



SYNOD COUNCIL MEETING
Christ Lutheran Church, Dallas
January 22-23, 2010

Living out our DiscipleLife: The Synod Council devoted some significant attention to the future of *DiscipleLife* and, indeed, the future of the NT-NL Synod itself. Beginning with a Bible study on the miracle of water changed to wine, the council considered how the groundwork seems to have been laid for a consideration of “reinventing” the purpose and work of the synod – allowing the synod to stay focused on (1) support to congregations, (2) leadership development, and (3) the pursuit of mission. Kairos Associates brought its *Feasibility Report* to the council indicating a growing interest among synod leaders for our transformation into such a “Center for Mission”. Their report drew heavily on two energetic “summit” meetings held since the first of the year at which a lot of spirited brainstorming happened. The upcoming Synod Assembly will get to hear about this exciting vision and will become part of the expanding conversation.

Actions: (1) Endorsed *Care and Compensation 2011* and forwarded it to the Synod Assembly for adoption. (2) Approved the plan for a synodwide Day of Prayer for the people of Haiti on February 14. (3) Approved the proposed agenda and rules of procedure for the upcoming assembly. (4) Approved several constitutional amendments for consideration at the upcoming assembly. (5) Approved the slate of new board members for the Mission Endowment Fund. (6) Agreed to continue the contract with Kairos Associates for the next three months. (7) Approved the suggested 2010 spending plan, and endorsed the 2011 proposed Mission Strategy for consideration at the upcoming assembly. (8) Granted an 11-week sabbatical to Pastor Stan Meyer for the fall of 2010. (9) Adopted a *Personnel Manual* for the synod. (10) Designated the offering from the upcoming assembly for support to Pastor Kate Warn (pastor-in-residence in Sierra Leone) and the costs for a shipping container of medical supplies for Sierra Leone. (11) Responded to a letter from Living Word, Grapevine, regarding the recent changes in ministry policies adopted by the Churchwide Assembly. (12) Acted on several retirement and on leave requests.

Information: (1) Bishop Kanouse reported on synod activity in response to the changes in ministry policies adopted by the Churchwide Assembly. He has visited in many congregations to answer questions, has received Declarations from 17 that they will not be open to the ministry offered by homosexual persons, is aware of four congregations who have voted to leave the ELCA – only one of which may move on to take the second and final vote – and has seen some redirection of mission support. (2) The synod finished FY09 with a \$50,000 deficit. In response, a spending plan for FY10 was approved which includes cuts totaling \$54,000 in areas like support for Briarwood, Campus Ministry, seminaries, Parish Lay Ministry Academy, and outreach grants. There will be no staff salary increases. (3) The council recalled with deep thanks the 20+ year ministry of Ed Halter as our Mission Partners Coordinator. (4) While the effort to develop Hispanic Ministry at St. Paul, Farmers Branch, has ceased, Hispanic ministries in three other places are being expanded or explored. (5) The recent Senior High Youth Gathering was a marvelous success – 150 participants and several engaging mission projects. (6) A number of congregations reported that they raised \$1,000+ each when they called upon members to respond to the tragedy and needs among the people of Haiti.

The Synod Council is a group of leaders from across the synod elected by the Synod Assembly to carry on the work of the synod in between assemblies. They are charged with the tasks of caring for our present ministries, planning for the future mission work of the synod, and connecting congregations, leaders and conferences to each other and to the ministry we share.