

## **Friday, May 30, 2014**

### **Plenary II**

Bishop Barrow called the Assembly to order at 8:03 am. The morning began with devotions shared by Ms. Christine Shander, Children, Youth and Family Director at Galilee Lutheran Church in Pewaukee.

Announcements by Bishop Barrow included “shameless promotions” for among other things Reformation Lutheran Church selling honey in angel jars with the text of John 3:16, support for Cross+Generational Ministry by saying “hunger” and other special words on Friday, with money going to the next offering, and for Rev. Joseph Ellwanger’s new book, a history of his ministry, including work with Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

### **Report of the Credentials Committee**

Mr. David Groenewold gave the report of the Credentials Committee, reporting first that the numbers presented on Thursday evening did not include one sheet of attendees. The revised figures were 125 rostered, 161 lay, for a total of 286 voting members. There were 36 visitors, making a total of 322 individuals present.

He continued by reporting that in attendance by 8:00 am, Friday, May 30, 2014 were 137 rostered persons and 177 lay people, for a total voting membership of 314. Also present were 41 visitors for a total attendance of 355. A quorum was present.

### **ELCA Representative Report**

Rev. Ruben Duran presented the ELCA Representative Report, beginning with a video greeting from Presiding Bishop Elizabeth Eaton. In her video, Bishop Eaton said that the best part of her job is to “see the church in action, our story in action,” expressing and embodying God’s love across this church. Included were profiles of missions, with Bishop Eaton stating the hope that those reached by the ELCA are “not just a bunch of clients on whom we are perpetrating good works.” Her call was for the Lutheran presence to serve all people, including those who may not be Christians, with the notion that “somebody always need somebody,” and that grace is something we all need to receive.

Rev. Ruben offered “greetings from your colleagues south of the border at the churchwide offices,” noting his close work with Rev. Sandy Chrostowski on the synod staff. He praised the “exciting outreach” in our synod, saying that Christ is present on the streets of Milwaukee and in the small towns and rural communities. He offered special thanks for Bishop Barrow’s work, both in the conference of bishops, and in his work “with people who need the church.” Of note was the bishop’s work to affect public policy, with Rev. Ruben also praising the synod’s staff (followed by general applause). He spelled out the intent statements of the ELCA: “we are church, we are Lutheran, we are church together – we are church for the sake of the world.” Being the church together is highlighted this year in the Stories of Faith in Action publication, and in “God’s Work, Our Hands” Sunday on September 7<sup>th</sup>. He urged congregations to being planning for this date, and to consider worship at the service site and/or partnering with other ELCA congregations.

## Minutes of the 2014 Greater Milwaukee Synod Assembly May 30, 2014 – Plenary II (Morning Session)

After taking note of the Assembly's "noisy offerings" for hunger, Rev. Ruben spoke of the ELCA's response to hunger, with, \$18.6 million spent last year, and continued by talking about the continuing renewal of the church by the young: "the church is always renewed by the faith of its youth." This led to comments on the ELCA Youth Gathering in 2015, about which people sometimes say "don't go to Detroit – it's dying." "Yeah, but we remember Good Friday"

Statistics shared included 41 new congregations last year, 155 congregational renewal efforts, 225 seminary students supported, along with international scholarships and the issues of hunger and malaria. Malaria, he said, is something we can tackle, adding that \$250,000 was needed for this work in Namibia.

In observations extending beyond institutional issues, he said that population growth continues most in the south and west, with an ever growing Latino population. But the challenge, he said, is more than geographical, including socio-economic, generational, ethnic and multicultural. He reported that 1,400 existing congregations are located in zip codes with at least 30% Latino population, and 2,000 in zip codes with at least 30% African-American populations. In fact, he said, half of ELCA congregations are in communities that embody some significant form of diversity, whether in population or finance or age.

That said, he added that "our identity is a theological identity," not intrinsically tied only to specific populations. While he said that "we are graying," there are new faces in our midst, and we possess the gift of hospitality. While Lutherans were once "called, gathered and nourished," we now aim to be "claimed, gathered and sent." Geography, he added, is spreading out for new congregations, with a church that can become one with no ethnic majority.

People in communities doing God's work, including a total of 490 new congregations created since the beginning of the ELCA, with another 352 new congregations under development, including 15 new congregations last month. Twenty-eight congregations are in the planning stages.

Priorities for the ELCA include accompanying congregations as evangelical centers for mission, and building capacity for witness and service in the world; especially addressing poverty.

In closing, Rev. Ruben recalled the Road to Emmaus, a downhill road seven miles long. Something happened, he said, on that road that caused the two disciples to run uphill to share the story of their meeting with Christ. What happened? On that road, they began to recognize the presence of Christ, who is walking with us. The disciples were left with burning hearts; they had a different look on the way back, a sense of urgency, couldn't wait to tell the story. We have the expectation to seek Christ every day.

You have been given that because of the presence of Christ. Where are you today, are you on the way to Emmaus? Do you experience the presence of God? Where are you, where is your congregation? God wants to send you back home with a burning heart: everyone, may God bless you with a burning heart.

## Minutes of the 2014 Greater Milwaukee Synod Assembly May 30, 2014 – Plenary II (Morning Session)

Bishop Barrow thanked Rev. Duran. He said that you want people in the national church who are not going to create red tape, but to cut through it.

The bishop explained that Rev. Chrostowski's is absent for daughter's wedding. "She is the broad shoulders we stand on in the office."

In mentioning the malaria challenge, with the special need for \$250,000, it was nice to have ended up with \$300,000. He added that the ELCA's new fund drive, totaling \$200 million, is a goal that says we do want to be a church on the move.

Finally, the bishop had a word about Presiding Bishop Elizabeth Eaton, who, he said, "says more with fewer words than anyone I've ever met."

### **First Ballot**

Bishop Barrow called for voting members to cast votes, using the electronic voting system to cast separate ballots for each open office. Votes were recorded on the electronic system, with results reported at the time of the vote. There were 329 active participants on the voting system (additional registrants had been added since the figures reported by the Credentials Committee). Names in **bold face with asterisks** were declared elected, with each person's vote total following their name.

Nominated for Synod Council

At Large – Clergy – Partial Term from Election through August 2015

**Rev. Jay McDivitt\* 261 votes**

Nominated for the Consultation Committee

Clergy – Partial Term from Election through August 2015

**Rev. Christian Marien\* 269 votes**

Lay Male – Partial Term from September 2014 through August 2019

**Mr. Grant Younquist \* 260 votes**

Lay Male – Partial Term from September 2014 through August 2015

**Mr. Christopher Ellerd\* 260 votes**

Lay Female – Partial Term from September 2014 through August 2015

**Ms. Susan Daniels\* 258 votes**

Lay Female – Partial Term from September 2014 through August 2019

**Ms. Allison Bremer\* 254 votes**

A point of order was raised by Ms. Esther Rusch, Faith Lutheran Church, Cedarburg, regarding the lack of published information on candidates nominated from the floor, including the two candidates for the Partial Clergy Term on the Consultation Committee below. Bishop Barrow ruled that the results of the vote for this position, which had been conducted, were void, and that contested elections involving floor nominees would be deferred until the scheduled second voting period to allow the distribution of such information.

Clergy – Partial Term from September 2014 through August 2015

Rev. Sheila Rawn – Floor Nomination

Rev. Ari Mattson – Floor Nomination

Nominated for the Discipline Committee

Clergy – Full Terms (2) from September 2014 through August 2020

Minutes of the 2014 Greater Milwaukee Synod Assembly  
May 30, 2014 – Plenary II (Morning Session)

**Rev. Ed Weiskotten\* 239**

**Rev. Roy Nelson\* 229**

Lay Male – Full Term from September 2014 through August 2020

**Mr. Robert Gee\* 250**

Lay Male – Partial Term from Election through August 2016

**Mr. Jerry Key\* 252**

Lay Female – Full Term from September 2014 through August 2020

**Ms. Alicia Ellis\* 262**

Lay Female – Partial Term from September 2014 through August 2016

**Ms. Kathleen Holat\* 265**

The following election was deferred based upon the bishop's earlier ruling, pending distribution of biographical information.

Clergy – Partial Term from Election through August 2016

Rev. Karen Natterstad – Nominating Committee Nomination

Rev. Grant Quever – Floor Nomination

A point of order was raised, asking whether the biographical information was limited to the congregation name. It was stated that there is more information; the Assembly will continue to wait for that information to be distributed.

Clergy – Partial Term from September 2014 through August 2016

**Rev. Stacy Seger\* 261**

### **Budget Presentation**

Mr. David Groenewold, Director of Finance for the synod, explained key provisions of the proposed FY2016 synod budget. As background, he noted that while mission support for the previous year, which ended January 31, 2014, was above budget, it still represented the seventh consecutive year of decreased giving for general mission support. The focus of giving by the synod is to the ELCA, which receives 55% of the synod's mission support, and to partnership ministries, including the largest seminaries, Wisconsin Council of Churches, and the Interfaith Conference of Greater Milwaukee, with ongoing support for Lutheran Campus Ministry, at \$135,000 per year.

For this year the synod is looking at yet another reduction in commitments from congregations. Mr. Groenewold referred to the budget printed in the Supplement, which calls for the same amount of income as this year based on commitments. He noted the shift in focus for grants from the Siebert Lutheran Foundation, though with the amount expected to remain unchanged at \$30,000. There were no questions. This budget will be submitted for discussion and action tomorrow.

### **Synod Endowment Fund Presentation**

Rev. Larry Westfield told the Assembly that burning hearts are also generous hearts, and that we can be grateful there are so many in our church. He reported that two years ago a discussion began on how the synod could encourage legacy giving among its people. This discussion stemmed in part from the fact that Outreach for Hope was receiving a small number of bequests. The question was "how can we encourage that same kind of experience for all the other ministries that are supported by the synod?"

## Minutes of the 2014 Greater Milwaukee Synod Assembly May 30, 2014 – Plenary II (Morning Session)

This was followed by a presentation to the Synod Council, with the question being “how do we expand this invitation to be engaged in legacy giving?”

A task force was formed to provide leadership to exploring the question. The task force’s recommendation to the Synod Council was forwarded to the Synod Assembly in the form of Resolution 1, addressing the question of establishing gifts. This fund is meant to be a container to accept gifts in five categories: Hunger and Poverty, Justice and Anti-Racism, International and Global, Youth Leadership and Development, and Health and Wellness. The ongoing purpose is to engender a culture of generosity in which individuals are encouraged to pray and to consider one or more ministries of the church for a bequest. Now, he said, is the time to discuss and to act. If approved, the Synod Council would set up an oversight board. Rev. Westfield ended his report by saying that everyone has the ability to set up a legacy gift, and that it would be wonderful if this resolution could be approved unanimously.

### **Consideration of Resolutions**

Bishop Barrow invited Mr. Paul Bedker, chair of the Reference and Counsel Committee, to return to the podium to present the pending resolutions.

### **Resolution 1 – Resolution on Establishment of a Synod Endowment Fund**

The first resolution, which was submitted by the Synod Council, was presented to the Assembly for its consideration:

#### **Resolution on Establishment of a Synod Endowment Fund**

Whereas, Christian stewardship involves the faithful management of all the gifts God has given to humankind - the created world, the Gospel, life, time, abilities, money, including accumulated, inherited, and appreciated resources; and

Whereas, the biblical principle of proportionate giving, to return to the Lord a portion of the gifts God has first given to his beloved children, is both a privilege and an appropriate response of gratitude to God; and

Whereas, Christians can give to the work of the church through gifts in and from wills, life insurance policies, charitable gift annuities, charitable remainder and other trusts, and transfers of property such as cash, stocks, bonds and real estate; and

Whereas, a small but growing number of individuals are choosing to include one or more ministries of the GMS with a planned gift, it is the desire of Greater Milwaukee Synod (herein referred to as GMS) to encourage, receive and administer these gifts in a manner consistent with loyalty and devotion to our Lord; therefore, be it

**RESOLVED**, That the Greater Milwaukee Synod establish a new and separate fund to be known as the Greater Milwaukee Synod Endowment Fund (herein referred to as the Fund), with the following provisions:

- The purpose of this Fund is to distribute financial support to ministries of the GMS. Those ministries include but are not limited to the following areas: Hunger & Poverty, Justice & Antiracism, International & Global, Youth Leadership & Development, Health & Wellness

## Minutes of the 2014 Greater Milwaukee Synod Assembly May 30, 2014 – Plenary II (Morning Session)

- No portion of the distributions of the Fund shall be used for the annual operating budget of the GMS, and,
- The GMS Endowment Fund Committee (herein referred to as Committee) shall be the custodian of the Fund, The committee is to be formed through the action of the GMS Council by appointment or, if the Council decides, by the same process as is followed for the staffing of other synod standing committees. The committee will have the authority to establish the investment plan, after receiving approval of such investment plan from the GMS Council and take appropriate action to carry out that plan. The committee will also have the responsibility to recommend distributions to the GMS Council for their approval. Once approval is granted the Committee would then be responsible to see that distributions are carried out as quickly as possible, and,
- The purpose, governance, administration and management of the Fund and Committee will be defined by the plan of operation to be approved by the GMS Council. The Fund will be subject to an annual audit, as part of the GMS audit. In addition, The Committee shall report on a bi-monthly basis the status of the Fund, including investment return, additions, distributions, and make-up of investment portfolio.
- The GMS Council with the advice of the task force working on the creation of the GMS Endowment will select a name by which the GMS Endowment will be known and identified.
- The task force working on the creation of the GMS Endowment will also provide recommendations to the Council regarding the plan of how to attract funds to the Fund.

Rev. Grant Quever, Gethsemane Evangelical Lutheran Church, Brookfield, asked whether this synod was indeed the only synod without an endowment fund, noting also that when an endowment fund was created for the South-Central Synod of Wisconsin clergy were encouraged to tithe from their estates in their wills.

A speaker in support noted that the assignment of oversight to a committee raises fiduciary issues, with ultimate responsibility shared by the committee and the Synod Council. Part of the concern was the issue of liability.

Mr. Steve Kerstin, Muskego, said that in looking at other resolutions, with special attention to costs of Assembly, would it be possible to add a Synod Assembly scholarship fund to the endowment.

Rev. James Bickel, Galilee Lutheran Church, Pewaukee and Executive Director of Outreach for Hope, said “I have a vested interest in this, but I want to speak about a faith issue; this is about our faith and how we express it. We generally think about what we have in our pockets, but God gives us everything. When we leave, we leave that all behind.” He said that the church is often a low priority for such giving, but that with an endowment fund we have an opportunity to say “this is what we are about; this is what our life is about.” Saying that tax advantages today are structured so well for setting up an estate, while leaving something for children, but making “a real difference for the ministries that are your passion.” This, he said, is a way to move our gifts forward.

## Minutes of the 2014 Greater Milwaukee Synod Assembly May 30, 2014 – Plenary II (Morning Session)

Rev. Ted Romberg, retired, and a member of Ascension Lutheran Church in Waukesha, said in addressing the fiduciary issues that there is intended to be an ELCA Foundation tie-in. He said that his congregation started an endowment fund which has grown but which, he went on, has not affected current giving. These gifts are meant to be after life, through wills. Individuals would then have options for all three expressions of the church for planned giving: to their congregation, the synod, or the ELCA. He added that there are two attorneys working on details for the structure of the endowment fund. He is in favor of the resolution.

### **Assembly Action**

#### **SA14.05.04. Adoption of Resolution 1**

The Assembly voted to adopt Resolution 1 as presented:

#### **Resolution on Establishment of a Synod Endowment Fund**

Whereas, Christian stewardship involves the faithful management of all the gifts God has given to humankind - the created world, the Gospel, life, time, abilities, money, including accumulated, inherited, and appreciated resources; and

Whereas, the biblical principle of proportionate giving, to return to the Lord a portion of the gifts God has first given to his beloved children, is both a privilege and an appropriate response of gratitude to God; and

Whereas, Christians can give to the work of the church through gifts in and from wills, life insurance policies, charitable gift annuities, charitable remainder and other trusts, and transfers of property such as cash, stocks, bonds and real estate; and

Whereas, a small but growing number of individuals are choosing to include one or more ministries of the GMS with a planned gift, it is the desire of Greater Milwaukee Synod (herein referred to as GMS) to encourage, receive and administer these gifts in a manner consistent with loyalty and devotion to our Lord; therefore, be it

**RESOLVED**, That the Greater Milwaukee Synod establish a new and separate fund to be known as the Greater Milwaukee Synod Endowment Fund (herein referred to as the Fund), with the following provisions:

- The purpose of this Fund is to distribute financial support to ministries of the GMS. Those ministries include but are not limited to the following areas: Hunger & Poverty, Justice & Antiracism, International & Global, Youth Leadership & Development, Health & Wellness
- No portion of the distributions of the Fund shall be used for the annual operating budget of the GMS, and,
- The GMS Endowment Fund Committee (herein referred to as Committee) shall be the custodian of the Fund, The committee is to be formed through the action of the GMS Council by appointment or, if the Council decides, by the same process as is followed for the staffing of other synod standing committees. The committee will have the authority to establish the investment plan, after receiving approval of such investment plan from the

## Minutes of the 2014 Greater Milwaukee Synod Assembly May 30, 2014 – Plenary II (Morning Session)

- GMS Council and take appropriate action to carry out that plan. The committee will also have the responsibility to recommend distributions to the GMS Council for their approval. Once approval is granted the Committee would then be responsible to see that distributions are carried out as quickly as possible, and,
- The purpose, governance, administration and management of the Fund and Committee will be defined by the plan of operation to be approved by the GMS Council. The Fund will be subject to an annual audit, as part of the GMS audit. In addition, The Committee shall report on a bi-monthly basis the status of the Fund, including investment return, additions, distributions, and make-up of investment portfolio.
  - The GMS Council with the advice of the task force working on the creation of the GMS Endowment will select a name by which the GMS Endowment will be known and identified.
  - The task force working on the creation of the GMS Endowment will also provide recommendations to the Council regarding the plan of how to attract funds to the Fund.

**The vote on Resolution 1 was 260 in favor, 16 opposed.**

### **Resolution 2 – Resolution Encouraging Voting Member Diversity and Participation**

The second resolution, which was submitted by the Waukesha Cluster, was presented to the Assembly for its consideration. It was noted that the Reference and Counsel Committee recommended against passage of this amendment.

#### **Resolution Encouraging Voting Member Diversity and Participation**

WHEREAS many congregations do not send as many voting members to our annual assembly as they would be eligible to send; and,

WHEREAS other congregations send no voting members to our annual assembly; and

WHEREAS the annual fee to register is a significant barrier to participation even in well-resourced congregations; and

WHEREAS the sample polling done at the 2012 Assembly found that a majority of voting members had been there previously in that capacity, frequently more than five times; and

WHEREAS the typical days for this Assembly (Thursday-Saturday) tend to make it less likely that different, younger, and/or working age people will attend as voting members; and

WHEREAS the congregations of this Synod provide the vast majority of income to the Synod and rightly expect the Synod to facilitate the business of the congregations without billing the congregations for additional fees; and

WHEREAS we otherwise place a high value on diversity, inclusion, removal of financial barriers, and broad participation in the life of our church; therefore be it

## Minutes of the 2014 Greater Milwaukee Synod Assembly May 30, 2014 – Plenary II (Morning Session)

**RESOLVED**, that beginning in 2015, the Greater Milwaukee Synod schedule future Assemblies on weekend days and evenings, and be it further

**RESOLVED** that all congregations be strongly encouraged to send a full slate of voting members to attend each assembly, and be it further

**RESOLVED** that congregations be further encouraged not to send the same people as voting members in consecutive years, and be it further

**RESOLVED** that the Synod Council implement, as a part of the 2015 registration process, means by which substantial discounts of at least 25% be utilized to celebrate full slates (for the 3<sup>rd</sup> voter member per congregation and up) and the rotation of congregational representation (discount for anyone who did not serve the previous year). Funding for these discounts should come from General Synod revenue rather than increased fees for registration, and be it further

**RESOLVED** that the long-term goal of this Synod be to eliminate registration fees entirely through adjustments to the general Synod budget beginning in 2015 with the goal of achieving fee-free access to our own assembly as of 2017.

Rev. John Horner-Ibler, Pastor of Cross of Life Lutheran Church, Brookfield, and Dean of the Waukesha Cluster, spoke on behalf of the second resolution. He asked for three minutes, to have time to explain the rationale for this resolution and the spirit in which the resolution was presented. He said that this is not meant to be the last step, and that there is the presumption that there would be amendments, but that the goal is to move forward with action on this issue. He stated that fewer than half of potential lay voting members had registered, and urged more rotation of voting members, leading, he said, to greater vitality in an Assembly with a shorter and more focused timespan. He said that moving to weekends and evenings would give more individuals a chance to attend. He estimated that the first year financial impact would be \$5,000 or less. He urged passage in the spirit of conversation, and downplayed potential unforeseen outcomes.

Mr. Matthew Brockmeier, St. Paul's Evangelical Lutheran Church, Random Lake, and Synod Secretary, noted that at its May 2014 meeting the Synod Council took action to begin discussions on issues of representation at and affordability of the Synod Assembly over the next year.

Mr. Jerry Key, Peace Lutheran Church, Faith/Santa Fe Lutheran Church, and member of the Synod Council, stated his concern that the resolution was too detailed, and suggested not accepting it.

Rev. David Schoob, Trinity Lutheran Church, West Bend, made a motion to "refer the question of Assembly participation and affordability to the Synod Council for consideration," stating that it is appropriate to move this to the Council as the most efficient way to move this process forward.

Mr. Gary Bennett, Evangelical Lutheran Church of the Redeemer, Hartford, asked that this discussion, if approved, also include consideration of meetings of committees and other similar bodies.

## Minutes of the 2014 Greater Milwaukee Synod Assembly May 30, 2014 – Plenary II (Morning Session)

Mr. Jerry Key encouraged those who submitted the resolution to meet with the Synod Council as part of this discussion.

Rev. John Horner-Ibler asked that a date be set for completion of this discussion.

Rev. David Schoob responded that a timetable was not included in his motion, in part because of the impact on budget, and the budgetary timeframe that would be involved.

Ms. Esther Rusch, Faith Lutheran Church, Cedarburg, moved an amendment to the motion to refer the question to the Synod Council to add the words “with the Synod Council to report its findings to the 2015 Synod Assembly.”

Rev. Brad Brown, North Cape Evangelical Lutheran Church, Franksville, spoke in favor of adding a deadline to the resolution.

Rev. John Gugel, St. John’s Lutheran Church, Brookfield, suggested that also included in the resolution should be a discussion of the location of future Synod Assemblies.

### **Assembly Action**

#### **SA14.05.05. Adoption of Amendment**

The Assembly voted to adopt the motion to amend the previous motion to include the words “to receive the Council’s report at the 2015 Synod Assembly.”

**The vote on the motion to amend was 250 in favor, 27 opposed.**

Rev. John Gugel made a motion to amend the original motion to include review of location as a factor for consideration.

A point of order was made, that this motion was not germane to the issue. The chair ruled that the amendment was germane, allowing its consideration.

### **Assembly Action**

#### **SA14.05.06. Adoption of Amendment**

The Assembly voted to adopt the motion to amend the previous motion to include the words to include review of location as a factor for consideration.

**The vote on the motion to amend was 205 in favor, 75 opposed.**

### **Assembly Action**

#### **SA14.05.07. Adoption of Motion to Refer Consideration to Synod Council**

The Assembly voted to adopt the motion to “refer the question of Assembly participation, affordability and location to the Synod Council for consideration, with the Synod Council to report its findings to the 2015 Synod Assembly.”

**The vote on the motion to refer was 243 in favor, 40 opposed.**

The bishop thanked those responsible for the resolution, noting that these issues regarding the Synod Assembly have been a growing concern.

### **Resolution 3 – Resolution Encouraging Intentional, Called Interim Ministry in Our Synod**

The third resolution, which was submitted by the Waukesha Cluster, was presented to the Assembly for its consideration. The Reference and Counsel Committee forwarded this resolution to the Synod Assembly without recommendation.

Minutes of the 2014 Greater Milwaukee Synod Assembly  
May 30, 2014 – Plenary II (Morning Session)

**Resolution Encouraging Intentional, Called Interim Ministry in Our Synod**

WHEREAS some pastoral transitions create unique stresses in congregations due to an especially beloved, long, or troubled pastorate; and

WHEREAS trained interim pastors have long been seen as vital to facilitating successful congregational transitions to future settled pastors; and

WHEREAS retaining a trained, motivated, and caring group of interim pastors has long proved difficult due to the uncertainty of compensation between calls; and

WHEREAS the uncertainties of consistent compensation often cause interims to leave an interim call prematurely or entirely in order to assure ongoing employment; and

WHEREAS the Bishop of the Synod should have maximum latitude and flexibility in assigning interim pastors to the settings in which their gifts are most needed and that this flexibility should be unrelated to the immediate capacity of any one congregation to fairly compensate that particular interim pastor; therefore be it

**RESOLVED** that the Greater Milwaukee Synod call and compensate on a full-time basis at least four duly trained pastors to serve the congregations of the entire Synod on an ongoing basis as interim pastors; and be it further

**RESOLVED** that the initial such call be issued beginning in 2015 and the program be fully implemented by the end of 2016; and be it further

**RESOLVED** that congregations to which these Pastors are assigned reimburse the Synod for employment expenses incurred during their stay; and be it further

**RESOLVED** that congregations reimburse the Synod for these employment expenses on a sliding scale set by the Synod Council and ranging between 75% and 110% of total costs with the scale taking into account the congregation worship and budget size and costs previously incurred by the congregation (or expected to be incurred) with a settled pastor; and be it further

**RESOLVED** that the Synod budget to pay the balance of costs for interim pastors not to exceed \$20,000 per year per pastor and not to exceed \$75,000 in aggregate for all interim pastors once the program is fully implemented; and be it further

**RESOLVED** that the calls for these interim pastors be issued by the Synod Council and their assignment to be under the authority of the Bishop and her/his staff in regular consultation with the Cluster Deans and Synod Council.

Rev. Jay McDivitt, Christ the Servant Lutheran Church, Waukesha, and Synod Council, spoke in favor of the resolution, noting the high turnover and large number of interim calls at his current and previous congregations. He cited as a primary concern the economic uncertainty of serving as an interim minister, where there are weeks or months without predictable income. Rev. McDivitt noted another issue, that not all ministers have all the gifts for effective interim service, and that the availability of

## Minutes of the 2014 Greater Milwaukee Synod Assembly May 30, 2014 – Plenary II (Morning Session)

appropriate interim ministers cannot be assured at any particular time in the synod. He called this resolution is a step in the right direction, promoting the reliable ministry needed “during tender times of transitions,” and encouraged the Synod Assembly to take this issue very seriously.

Rev. Sherman Martell, Luther Memorial Evangelical Lutheran Church, West Allis, said that about six years ago there were discussions about interim ministry, and that one of the questions that arose was about training for interim ministers. This was, he said, a stumbling block to assuring good interim calls, and he asked what training is typical for current interim ministers. He also asked how many interim ministers are currently serving in the synod.

The bishop responded that he did not have the number of interim ministers available offhand, but that usually there are from twenty to thirty congregations in transition at any moment. All of those, he said, require some sort of interim status. He added that there are trained interim ministers, and that the synod attempts to encourage that training with anyone looking at interim ministry. He also said that there are more and more synod calls to interim ministers, with part of the reason being the three-year limit for On Leave from Call status, to avoid having individuals serving interim calls lapsing from the roster. He said that there are certainly more than four current interim calls. As a procedural matter, the bishop said that because of the budgetary impact, this resolution would require a two-thirds vote to accept, and that the proposed budget would need to be reduced by \$75,000 in other areas to remain in balance, as required by the Assembly Rules.

Rev. Chuck Brummond, St. Luke Lutheran Church, Slinger, and Co-Director of Rostered Leadership for the synod, said that while he loves the spirit of this resolution, he is not sure that he is in favor or passage. Because of the complexity of the question, and that fact that this is a “very significant ministry,” it deserves greater attention and should, he said, be referred to the Synod Council. He noted that the cost for training for interim ministry is about \$1,500.

A motion was made to refer the question of intentional, called interim ministry to the Synod Council to consider, and for the Synod Council to report back to the Synod Assembly in 2015.

Rev. John Horner-Ibler spoke against the motion to refer. He said that because the first year was a phase-in period in the resolution, the initial costs may be overstated. He said that those numbers should not scare the Synod Assembly into thinking the issue needs long-term study. Interim ministry is, he said, a spectrum of things, and this addresses the most difficult congregational transitions. He said that we should be putting resources into assuring the long-term survival of our ministries; “let’s not put this stuff off – we’re getting killed by putting stuff off.”

Rev. Chuck Brummond said that he is not sure the Synod Assembly has enough information to vote on the resolution, taking into account how it is structured. He said that one consideration is that implementing this plan would raise questions on compensation for other interim ministers.

### **Assembly Action**

Minutes of the 2014 Greater Milwaukee Synod Assembly  
May 30, 2014 – Plenary II (Morning Session)

**SA14.05.08. Adoption of Motion to Refer Consideration to Synod Council**

The Assembly voted to adopt the motion to “refer the question of intentional, called interim ministry to the Synod Council to consider, with a report by the Synod Council to the 2015 Synod Assembly.”

**The vote on the motion to refer was 191 in favor, 91 opposed.**

Bishop Barrow said that he is “glad it is being referred. It is a personal concern, when we get a bunch of interims, some with guaranteed positions and some not.”

**Announcements**

The banquet begins promptly at noon, and should be wonderful. Because of needed set-up for the banquet, all personal items must be removed from the room.

Immediately after recess, all rostered women are asked to assemble for a photo.

The Ministry Fair takes place both before and after the banquet.

“Hunger” (coins drop)

The Assembly recessed for workshops and the banquet at 10:20 am.