Worship - Camp Sequanota Staff

Sequanota Lutheran Conference Center and Camp - Rev. Carol Custead asked for persons in the Assembly to consider serving on the Board of Directors for a three-year term. The Board is presently in need of persons with skills in Marketing & Finance.

Report of Second Ballot – Rev. Glenn Foster

Panel C – Synod Council Clergy Male or Female – elect 1

- 205 Number of ballots
- 2 number if invalid/abstain votes
- 203 Number of valid votes
- 102 Minimum number needed to elect
 - *Rev. Denise Arpino* – 108
 - *Rev. Drew McCaffery* – 95

Rev. Denise Arpino is elected to a three-year term on Synod Council

Synod Council Report III - Budget Vote Rev. Greg VanDyke

Comments from the floor of the Assembly on the 2017-18 Budget proposal...

- Rev. Scott Schul – stands in support of the budget & spoke in support of adding a budget line in the future to support LAMPa.
- Rev. Kevin Shock – spoke in favor of the comments of Rev. Schul & in favor of a greater commitment to Gettysburg Seminary & Penn State Campus Ministries & in favor of providing free camp experiences to the children of our congregations.
- Todd Hammaker – “What you see in this budget is a reflection of what you do in mission support.”
- Rev. Paul Tomkiel – stands in support of the budget & suggests creating a prioritized list of where the next surplus would be committed.
- Motion ***SA16.06.08*** (the 2017-18 fiscal-year budget) is adopted

Biblical Study and Conversation 3 Rev. Dr. Jane Strohl

Faith & Works

- Talking about work in the area of vocation
- Luther believed that there was only one spiritual estate – ***Baptism***
 - You can glorify God & serve your neighbor in all kinds of work
 - Being a parent is a holy vocation
 - Marriage is a far better crucible to learning about faith, than any monastery
- The balancing act of faith in vocation
 - Pastors that are torn between caring for their congregations & caring for their family
- This is the life God created, this is the life God sustains
- When do you draw back & replenish... in order to do the work you must do
- What we are able to do with our lives, to live by Grace... life can be a blast
- Things might not work out the way you have hoped, but that doesn't mean you shouldn't try
- This is how baptism is lived out, Luther reveled in the power of Baptism
- Because of Baptism I know whose I am, and it is a state that we live in forever
- Baptism is also an antidote to temptation – it creates the strength in us to say “Get behind me Satan”
- Baptism refreshes us, it wipes away our tears, it's always there & it renews life
- When you are brought before God, in baptism there is no pretense & no denial
- The water is always there
- Shake your baptismal water everywhere... like a really wet dog

Staff Reports

Rev. Tim Knauss; Director for Evangelical Mission (Bulletin of Reports pgs. 46-47)

- Why for God's Sake does your congregation (your Synod) exist?

Rev. Paula Schmitt; Assistant to the Bishop (Bulletin of Reports pgs. 48-49)

- Ignite – transforming the DYD program
- Journey of Discernment - exploring a career in ministry

Committee Reports

Rev. Elisa Osman; Global Mission (Bulletin of Reports pgs. 82-83)

- Elisa shared the accomplishments made this past year in Global Mission, particularly in the Kenya Evangelical Lutheran Church

Marlin Plymette; Candidacy/Leadership (Bulletin of Reports pgs. 80-81)

- Highlighted work of the Candidacy Committee

Rev. Scott Klimke; Stewardship (Bulletin of Reports pgs. 105-107)

- Spoke on the challenge of last year to raise \$800,000 in Mission Support Funding... de-bunking the myth of downward spiraling financial patterns

Carol McClure; Allegheny Synod Women's Organization

- Highlighted the work of the ASWO

Rev. Susan Williamson; Practice Discipleship

- Being a student, practicing always, taking part in Practicing Discipleship, a ministry of the ELCA Youth Ministry Network, funded by the Congregational & Synodical Mission Unit of the ELCA.
- The four areas of focus in the Allegheny Synod
 - Wondering at Creation
 - Wondering Creatively
 - Wondering about Confirmation
 - Wondering about the Church

Rev. Paula Schmitt; 500th Reformation Anniversary Celebration

Reference & Counsel Report 2

SA16.06.10 - The ***Resolution of Appreciation*** presented by the Committee on Reference & Counsel, seconded by Bishop Rhyne... the motion is adopted by acclamation⁷

Prayer & Closing of Assembly

Bishop Rhyne offered prayers for the newly elected Bishops.

Bishop Rhyne acknowledged the outstanding & long-term service of Spence Garvin; as the outgoing Vice President of the Allegheny Synod, as a former Treasurer of the Allegheny Synod & as a Lay Worship Leader in the congregations of the Synod.

Conclusion of Synod Assembly

Bishop Rhyne declared the 29th Annual Assembly of the Allegheny Synod to be closed at 12 Noon.

⁷ See Item #3 in the End Notes of these minutes to read the text of this Resolution

End Notes:

Item #1

Category B10: Supporting Military Personnel, Veterans and their Families
Churchwide Assembly Action – CA16.06.29

To receive with gratitude, the memorials of Eastern Washington-Idaho, Pacifica, Southeastern Minnesota, Southwestern Texas, East-Central Wisconsin, Southern Ohio, Northwestern Pennsylvania, *Allegheny*, Metropolitan Washington, D.C., West Virginia-Western Maryland and Southeastern synods regarding their interest and vision for ministry affirming those called to military service, veterans, their families and this church's support for chaplaincy ministries;

To recognize with gratitude ELCA members, congregations, agencies and institutions which have initiated creative ministry and mission engaging members of the military, veterans, ELCA chaplains and their families;

To encourage congregations, agencies, families and individuals to assist those considering military service and those continuing in service through moral discernment and vocational guidance concerning the life-changing decisions they must make involving justice, service and the ethical application of force;

To direct the Office of the Presiding Bishop to establish a Sunday of prayer and action near Veterans Day each year to unite this church in prayer and encourage assistance for military members, veterans, ELCA chaplains and families;

To encourage ELCA members, congregations and synods to offer care and support for returning veterans;

To encourage congregations to seek out incarcerated veterans to thank them for their service and to help them access veterans' benefits so that they might have a more successful transition upon release;

To affirm the publication of the Prayer Book for the Armed Services and to encourage congregations to present gift copies to veterans, military personnel and chaplains;

To encourage synod bishops, candidacy committees, congregations and seminaries to make known the need for ordained pastors to serve as chaplains in the military, Veterans Affairs hospitals, federal corrections and other chaplaincies;

To urge ELCA members and congregations to contribute to the ELCA Federal Chaplaincy Ministries Fund for Leaders Scholarship to attract the next generation of chaplains; and

To encourage ELCA seminaries, colleges and universities to integrate practicing chaplains to teach about specialized ministries, preach in chapel, and foster awareness and consideration of a call to chaplaincy ministry.

Item #2

Resolution *SA16.06.09*

Recognizing the Work of Agencies and Institutions in Ministry

Whereas: The Christian faith convicts Lutherans to care for those who cannot care for themselves; that this caring is extended to, but not limited by, feeding the poor, providing shelter for the homeless, welcoming the stranger, raising up our children in healthy, nurturing environments, educating and teaching the Gospel, and being instructed and inspired by the command of Christ, as you did it to one of the least of these who are members of my family, you did it to me; and

Whereas: Martin Luther, the Father of Lutheranism, set the example in the sixteenth century of caring for the down-trodden and disadvantaged through his unending support of his community through planned and intentional outreach, social ministry, education; and

Whereas: The Lutheran Church in general and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America in particular has summoned ELCA Lutherans for the building and strengthening of outreach as well as networks for social justice at a local and community level through a large, vibrant, and growing network of affiliated agencies and institutions to serve wherever needed; and

Whereas: The Lutheran Theological Seminary at Gettysburg was founded in 1826 and has prepared men and women leaders for the Lutheran church; and the Lutheran Theological Seminary at Gettysburg has served Lutherans with faithfulness and distinction; and the Seminary's purpose remains to teach, form, and nurture seminarians for public ministry and service to the church; and with the instruction of the faculty continuing to offer relevant 21st century instruction in a broad range of comprehensive and theological disciplines to men and women preparing to serve the church; and
Whereas: Gettysburg College was founded in 1832 and Susquehanna University was founded in 1858 to build a better future for the children of the region through education directed toward the whole person; and that Gettysburg College and Susquehanna University have become a driving force in providing individuals from all walks of life a new and promising future; and

Whereas: Allegheny Lutheran Social Ministries was founded in 1948 with the commitment of thousands of volunteers, donors, and faith partners; providing comprehensive residential options and support services to seniors in retirement communities, rehabilitation centers, skilled care nursing services, personal care residences, at-home care, at-home health care, adult day services, counseling, children's services, geriatric care management, and caregiver support; and

Whereas: The Lutheran Conference and Camp at Sequanota was founded in 1946; in beautiful, natural landscapes providing refuge from the hustle of everyday life; and with the goal of empowering guests to grow in their understanding and appreciation of God's creation through encounters with the natural world; to develop Christ-centered relationships in a unique place apart; and to build strong and faithful leaders for the future of the church and world; we gather as a community of faith to live life in the joy of God's Grace at a slower pace; and

Whereas: campus ministry at UPJ and PSU enriches the lives of students as they discern their future careers; and

Whereas: Lutheran Advocacy Ministry in PA, as the first state advocacy office in the ELCA founded in 1979 serves as our voice to plead the cause of those suffering injustice; and

Whereas: The Breezewood Truckers and Travelers ministry provides a safe haven for those persons who are on the road and who may need Christian hospitality; and
Whereas: Congregations of the Allegheny Synod have joined hands with members and other community partners in the development and management of and enrichment programs focused on changing lives; therefore,

Be it resolved:

1. That all affiliated and related agencies, institutions, services, and programs under the sponsorship and support of Allegheny Synod join with the three expressions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, identified as congregations, synods, and churchwide, by affirming and endorsing the Allegheny Synod agencies, institutions, services and programs as a vital expression of the church within this Synod and as representing the full expression of the body of Christ within the Lutheran commitment of the Allegheny Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.
2. That the Allegheny Synod pray for, celebrate, lift up, and support this vital expression of the church as the hands of Christ serving in numerous and diverse ways both in the Allegheny Synod and throughout the State of Pennsylvania.

Submitted by:
Pastor Ron Miller
Trinity Lutheran Church, State College

Item #3

Resolution *SA16.06.10*

Resolution of Appreciation

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

Whereas, the Holy Spirit has enabled the Assembly in its action to proclaim its theme, “We are Lutheran,” in our Allegheny Synod and through all of the world,

Therefore, be it resolved that the Allegheny Synod Assembly convening in Altoona June 3 and 4 expresses its thanks

- To Pastor Walter Startzel and the worship team for planning our worship experiences. We celebrate the talents of the wonderful musicians and the Assembly Choir that rocked the house.
- To the Assembly Planning Committee for once again fulfilling the responsibility for all of the arrangements for a productive assembly at the Blair County Convention Center and for achieving its task of organizing an agenda of business, education, worship, and meals;
- To Tere Rill for her leadership of the Assembly Planning Committee;
- To Bishop Rhyne for the bumper sticker to proclaim to the whole world that Jesus loves us;
- To Spence Garvin for serving as our Synod Vice President. Well-done, good and faithful servant.
- To Todd Hammaker for his financial expertise and oversight;
- To our synod partners for sharing stories of their ministry and for ministries among us;
- To David Finney, our synod secretary, for organizing our records and our minutes;
- To the technology crew for making sure the microphones were in working order;
- To Pastor Michael Stadie, our ELCA representative, for acknowledging our support of Lutheran Disaster Response where the funds apply to the persons affected by disaster;
- To Bishop Rhyne for reminding us that the Holy spirit is moving;
- To the “pages” who hustled to make sure we had the papers and information we needed to conduct business;
- To our Bible Study leader, Dr. Jane Strohl who lifted high the message that Jesus isn’t out to get us but to love us;
- To Pastor Bob Way for serving as our resident photographer;
- To Pastor Polanzke for teaching us how to do the “Whip Nay-Nay”;
- To the new ordinands for his willingness and commitment to serving our church in pastoral ministry;
- To the new pastors in the synod who have begun their ministry journey with us in the Allegheny Synod;

- To Elizabeth Hendrickson for the good work in our companion synod, Kenya. Praise the Lord.
- To Bishop Rhyne for calling our attention to the feast of the Holy Martyrs of Uganda;
- To the rostered persons who celebrated anniversaries of ordination and especially to Pastor Boerstler who brought to our attention on the 60th anniversary of his ordination that we should never buy a pot without a lid;
- To the retired rostered persons for their many years of ministry among us;
- To the congregations who celebrated anniversaries;
- To Pastor Van Dyke for his brevity and making the angels sing for Bishop Rhyne;
- To the newly elected synod council and other synod leaders and to Sam Dunkle for his willingness to serve as the Synod Vice-President;
- To Gettysburg Seminary for the vision of the New School of Theology and highlighting the desperate need for pastoral leadership now and into the future; and
- To some behind-the-scenes assistants among us (to name a few)... Michelle Bossler for her clerical expertise; to the enlister of lectors, Miss Ima Readen; to Mr. Hammaker's assistant, Dr. Seymour Mulla; to Mr. Hugh Wake, the Assembly counter; to Ms. Collette O'Day, the Clock Watcher; to the communications director, Mr. George Stayontopofthis; to the grammar consultant, Ms. I. M. Shirley Wright; to the Audio Visual Expert, Kent C. Nuttin; to the prayer leader, Pastor Denise R. Sore; to the timekeeper, Bea Dunn Sooner; to the roster keeper, C. Moore Kollars; to the teller, All N. Favor; to the social issue facilitator, Eileen Wright; to the adjournment mover, Frieda Goh; and to the Bishop's self-esteem Guru, Hugh D'Mann; and to all those persons who once again worked together to conduct a productive and prayerful assembly filled with warm fellowship and lively discussion.

This Assembly called upon us to remember that we are Lutherans.

May we focus on the message, "God's work, our hands."