

Section D

Reports of Committees

And

Task Groups

Candidacy Committee

www.elca.org/candidacy

One of the more recent hymns, twentieth century not sixteenth, which has gained favor in our congregations, is “I, the Lord of Sea and Sky”. Each verse of the hymn asks the question “Whom shall I send?” The refrain replies, “Here I am, Lord. Is it I, Lord? I have heard you calling in the night.” The affirmative response is then made “I will go, Lord ...”

When I was in elementary and Jr. High school, it was customary to raise your hand if the teacher asked a question for which you had the answer. If it was a difficult spelling word or a complicated math problem and you knew you had the answer, you along with the others who wanted to be selected raised your hand. Sometimes there would be vigorous waving. Especially, if you had the answer and you wanted to be noticed.

I want to believe that all rostered leaders in our congregations, our synod, and nationally raise their hand and with abandon wave them whenever God asks the question “Whom shall I send?” It is my expectation that as candidacy committee we are working side by side with candidates from our synod who have raised their hands, followed by vigorous waving, and said, “I will go Lord...” As members of the committee, both rostered and lay, we have said yes to God and the church to serve the now and future church and those potential leaders who have affirmed God’s call in their lives.

It is a time of change and challenge for those who are moving toward rostered leadership in the life of ELCA community. Congregational life is changing and God requires that the leaders of Christian community change as well. Our committee, working together with our seminaries, congregations, and candidates, seeks to support each individual as best we can and to prepare them to live out their response of “I will go, Lord...”

The guidelines that the committee follows are found on the ELCA website under Candidacy Manual and Candidacy Handbook. These are available to all. We are also responsible to the documents of the ELCA that define appropriate lifestyle for Rostered Leaders. These documents have changed in light of the actions taken by the national assembly in 2009. As candidacy committee, we serve at the pleasure of our synod bishop and as a representative of the ELCA.

At the present time, there are twelve rostered leaders on the committee this includes: Rev. Dr. Larry Hand, assistant to the Bishop; Rev. Dr. Robert Robinson, Seminary Faculty Representative, Rev. Peggy Wuertele, Region Seven Representative for the ELCA; Rev. David Hinkelman, Chair; Ms. Rebecca Kolowé, Diaconal Minister, Rev. Maggie Ainslie, Rev. Kay Braun, Rev. Nancy Brown, Rev. Cornelius Eaddy, Rev. Lee Miller, II, Rev. Paul Neff, Rev. Dan Schaefer, and the following seven lay members make up the committee roster of nineteen persons total: Ms Tracey Beasley, Mr. Rick Eberts, Mr. Charles Ferguson, Ms. Iris Hernandez, Mr. Fred Renigar, Mr. Tom Salber, and Ms. Arlette Stansbury. The committee meets six times a year for two day meeting and this includes a retreat with the candidates. Committee members are also assigned to contact teams made up of a rostered member and lay member. Each contact team relates to a maximum of five candidates and is in conversation with these individuals on a regular basis.

A word of thanks to and blessing on the members of the committee for the work they do on our behalf throughout the year.

At the present time, we have a total of twenty-seven candidates in active pursuit of rostering. Of these, twenty-five are Ordained track and three are AIM track. The 2010 class of graduates includes the following: Donald Gleiter, James Goodyear, Donna House, Dwight Mason, Frances Savage, and Mathewos Shibo; all of whom have completed the Ordained Roster Track. As a synod, we wish them God's blessings as they pursue a call to serve the people of God in community.

I would like to share a personal thank you to Bishop Burkat for her support of the work we have been called to do and for her appointment of dedicated and discerning members to the committee. We are grateful to Rev. Dr. Larry Hand for his leadership in this area and for his attention to detail and commitment of time to this important work. A very special thank you to Mr. William Harp for his energy, tracking of the details, and commitment to transparent communication that makes the work of the committee so much more efficient. He is an important addition to the synod staff as support to the work of the Candidacy Committee.

Respectfully Submitted By
Rev. David Hinkelman,
Chairperson by appointment of Bishop Burkat.

Eastern Pennsylvania Lutheran Camp Corporation (Bear Creek Camp)
www.bearcreekcamp.org

Bear Creek Camp and Conference Center is the **year-round outdoor ministry** of both the NE and SE Pennsylvania Synods of the ELCA. In our mission to provide opportunities for adventure and discovery within God's creation and within Christian community, we served 1,200 children through our summer church camp programs last year. While we had hoped to increase the number of our summer camp participants, the state of the economy left us feeling satisfied with only a slight decline in our camper numbers. Over 4,000 were impacted by our Nature Center, and retreat programs and facilities ministered to another several thousand adults and children.

After nine years of talks, contract revisions, surveys, appraisals, and legal counsel reviews, Bear Creek Camp entered into a **Conservation Easement** on October 28 with the state and North Branch Land Trust for 1,880 acres of our 2,800 acre site. This contractual agreement will protect the camp's unique Pocono plateau ecosystem from future development, while making it available to the public for passive recreation uses, like hiking, bird watching, and cross country skiing.

The grant from the state for the conservation easement paid all expenses, provided for \$210,000 of immediate renovations and equipment replacement (which will be implemented throughout 2010), and created a \$1.1m **Endowment Fund**. Investment earnings from this fund will be used

for such things as camperships, capital improvements, marketing efforts, financial development, and new program ventures.

In response to the Synod offering a \$10k **Challenge Grant** in early 2009, families and congregations contributed \$10,287, resulting in a total gift of \$20,287 to BCC. A huge “Thank you!” to SEPA Synod for this fantastic act of partnering. Your support in a financially difficult time made a huge impact on our ability to offer quality staff and programs this past year.

A 90 acre **Timber Sale** was successfully completed in December. Forestlands Consultants were employed to ensure that such harvest of trees would result in a healthier forest diversification, wildlife habitat enhancement, and profitable use of our renewable resources. Net proceeds of \$37,500 paid down the remaining balance owed for construction of the Sanctuary, the new outdoor worship chapel and amphitheater.

A Task Force met for a retreat at camp in September to review the report and recommendations of a national **Outdoor Ministry Audit** team, which conducted six listening posts with board members, interested persons, and staff from both synods, as well as the camp staff and executive director. A SEPA Synod team (Pat Robinson, Adam Marles, Rev Chris Weidner, and Molly Beck Dean) worked with a NEPA Synod team and a BCC team to identify focus areas, explore issues, and form strategies.

The six **major focus areas** identified in the Audit were: History and Ownership; Board Training and Development; Strategic Planning; Communications; Site Management and Renewal; Personnel. Each area was assigned to a task force team, which will meet throughout upcoming months to facilitate these outcomes. We look forward to implementing and sharing changes in the future toward the end of stronger partnerships, more meaningful programs, clearer communications, more efficient use of human resources, better maintained facilities, and an exciting strategic plan for accomplishing excellent outdoor ministry here in eastern Pennsylvania.

We again accomplished a number of facility **renovations and improvements**. A big thanks to everyone who made these projects successful. A few of those projects were:

- Painted Office/Retreat House
- Upgraded entrance road
- Sanctuary landscaping
- Volleyball court landscaping
- Adirondack shelter platforms

Bear Creek Camp asks all of our churches and supporters to please consider **adopting a project in 2010**. At www.bearcreekcamp.org, one can peruse a list of the many projects and equipment needs, and the camp staff is ready to host your crew's work day anytime throughout this year. **Thank you for being a partner with us** in offering excellent outdoor ministry to the churches of eastern Pennsylvania.

Robert Stover, Executive Director

Lutheran Archives Center at Philadelphia

Northeast Regional Archives of the ELCA

www.ltsu.edu/lutheran-archives-philadelphia

As we trust all who read this report know, our Archives Center's Charter is to preserve the long and distinguished history of our Lutheran Church in the Northeast Region of our Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. With excellent new facilities in the undercroft of the Brossman Center on the Philadelphia Seminary campus, we are pleased to report several positive developments in our activity and work:

- Despite the current financial constraints which affects all institutions these days, we continue to offer our services four afternoons each week, as well as by special appointment for particular or special needs. Unfortunately, we were not able to increase hours which is part of our long term planning – that is, to have full time staff service.
- With the services of student workers, we continue to process and catalogue our collections. We hope to announce the initial offerings in this regard within the next year.
- Not only is our space a depository of church records, but we also have a significant collection of artifacts, many of which we have on display. We invite all those interested to come check out these treasures. Please set an appointment so that we have our professional staff – Curator John Peterson or Archivist Kim-Eric Williams – available to host your visit,
- A current goal is to visit and meet with synod leadership to develop our mutual relationships for understanding our joint tasks and arenas of support. We expect that the Synod Archivists will take the lead, calling on our staff as might be helpful.

300th Muhlenberg Anniversary to be Celebrated in 2011-12

The Seminary and our Center will be sponsoring various activities for this significant milestone. As most of you are aware, the capstone activity will be the restoration of the true treasure of our collections, the Journals of Henry Melchoir Muhlenberg's near half century as the Patriarch of the Lutheran Church in America, not only in Pennsylvania, but also "Adjacent States". As this report is written, we are very close to the half way mark in securing funds for matching the near \$100,000 grant from the National Park Service in its "Saving America's Treasures" program. We have a little over a year to complete the task and count on our "friends" for contributions to complete this task. We welcome your inquiry as to how you can help.

George E. Handley, President
For the Board of Directors, LACP

**Report to the Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod Assembly
From the Mission Investment Fund of the ELCA**

www.missioninvestmentfund.org

The Mission Investment Fund of the ELCA continues to serve this synod by providing vital loans for capital projects to new mission congregations, established congregations and ELCA-related ministries. The fund is able to fund these loans through the sale of investments to ELCA ministries and congregation members.

Nearly **800 MIF loans** totaling more than **\$465 million** are at work today in ELCA ministries throughout the United States, Virgin Islands and the Caribbean.

In the Southeastern PA Synod, 21 congregations and ministries currently have Mission Investment Fund loans totaling \$20 million, while many individuals and 85 ministries, including the synod, have investments in the fund totaling \$10 million.*

MIF serves ELCA ministries. In addition to the ministry loans and investments that it offers, the fund provides consulting services to ELCA congregations through its church building consultants and staff architects. The consultants help congregations design building programs that support their mission and evaluate the effectiveness of existing facilities or plans for new facilities. Staff architects provide initial schematic design proposals that congregations can take to local architects. The consultants and architects' services are provided at no charge. Area representatives are available to meet with congregations and ELCA-related ministries regarding the fund's loan and investment opportunities.

Has your congregation invested? Have members of your congregation invested? Join the thousands of individuals, ELCA congregations, ELCA-related ministries and synods – **including the Southeastern PA synod** – that are earning interest on their investments as they help to build the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. Your participation enables the fund to continue this vital ministry. A variety of fixed- and adjustable-rate investment opportunities are available and may be opened with initial investments of as low as \$5. Information on investments and ministry loans is available at www.elca.org/mif and through the fund's representatives listed below who serve this synod.

Thank you for your support of and participation in the Mission Investment Fund. It is a joy to work in partnership with you for the advancement of God's kingdom.

Yours in Christ,

Pr. Mark Wimmer
Area Representative
Phone Number
Mark.wimmer@elca.org

Jeff Spann
Church Building Consultant
973-625-2568
jeff.spann@elca.org

Region 7 Report to 2010 Synod Assemblies

www.elca.org/Who-We-Are/Our-Three-Expressions/Churchwide-Organization/Synodical-Relations/Regions/Region-7.aspx

In 2009 the Region 7 office underwent big changes in staff and in the distribution of work that is done on behalf of the synods and the churchwide expression. In February we learned that due to budget reductions, the three campus ministry coordinator positions in the ELCA were being eliminated and that the Coordinators for Ministry Leadership would take on the administrative duties formerly handled by the Campus Ministry Coordinators. Churchwide financial support for the administrative assistant position was also eliminated. In November, we learned that further reductions meant the elimination of the position of Director of Candidacy, and that the work of candidacy would be shared between the Assistant Director for Leadership in Vocation and Education and the nine coordinators.

The bishops and the staff of the region believe that the work of the region is critical to helping all of us carry out the mission of the church. To that end, the steering committee has worked with us to reduce our expenses, and to use the small amount of “contingency money” that we had accumulated over the years to make the stretch.

Peggy continues to meet with all seven synods’ candidacy committees to provide resources and support to them, to convene faculty panels at the seminaries to assist candidates coming from other traditions and through TEEM, and to provide training as needed by the committees and their leadership. In addition, she is getting to know the 18 or so campus ministries in the region, visiting with their staff and boards and learning how to convene required reviews and provide oversight of the churchwide financial support. We also continue to work with regional initiatives like the First Call Theological Event each January, and the triennial Region 7 Youth Gathering.

Yvonne has increased her responsibilities in the office, continuing to handle our finances, and event registration, and doing more with the coordination of regional gatherings that are requested by our churchwide partners. She is also a good source of information and support when synod staff and other partners have questions.

So, as in all of the church we are looking for creative approaches to reduce expenses while maintaining mission. We thank the synods for being our partners and in all of this we rely on the Grace of a God who never fails us. To God be the Glory!

The Rev. Peggy M. Wuertele
Coordinator for Ministry Leadership, Region 7

Mrs. Yvonne Curtis
Executive Assistant

Ministries of Chaplaincy, Pastoral Care, and Clinical Education MCPPE

The ministries of the SEPA Synod include service by a number of rostered leaders who are involved in a wide variety of Ministries of Chaplaincy, Pastoral Care, and Clinical Education

(MCPCCE). Members of the group continue to represent the Synod in unique and creative contexts wherein the presence of the Gospel addresses God's people in the face of demanding and difficult circumstances.

Those in chaplaincy and specialized ministry currently provide pastoral care to hospitals, rehab centers, retirement communities, nursing homes, hospice facilities, counseling services, prisons, veterans hospitals, mental health facilities, spiritual guidance programs, et al. across the territory of the Synod. Members of this fellowship meet periodically during the year for light repast and discussion of the challenges and rewards of such specialized ministries and the concerns and joys experienced therein.

The group also reviews for recommendation to the bishop those wishing Synod Council call to specialized ministry and assists such candidates in navigating the required criteria.

Current ELCA policy expects three factors to be met for a call to specialized ministry:

- 1) APC certification
- 2) ELCA endorsement
- 3) Confirmation of employment in a chaplaincy position

Anyone interested in an MCPCCE involvement may certainly contact Sr. Jane Roper or Chaplain Ed Neiderhiser for more information.

Congregations seeking adult forum or other topical programs are invited to seek out MCPCCE members as helpful and informative resources.

Respectfully submitted,

Rev. Edward A. Neiderhiser
MCPCCE convener

Tanzania Companion Synod Ministry Team Report

The purpose of our Tanzania Team is to deepen and broaden our companion relationships with the North Eastern Diocese of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Tanzania (ELCT-NED). That is done with encouragement of two major ministry ventures – SEKUCo University, and Mwangaza Education for Partnership – in addition to three foci for our primary work on the team. First, we celebrated our third annual Companion Sunday on the last Sunday in January. Second, we focused on building relationships through visits between our countries, including involvement in a trip by a delegation of eight ELCT-NED pastors and diocese officials in November, 2009. Finally, we have an enthusiastic team which not only helped work towards better relationships amongst our synod's partner congregations, but also helped more congregations to consider (and join in) this exciting companion relationship with a parish in Tanzania.

Mark Singh-Hueter, Outgoing Chairperson – 610-363-6264.

2010 Report of the SEPA Synodical Women of the ELCA

www.elca.org/Growing-In-Faith/Ministry/Women-of-the-ELCA.aspx

“Come to the Waters,” the 2008 triennial theme encourages Women of the ELCA to become connected. The SEPA Women of the ELCA continue to make our presence known in many areas of our churches.

In June 2009 our Special Event promoted the **stewardship** of *Time and Faith – A Balancing Act*. There were workshops to encourage women to be mindful of taking care of their bodies as they feed their souls. Our purpose statement reminds us that we are created in the image of God, and we need to care for ourselves as He cares for us. We were pleased to have Bishop Burkat join us that day.

In the fall of 2009 we held seven conferences using the theme of *Message, Mission, Mentoring and Ministry*. We meet as conferences to learn about news from the Churchwide Women’s Organization (CWO) as well as fellowship in a large group outside our Congregational Unit (CU). These conferences offer ways to share a message. Mission trips were explored; an example of mentoring children with puppeteering, and a unique take on filling different shoes in women’s ministries. When we encourage new groups of women’s ministries or work with women to strengthen existing circles, it helps to know that there are a variety of ways to meet as Women of the ELCA.

Synodical Women’s Organization (SWO) Board member Lisa Brown was appointed Triennial Gathering Promoter for the Eighth Triennial Convention and Gathering to be held in Spokane, WA in July 2011. She visited Spokane in the fall and will visit our spring conferences to share information about the event. At our June synodical convention we will elect 4 delegates to this national convention. The theme is Renew, Respond, Rejoice, and we are looking forward to a strong representation from Southeastern Pennsylvania.

Under the umbrella of **justice**, CUs around the synod filled 17 Flood Buckets that we gave to LWR to be used locally. Throughout the year we collected and recycled more than 250 cell phones, an on-going national appeal, and made 17 school kits for the children of Silver Springs - Martin Luther School. After the Haiti earthquake in January 2010, LWR again appealed to Women of the ELCA to make up and send Health Kits for Haiti. We passed the word quickly and the congregations responded in force.

The spring conferences are planned for April. The topic is *Let it Happen*, Mary’s response to the angel Gabriel. These gatherings will provide an opportunity for the SWO Board to communicate face-to-face with the women in the synod, encourage their service as board members, register early for the Triennial Gathering in 2011, and to invite participation at our June Convention. The convention theme is *Seasoned with Salt* from Colossians 4:6. To be held on June 19, 2010 at Trinity, Lansdale, all women are invited to attend. Bishop Burkat will once again join us, and other special guests will offer a menu of activities.

Called to discipleship in Jesus Christ, we are also enriched by the Bible studies available in **Lutheran Woman Today** magazine and other spiritual programs provided by the Women of the

ELCA. The *Dove's Eye View* is a new column in our newsletter, The Voice, which allows a Congregational Unit to tell its story. These stories remind us that women all over the synod are fulfilling the Women of the ELCA mission to mobilize women to act boldly on their faith in Jesus Christ.

Women's ministries organized as Women of the ELCA gives us the opportunity to be a community of women in many forms including study groups, prayer circles, and mission project coordinators. We strive to live out our purpose statement empowered by the Holy Spirit and eager to discern God's call to where He may lead us.

Respectfully submitted,

Nancy Ischinger
SEPA Synodical President
Women of the ELCA

SEPA Youth Ministry Committee 2010 Annual Report

www.sepayouth.org

Instead of a traditional report to the assembly this year, I asked youth and adults involved with our synod's youth ministry to share what has made our ministry together great over the last year and how they have seen the Spirit at work. This top ten list is the result of their testimonies...

Top Ten List

Why SEPA Synod Youth Ministry Rocks
(aka - How We Know the Spirit Is At Work!)

1. Senior High Youth Gathering, Junior Youth Gatherings... Youth Attended, Youth Run, Youth Approved!
2. Inclusivity is held up as a primary teaching of Christ. We take seriously and openly discuss difficult issues.
3. It's filled with people who don't just think out of the box, they want to get rid of the box.
4. Throughout the 2009-2010 school year, we'll have had youth and adults from at least 65 congregations participate in Synod Youth Ministry Events. People from Advent, Harleysville to Zion, Zion Hill participated in our events! (A-Z of SEPA Congregations!)
5. By lifting up a "Youth of the Month" from throughout the synod, it highlights all the good that youth do as opposed to the media coverage of teens which only seems to see the negative.

6. It provides ways for youth workers to network together, find support, grow and learn, share ideas, build meaningful relationships, and survive this crazy thing we call youth ministry without losing our spirituality or our sanity!
7. Service, Service, Service! – Domestic and International Servant trips that are team planned and led, Helping Hands Day which is fully based on service and worship, servant learning as a focus for our Senior High Youth Gathering.
8. Because if not for SEPA Youth Ministry, I wouldn't have remained active in my faith and probably wouldn't be a candidate for rostered ministry right now.
9. Time with peers is set aside to explore our faith and invite others to grow in faith.
10. An LYO board and planning teams through which youth lead the ministries of our synod instead of being passive participants.

Because God is good, all the time.

Respectfully submitted,
Molly Beck Dean
Assistant to the Bishop – Youth Ministry Specialist
www.sepayouth.org