

2009 Report of the 22nd Annual Assembly of the Metropolitan Chicago Synod, ELCA

The Metropolitan Chicago Synod met in assembly June 5 and 6, 2009, at the Crowne Plaza O'Hare Hotel, 5440 N. River Rd., Rosemont, IL 60018. This year's assembly theme was - *One Lord. One Faith. One Baptism.* The Right Rev. N. P. Phaswana, Bishop of the Central Diocese of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Southern Africa, our companion synod, was the guest speaker at this year's assembly. The churchwide office representative was the Rev. Stephen Bouman, Executive Director, Evangelical Outreach and Congregational Mission, ELCA.

After approval of the agenda, appointment of the committees, and declaration of a quorum, there was an ecclesiastical ballot for synod vice president and secretary. After a second ballot later in the assembly, Ms. Nanette Dahlke was re-elected as synod vice president, and the Rev. Steve Srock was elected as synod secretary, replacing the Rev. Jane Kunzie-Brunner who decided to remove her name from consideration so that she could spend more time with her family.

Vice president Nanette Dahlke, in her report, talked about the number of congregations rostered leaders, and baptized members in the synod, but stressed that we have "ONE Lord, ONE faith, ONE baptism. Notice it is not ONE way of thinking, ONE solution, ONE opinion," she continued, "But ONE Lord, ONE faith, ONE baptism. Not only that but we are charged to 'make every effort to keep the unity of the spirit through the bond of peace.'"

Treasurer Yvette NewberryWhite - who introduced the 2010 synod budget - gave her report, and following a hearing on Friday afternoon, the budget was accepted as presented.

Bishop Wayne N. Miller gave his report – opening with the story of the woman at the well as recorded in John 4. He then asked the assembly to consider the question – "If you came on behalf of your congregation, what would you ask of the man sitting at the well? Miller then went on to discuss the relational aspect of the faith community, and expounded on the ecology of the church, including the mission branch (utilizing his image of the tree that was introduced at last year's assembly) that includes four "fruits" – charity (stewardship of wealth), philanthropy (stewardship of wealth), justice (stewardship of power), and testimony (stewardship of story). It is at the intersection of the stories we share with one another that my story, your story, and our story relate to the story – the faith story. Bishop Miller then connected this to the Turnaround Synod Initiative – stating that it is:

- Calling up the gifts that are already ours
- Awakenning the passion for Testimony
- Working together as a network of resources and relationships
- An offering

Bishop Miller's complete presentation is available online at www.mcselca.org/asmb09/index.html.

A Service of Word and Prayer, led by the synod's Antiracism Team, rounded out the morning. Bp. Phaswana was the homilist for the service. Conferences met over

lunch. After lunch, Bp. Phaswana led the assembly in a Bible study that focused on mission, and the Rev. Jane Kunzie-Brunner gave an update on the Book of Faith Initiative. Mr. Brian Becker, Vice President for Ministry Programs, Wheat Ridge Ministries, told the assembly about "Lutherans Against Violence," a collaborative effort between Wheatridge Ministries, the synod, and the Northern Illinois District, Missouri Synod, providing grants to congregations developing programs to stem the tide of violence in their communities. More information is available at www.wheatridge.org and clicking on *Lutherans Against Violence*. Two sections of workshops and hearings on resolutions, with debate on several resolutions, completed the day, along with a Service of the Word and Affirmation of Christian Vocation, led by the synod's Discipleship Team. The homilist for the service was the Rev. Steven Bouman.

The assembly passed six resolutions:

- RES. 01-09 Round-Robin Congregational Auditing
- RES. 02-09 To Reduce Carbon Footprints
- RES. 03-09 To Promote Peace, Justice, and Reconciliation in the Holy Land
- RES. 04-09 To Encourage Participation in ELCA Anti-Hunger Efforts
- RES. 05-09 A Memorial Concerning Human Sexuality from The Metropolitan Chicago Synod to the 2009 Churchwide Assembly Memorial on Rostering Persons in Same-Gender Relationships
- RES. 06-09 Memorial on Suicide Prevention and Response

Elected to the synod council were Laura Leon (C), Richard Goers (NrW), Rev. Robin Brown, (NE), Karen Scott (S), and other council members - Rev. Carlos Ortiz, Rev. Sue Allen, Rev. Thad Fisher, and Patti Tregoning.

Elected to the Consultation Committee were Bette MacKenzie, Priscilla Paris-Austin, Rev. Craig Mueller, and Rev. Carla Thompson Powell. Elected to the Discipline Committee were Joan Church, Kristin Nelson, Rev. D. Jensen Seyenkulo, and Rev. Ruth VanDemark.

The Rev. Stephen Bouman addressed the assembly on Saturday morning, continuing with the theme of mission. Presiding Bishop Mark S. Hanson's 2009 Synod Assembly DVD was then shown to the assembly.

Brief "Mission Moments," with members of congregations explaining how collectively we are doing God's work with our hands, punctuated the assembly. Mary Anderson, the synod's new Mission Interpreter Coordinator, had previously addressed the assembly, stating that we need to better share what we are doing, and asking for one mission interpreter from each congregation to help assist with the task.

The assembly ended with a Celebration of the Holy Eucharist. Bishop Miller was the homilist. A copy of his sermon is available at www.mcselca.org/asmb09/index.html.

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