

1 Proposal—Upper Susquehanna Synod Strategic Plan
2 Strategy for Mission Task Force

3
4 **Forward:**

5 *In November of 2005, upon Bishop Main’s recommendation, the Synod Council appointed 9 people to*
6 *serve on the Strategy for Mission Task Force (Mr. Charles Benner, Rev. Peter Bergstresser, Ms.*
7 *Deborah Leidy, Rev. Kerry Maurer, Rev. Daniel May, Ms. Clarice Pellman, Rev. David Pennebaker,*
8 *Mr. Michael Schrey, and Rev. Beth Ann Stone). This group was charged with the task of looking at*
9 *our synod with critical eyes. They were to look at the overall structure, committee functions, Synod*
10 *Council, all staff (called, employed, and volunteer), and to review what the functions of the synod*
11 *could be and ought to be for the future. This draft report shares the results of this task force’s work.*

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13 *Should this be approved by Synod Council in February and by the USS Annual Assembly in 2007, the*
14 *task force also recommends a review in three years to evaluate the synod functions and ministry and*
15 *the effectiveness of this proposed structure, and to make any needed changes. Ongoing changes and*
16 *adjustments are to be expected when adapting to a new way to do ministry as an organization. All*
17 *italicized comments in this document are added for clarity.*

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19 **UPPER SUSQUEHANNA SYNOD MISSION**

20
21 To make Christ known.

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23 **UPPER SUSQUEHANNA SYNOD VISION**

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25 All members of the Upper Susquehanna Synod growing as disciples of Jesus, serving together to make
26 Christ known.

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28 **STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS FOR THE UPPER SUSQUEHANNA SYNOD**

29 In partnership with the congregational and churchwide expressions of the church, in order to make
30 Christ known, we will:

- 31
- 32 • Equip the baptized to live as children of God—claimed, gathered, and sent for the sake of the
 - 33 world.
 - 34 • Promote faithful, vital, healthy congregations as centers for mission.
 - 35 • Lift up, prepare, and support leaders for the church, both lay and ordained.
- 36

37 **OPERATIONAL VALUES FOR THE UPPER SUSQUEHANNA SYNOD**

- 38
- 39 • Accessibility of synod staff for providing needed pastoral care to rostered leaders.
 - 40 • Openness to and support for implementing new ideas.
 - 41 • Encouraging partnerships among congregations to share ministries or best practices.
 - 42 • Engaging the baptized in the collaborative ministries of the wider church.
 - 43 • Fostering participation in ministries through the gifts and passions of people and congregations.
 - 44 • Regularly incorporating new leaders into ongoing ministries.
 - 45 • Facilitating healthy interdependent relationships and interactions within and among the
 - 46 expressions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.
 - 47 • Working cooperatively with our ecumenical partners for the sake of mission.
 - 48 • Encouraging welcoming and safe worship and ministries for all.

49 **UPPER SUSQUEHANNA SYNOD COUNCIL:**

50

51 Synod Council has planning responsibilities as well as oversight for the ministries and work of the
52 synod. The primary function of the Synod Council is to carry out the strategic directions and
53 operational values in every aspect of its work. It is the responsibility of Synod Council to call
54 synodical leadership to task and to keep them focused on and mindful of these strategic directions and
55 operational values.

56

57 Administratively, the Synod Council will oversee:

58

59 • Committees (*constitutionally mandated and defined committees*)

60

a. Mutual Ministry

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b. Executive

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c. Consultation

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d. Discipline

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e. Candidacy

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• Ministry Teams (*appointed by Synod Council and must be reauthorized annually*)

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a. Personnel

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b. Constitution

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c. Fiscal Management

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d. Synod Assembly Planning with responsibility to oversee the following:

70

i. Synod Nominating Committee

71

ii. Committee for Elections

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iii. Committee for Reference and Counsel

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iv. Memorials Committee

74

e. Others as appointed and/or described below

75

• Task Forces (*short-term teams appointed by the Office of the Bishop to carry out a specific goal or purpose*)

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77

78 Annually the Synod Council will meet with the bishop, assistants to the bishop, representatives of
79 committees, ministry teams, and task forces for a planning retreat. At this retreat, participants divide
80 into three major areas of emphasis: congregational life ministries, outreach ministries, and leadership
81 ministries to discuss their plans, ideas, goals, and tasks assigned. Each ministry group provides a
82 summary report of their proposed plans to the retreat participants. Synod Council evaluates and
83 approves the plans consistent with the mission and strategic directions of the USS.

84

85 Other meetings of the Synod Council during the year are sessions where updates on the work and
86 ministry of the synod are reported and new ideas and suggestions can be made.

87 **SYNOD COUNCIL REPRESENTATIVE EXPECTATIONS:**

88

89 Synod Council members have been elected and entrusted with the day-to-day ministry and business of
90 the Upper Susquehanna Synod. With this call to service come specific commitments and boundaries
91 that coincide with this important responsibility and privilege. The primary function of the Synod
92 Council is to fulfill the strategic directions and operational values in every aspect of their work.
93 Persons are elected to represent the whole church body and to carry forth the ministry and to always
94 work on behalf of the Upper Susquehanna Synod.

95

96 Individuals elected will provide leadership to the ministries of the synod. They will bring to the table
97 the needs and concerns of particular groups, congregations, and others with whom they have contact.
98 Their leadership provides an opportunity to connect local congregations and the synod office. Synod
99 Council members will encourage individuals to share their gifts and to identify future leaders within
100 the synod and the church.

101

102 In addition, Synod Council members should do the following:

103

- 104 1. Attend all Synod Council meetings.
- 105
- 106 2. Prepare to participate in all meetings by reading the provided materials prior to the meeting.
- 107
- 108 3. Respect and care for each other.
- 109
- 110 4. Listen with an open, nonjudgmental mind to the words and ideas of others.
- 111
- 112 5. Discuss, debate, and disagree openly, expressing themselves in as clear, honest and direct a
- 113 manner as possible.
- 114
- 115 6. Implement the strategic directions of the Upper Susquehanna Synod in every aspect of its work.
- 116
- 117 7. Support the final decisions of the Upper Susquehanna Synod Council, whether or not they
- 118 reflect your personal opinion.
- 119
- 120 8. Serve and participate on at least one committee, ministry team, or task force.
- 121
- 122 9. Provide leadership and relationship building among congregations, the Upper Susquehanna
- 123 Synod, and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.
- 124
- 125 10. Follow the constitution and bylaws of the Upper Susquehanna Synod.

126 **DESCRIPTIONS OF MINISTRIES: CONGREGATIONAL LIFE**

127

128 *Congregational life ministries primarily relate to making Christ known within the congregations of the*
129 *Upper Susquehanna Synod. These ministries assist with the vision of the USS that all members grow*
130 *as disciples of Jesus. These ministries assist congregations to equip the baptized to live as children of*
131 *God, to be faithful, vital, healthy centers for mission, and to support leaders for the Church.*

132

133 **Congregational Leader Networks:** Networks connecting new and existing leaders in the areas of
134 youth, Christian education, congregation councils, stewardship, musicians, and others are to be formed
135 and supported by the Office of the Bishop. These networks foster two-way communication between
136 the congregations and the synod. Needs in the congregations can be shared through these networks
137 and, if appropriate, training or educational events can be provided to answer that need. The synod will
138 be able to convey information to the congregations through these leaders and their related ministries.

139

140 Youth and family ministries are provided by a ministry team that will encourage the use of models
141 such as “Passing on Faith,” begun in the synod at the 2006 Annual Synod Assembly. This ministry
142 also includes traditional youth ministry, the USS FLOOD (Friends Living Out Our Discipleship)
143 ministry, and other initiatives as needed.

144

145 Worship and music ministries are provided as a number of task forces to focus on Synod Assembly
146 worship, introduce new worship resources, provide church musician workshops, organist lessons, and
147 other needs as they are identified. The congregational leader networks, the Synod Council, and the
148 Office of the Bishop assist the task forces in identifying their focus and direction.

149

150 The outdoor ministry of the USS is provided by Camp Mount Luther. The camp is governed by a
151 board of directors. The USS has developed a relationship with this board of directors and will continue
152 that relationship. Camp Mount Luther’s Board of Directors identifies areas in which the camp needs
153 assistance. Requests for assistance may then be forwarded to the USS.

154

155 The Christian education and stewardship ministries of the USS are provided by task forces. The
156 congregational leader networks, the Synod Council, and the Office of the Bishop assist the task forces
157 in identifying their focus and direction.

158

159 The ministries concerning domestic and world hunger are provided by a congregational leader network
160 and/or a task force. Training individuals regarding the ELCA’s World Hunger relief efforts will make
161 this endeavor more effective.

162

163 Health ministries in the USS are provided by Diakon Lutheran Social Ministries. The Program
164 Coordinator for Congregational Health and Ministries and Family Life Services provides health
165 ministry support to the congregations of the USS. Many congregations in the USS have a Parish Nurse
166 program or a Congregational Health Ministry team. Diakon’s Program Coordinator and the
167 Congregational Health Ministry teams are encouraged to participate in a congregational leader network
168 where information regarding health issues and concerns are identified and opportunities are explored
169 and implemented.

170

171 Ministry to small membership congregations in the USS is provided through a task force and leader
172 network. Small membership congregations account for over 60% of the congregations in the USS.
173 Many small membership congregations are members of multiple point parishes, comprised of two or
174 more congregations, working together to provide mission and ministry and to call a pastor. These

175 congregations are encouraged to participate in a congregational leader network to share their best
176 practices, to explore new ideas regarding ministry in small congregations, and to learn from each other.
177 Through the leader network, the USS can maintain close contact with its small membership
178 congregations to learn about their joys and successes. This can also alert USS to concerns and
179 problems before a crisis develops.

180
181 Resources for rural congregations are provided in the USS through a congregational leader network.
182 This network will participate in various rural networks through the ELCA and our ecumenical partners.
183 These networks include, but are not limited to, ELCMA (Evangelical Lutheran Coalition for Mission
184 in Appalachia) and StaR (Small Town and Rural Alliance). Recruiting additional leaders from rural
185 congregations will provide more rural lay leaders and pastors with the valuable resources and
186 information provided by our partner networks.

187 188 **DESCRIPTION OF MINISTRIES: OUTREACH MINISTRIES**

189
190 *Outreach ministries primarily relate to making Christ known beyond the congregations. These*
191 *ministries assist with the vision of the USS that all synod members grow as disciples of Jesus. These*
192 *ministries assist congregations to equip the baptized to live as children of God; to promote faithful,*
193 *vital, healthy congregations as centers for mission; and to reach out to their unchurched neighbors*
194 *with the Good News of Jesus Christ.*

195
196 Church in society, evangelism, and Lutheran Men in Mission ministries are provided by a number of
197 task forces and congregational leader networks focusing on their respective area of ministry. The
198 congregational leader networks, the Synod Council, and the Office of the Bishop assist the task forces
199 in identifying their focus and direction.

200
201 Outreach ministry is provided by task forces and congregational leader networks. Outreach is a two-
202 fold ministry that works with the ELCA Evangelical Outreach and Congregational Ministry Unit
203 including congregational new starts, redevelopment, grants, etc and, secondly, develops new ways to
204 reach people with ministry needs in the local community. The congregational leader networks, the
205 Synod Council, and the Office of the Bishop assist the task forces in identifying their focus and
206 direction.

207
208 Campus ministry and global mission ministries are provided by ministry teams. Both ministry teams
209 have counterparts in other synods, countries, and churchwide offices. Congregational leader networks
210 may be developed to provide additional connections to these ministries.

211 **DESCRIPTION OF MINISTRIES: LEADERSHIP MINISTRIES**

212

213 *Leadership ministries primarily relate to making Christ known within and beyond the congregations.*
214 *These ministries assist with the USS vision that all synod members grow as disciples of Jesus. These*
215 *ministries assist congregations to equip the baptized to live as children of God; promote faithful, vital,*
216 *healthy congregations as centers for mission, and lift up, prepare, and support leaders, both lay and*
217 *ordained, whatever their vocation or area of service may be.*

218

219 The ministries of the Lay Ministry Institute of the Upper Susquehanna Synod and its oversight are
220 functions of the Office of the Bishop. The Lay Ministry Institute is clearly defined by the USS.

221

222 Continuing education, retreats, and events for rostered individuals, authorized lay leaders,
223 congregational leaders, as well as orientations for new pastors are arranged by the synod staff.

224

225 LINC (Leading Into Nurturing Community) can remain as a ministry team, focusing on events for the
226 fellowship and support for the families of rostered individuals.

227

228 *This is by no means an exhaustive list of ministry teams or task forces in the synod, and others should*
229 *be added or ended as ministry needs demand.*

230 **UPPER SUSQUEHANNA SYNOD POSITION DESCRIPTIONS**

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232 **THE BISHOP AND THE BISHOP'S STAFF:**

233

234 *The next pages describe the staff positions deemed necessary to carry out the strategic directions of the*
235 *synod in the coming years. This assessment was based on the interviews with existing staff,*
236 *conversations in fifteen focus groups around the synod, conversations with the conference deans,*
237 *conversations at conference pastors' meetings, and the task force's analyzing of this information. The*
238 *full-time positions include the bishop, assistants to the bishop, administrative assistant, and*
239 *administrative secretary. The bookkeeper is a part- time position.*

240

241 *The task force recommends a shifting of responsibilities for the office support staff and the addition of*
242 *another full-time assistant to the bishop. These changes will enhance the ministry of the synod*
243 *particularly in executing its administrative tasks as well as allowing more time for the bishop and*
244 *assistants to the bishop to be present in congregations and at other synod events. This will enable the*
245 *staff to promote the strategic directions of the synod and help build healthy relationships with and*
246 *among pastors, lay persons, congregations, and the synod.*

247

248 **THE BISHOP:**

249

250 *The duties of the bishop are well defined in the USS constitution beyond the primary role of providing*
251 *pastoral care to rostered leaders. The task force sees the primary responsibilities for the bishop in this*
252 *proposed structure to fall under two categories:*

253

254 *Synod Office Functions:*

255

a. Leadership of Staff

256

b. Conduct regularly scheduled staff meetings

257

c. Evaluation of Staff performance

258

259 *Synod Administrative Functions*

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a. Ecumenical Relations

261

b. Call Process

262

c. Mobility

263

d. Discipline

264

e. Consultation

265

266 *Constitutional description of the duties of the bishop is included here for your convenience:*

267

268 **S8.10. BISHOP**

269

270 **S8.11. The bishop shall be elected by the Synod Assembly. The bishop shall be a pastor who is*
271 *an ordained minister of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.*

272

273 **S8.12. As this synod's pastor, the bishop shall be an ordained minister of Word and Sacrament*
274 *who shall:*

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276 *a. Preach, teach, and administer the sacraments in accord with the Confession of*
277 *Faith of this church.*

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- b. *Have primary responsibility for the ministry of Word and Sacrament in this synod and its congregations, providing pastoral care and leadership for this synod, its congregations, its ordained ministers, and its other rostered leaders.*
 - c. *Exercise solely this church's power to ordain (or provide for the ordination of by another synodical bishop of) approved candidates who have received and accepted a properly issued, duly attested letter of call for the office of ordained ministry (and as provided in the bylaws of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America)*
 - d. *Commission (or provide for the commissioning of) approved candidates who have received and accepted a properly issued, duly attested letter of call for service as associates in ministry; consecrate (or provide for the consecration of) approved candidates who have received and accepted a properly issued, duly attested letter of call for service as deaconesses; and consecrate (or provide for the consecration of) approved candidates who have received and accepted a properly issued, duly attested letter of call for service as diaconal ministers of this church.*
 - e. *Attest letters of call for persons called to serve congregations in the synod, letters of call for persons called by the Synod Council, and letters of call for persons called by the Church Council on the roster of this synod.*
 - f. *Install (or provide for the installation of):*
 - 1) *the pastors of all congregations of this synod;*
 - 2) *ordained ministers called to extraparish service within this church; and*
 - 3) *persons serving in the other rostered ministries within this synod.*
 - g. *Exercise leadership in the mission of this church and in so doing:*
 - 1) *Interpret and advocate the mission and theology of the whole church;*
 - 2) *Lead in fostering support for and commitment to the mission of this church within this synod;*
 - 3) *Coordinate the use of the resources available to this synod as it seeks to promote the health of this church's life and witness in the areas served by this synod;*
 - 4) *Submit a report to each regular meeting of the Synod Assembly concerning the synod's life and work; and*
 - 5) *Advise and counsel this synod's related institutions and organizations.*

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- h. *Practice leadership in strengthening the unity of the Church and in so doing:*
- 1) *Exercise oversight of the preaching, teaching, and administration of the sacraments within this synod in accord with the Confession of Faith of this church;*
 - 2) *Be responsible for administering the constitutionally established processes for the resolution of controversies and for the discipline of ordained ministers, other rostered leaders, and congregations of this synod;*
 - 3) *Be the chief ecumenical officer of this synod;*
 - 4) *Consult regularly with other synodical bishops and the Conference of Bishops;*
 - 5) *Foster awareness of other churches throughout the Lutheran world communion and, where appropriate, engage in contact with leaders of those churches;*
 - 6) *Cultivate communion in faith and mission with appropriate Christian judicatory leaders functioning within the territory of this synod; and*
 - 7) *Be ex officio a member of the Churchwide Assembly.*
- i. *Oversee and administer the work of this synod and in so doing:*
- 1) *Serve as the president of the synod corporation and be the chief executive and administrative officer of this synod, who is authorized and empowered, in the name of this synod, to sign deeds or other instruments and to affix the seal of this synod;*
 - 2) *Preside at all meetings of the Synod Assembly and provide for the preparation of the agenda for the Synod Assembly, Synod Council, and the council's Executive Committee;*
 - 3) *Ensure that the constitution and bylaws of the synod and of the churchwide organization are duly observed within this synod, and that the actions of the synod in conformity therewith are carried into effect;*
 - 4) *Exercise supervision over the work of the other officers;*
 - 5) *Coordinate the work of all synodical staff members;*
 - 6) *Appoint all committees for which provision is not otherwise made;*

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- 7) *Be a member of all committees and any other organizational units of the synod, except as otherwise provided in this constitution;*

- 8) *Provide for preparation and maintenance of synodical rosters containing:*
 - a) *the names and addresses of all ordained ministers of this synod and a record of the calls under which they are serving or the date on which they become retired or disabled; and*

 - b) *the names and addresses of all other rostered persons of this synod and a record of the positions to which they have been called or the date on which they become retired or disabled;*

- 9) *Annually bring to the attention of the Synod Council the names of all rostered persons on leave from call or engaged in approved graduate study in conformity with the constitution and bylaws of this church and pursuant to prior action of this synod through the Synod Council;_*

- 10) *Provide for prompt reporting to the secretary of this church of:*
 - a) *additions to and subtractions from the rosters of this synod and the register of congregations;*

 - b) *the issuance of certificates of transfer for rostered persons in good standing who have received and accepted a properly issued, duly attested, regular letter of call under the jurisdiction of another synods;*

 - c) *the entrance of the names of such persons for whom proper certificates of transfer have been received;*

- 11) *Provide for preparation and maintenance of a register of the congregations of this synod and the names of the laypersons who have been elected to represent them; and*

- 12) *Appoint a statistician of the synod, secure the parochial reports of the congregations and make the reports available to the secretary of this church for collation, analysis, and distribution of the statistical summaries to this synod and the other synods of this church.*

S8.12.02. *The bishop shall make visitation to congregations and church institutions in synod territory a priority. An earnest effort shall be made to visit officially every*

426 congregation and church institution at least once in a four-year period.

427
428 S8.14. The bishop may have such assistants as this synod shall from time to time authorize.

429
430 *S8.15. The presiding bishop of this church, or the appointee of the bishop, shall install into
431 office, in accord with the policies and approved rite of this church, each newly elected
432 synod bishop.

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435
436 Here is the constitutional description of the duties of the treasurer for your convenience, especially as
437 you review the bookkeeper position:

438
439 S8.40. TREASURER

440
441 *S8.41. The treasurer shall be elected by the Synod Assembly. The treasurer shall be a voting
442 member of a congregation of this synod. The treasurer may be either a layperson or an
443 ordained minister.

444
445 S8.42. The treasurer shall provide and be accountable for:

446
447 a. Management of the monies and accounts of the synod, its deeds, mortgages,
448 contracts, evidences of claims and revenues, and trust funds, holding the same
449 at all times subject to the order of this synod.

450
451 b. Investment of funds upon the authorization of the Synod Council.

452
453 c. Receipt and acknowledgment of offerings, contributions, and bequests made to
454 this synod, collecting interest and income from its invested funds, and paying
455 regular appropriations and orders on the several accounts as approved and
456 directed by the Synod Council. The treasurer shall transmit each month to the
457 treasurer of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America the funds received by
458 the synod for the general work of this church.

459
460 d. Maintenance of a regular account with each congregation of this synod and
461 informing the congregation, at least quarterly, of the status of this account.

462
463 e. Rendering at each regular meeting of the Synod Assembly a full, detailed, and
464 duly audited report of receipts and disbursements in the several accounts of this
465 synod for the preceding fiscal year, together with the tabulation, for record and
466 publication in the minutes, of the contributions from the congregations.

467
468 f. Giving of corporate surety in the amount determined by the Synod Council,
469 which shall be in the custody of the secretary, and the premium therefore shall
470 be paid by this synod. Fidelity coverage provided by the Evangelical Lutheran
471 Church in America shall be deemed a fulfillment of this requirement.

472 **UPPER SUSQUEHANNA SYNOD POSITION DESCRIPTION**

473

474 **TITLE:** Assistant to the Bishop (1)

475

476 **REPORTS TO:** Bishop of the Upper Susquehanna Synod

477

478 **POSITION SUMMARY:**

479

480 This position represents the Upper Susquehanna Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in
481 America and is responsible to lead, develop, and support the work and ministries of the Upper
482 Susquehanna Synod. It is the expectation of the Upper Susquehanna Synod that Assistants to
483 the Bishop of this synod comply with *Vision and Expectations* as set forth by the Evangelical
484 Lutheran Church in America. This position will be accountable to the Bishop of the Upper
485 Susquehanna Synod and provide and coordinate all tasks related to its principal
486 accountabilities.

487

488 **PRINCIPAL ACCOUNTABILITIES:**

489

490 1. Provide direction and serve as a resource person to the conferences and deans of the synod,
491 primarily relating to specific conferences as assigned by the bishop.

492

493 2. Will have primary responsibility for the following congregational-life ministries of the
494 synod:

495

496 a. Youth and Family

497 b. Congregational Leader Networks

498

i. Youth

499

ii. Christian Education

500

iii. Congregation Councils

501

iv. Stewardship

502

v. Musicians

503

vi. Others as necessary/possible

504

505 3. Will relate as a resource person to the following congregational-life ministries of the synod:

506

507 a. Worship and Music

508

b. Outdoor Ministry

509

c. Christian Education

510

d. Stewardship

511

e. Small Church

512

f. Health Ministries

513

g. Rural Ministry Networks

514

515 4. Other tasks as assigned by the bishop.

516 **UPPER SUSQUEHANNA SYNOD POSITION DESCRIPTION**

517

518 **TITLE:** Assistant to the Bishop (2)

519

520 **REPORTS TO:** Bishop of the Upper Susquehanna Synod

521

522 **POSITION SUMMARY:**

523

524 This position represents the Upper Susquehanna Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in
525 America and is responsible to lead, develop, and support the work and ministries of the Upper
526 Susquehanna Synod. It is the expectation of the Upper Susquehanna Synod that Assistants to
527 the Bishop of this synod comply with *Vision and Expectations* as set forth by the Evangelical
528 Lutheran Church in America. This position will be accountable to the Bishop of the Upper
529 Susquehanna Synod and provide and coordinate all tasks related to its principal
530 accountabilities.

531

532 **PRINCIPAL ACCOUNTABILITIES:**

533

- 534 1. Provide direction and serve as a resource person to the conferences and deans of the synod,
535 primarily relating to specific conferences as assigned by the bishop.
- 536
- 537 2. Will coordinate and staff the synod’s Committee for Candidacy.
- 538
- 539 3. Will have primary responsibility for the following leadership ministries of the synod:
- 540
- 541 a. Retreats and events
 - 542 b. New pastors orientation
 - 543 c. Rostered Leader groups
- 544
- 545 4. Will relate as a resource person to the following outreach ministries of the synod:
- 546
- 547 a. Church in Society
 - 548 b. Global Mission
 - 549 c. World Hunger
 - 550 d. Evangelism
 - 551 e. Outreach
 - 552 f. Campus Ministry
 - 553 g. Lutheran Men in Mission
 - 554 h. Lay Ministry Institute
- 555
- 556 5. Will relate as a resource person to the following leadership ministries of the
557 synod:
- 558
- 559 a. Continuing education
 - 560 b. LINC (“Leading Into Nurturing Community”)
- 561
- 562 6. Other tasks as assigned by the bishop.

563 **UPPER SUSQUEHANNA SYNOD POSITION DESCRIPTION**

564

565 **TITLE:** Administrative Assistant

566

567 **REPORTS TO:** Bishop of the Upper Susquehanna Synod

568

569 **POSITION SUMMARY:**

570

571 This position represents the Upper Susquehanna Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in
572 America and is responsible to support the work and ministries of the Upper Susquehanna
573 Synod. This position will be accountable to the Bishop of the Upper Susquehanna Synod and
574 provide support and assistance to the staff and volunteers of the synod.

575

576 **PRINCIPAL ACCOUNTABILITIES:**

577

- 578 1. Will develop and coordinate all communications technology and resources for the synod
579 including all publications, press releases, and mailing lists.
- 580 2. Will develop and coordinate an ongoing communication process and network for the following:
- 581 a. Congregational leader networks
- 582 b. Church secretaries network and workshops
- 583
- 584 3. Will coordinate, develop, and staff all areas of communications related to the Synod Assembly.
- 585
- 586 4. Will sort and open the daily mail, as part of the fiscal office procedure.
- 587
- 588 5. Will oversee the Bookkeeper and Administrative Secretary and review their tasks.
- 589
- 590 6. Will serve as the executive secretary to the bishop and provide support in the following areas:
- 591 a. Arrange travel for synod staff and related synod functions
- 592 b. Schedule supply pastors and Authorized Lay Worship Leaders
- 593 c. Maintain synod archives
- 594 d. Update synod and ELCA official statistics
- 595 e. Maintain the clergy roster
- 596
- 597 7. Other tasks as assigned by the bishop.
- 598
- 599
- 600

601 **UPPER SUSQUEHANNA SYNOD POSITION DESCRIPTION**

602

603 **TITLE:** Administrative Secretary

604

605 **REPORTS TO:** Administrative Assistant

606

607 **POSITION SUMMARY:**

608

609 This position represents the Upper Susquehanna Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in
610 America and is responsible to support the work and ministries of the Upper Susquehanna Synod. This
611 position will be accountable to the Administrative Assistant of the Upper Susquehanna Synod and
612 provide support and assistance to the staff and volunteers of the synod.

613

614 **PRINCIPAL ACCOUNTABILITIES:**

615

616 1. Will serve as office receptionist answering and and/or referring all phone calls, greeting and
617 assisting visitors, etc.

618

619 2. Will supply and provide all clerical duties as requested by the assistants to the bishop.

620

621 3. Will coordinate, develop and staff all clerical duties assigned to the following tasks:

622

623 a. Synodical reports

624 b. Picking up and sending mail

625 c. Daily deposits

626 d. Events registrar

627 e. Mailings

628 f. Coordination of events logistics

629 g. Resource center

630

631 4. Other tasks as assigned by the administrative assistant.

632 **UPPER SUSQUEHANNA SYNOD POSITION DESCRIPTION**

633

634 **TITLE:** Bookkeeper (part-time)

635

636 **REPORTS TO:** Administrative Assistant

637

638 **POSITION SUMMARY:**

639

640 This position represents the Upper Susquehanna Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in
641 America and is responsible to support the work and ministries of the Upper Susquehanna
642 Synod. This position will be accountable to the Administrative Assistant of the Upper
643 Susquehanna Synod and provide support and assistance to the treasurer and staff of the synod.
644

645

645 **PRINCIPAL ACCOUNTABILITIES:**

646

- 647 1. Will carry out and maintain all accounting and bookkeeping functions of the Upper
- 648 Susquehanna Synod.
- 649
- 650 2. Will collaborate with the elected treasurer of the Upper Susquehanna Synod in preparing and
- 651 distributing financial reports.
- 652
- 653 3. Will prepare and distribute quarterly reports of congregational mission support.
- 654
- 655 4. Will accurately and timely record appropriate entries of all deposits and expenditures.
- 656
- 657 5. Will receive and respond to requests regarding status of monies received and checks in process.
- 658
- 659 6. Will reconcile bank accounts on a monthly basis to be reviewed by Treasurer.

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674 **CONFERENCE MINISTRY**

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676 *What follows is a review and reconsideration of the structure of the synod beyond the Office of the*
677 *Bishop, synod staff, and Synod Council. Through the focus groups and conversations with the deans,*
678 *the task force learned that the conference structure as intended was not working well in most*
679 *conferences. The changes noted in these next pages address some of those concerns and enable the*
680 *conference, congregations, and synod to work together.*

681 **CONFERENCE MINISTRY**

682

683 **DEFINITION:** The conference is a geographical grouping of congregations of the synod “to foster
684 interdependent relationships among congregations, institutions, and synodical and churchwide units for
685 mission purposes” (Synod Constitution, S12.01.).

686

687 **PURPOSE:** The conference provides a means by which all congregations are represented in the wider
688 ministries of the church and synod, and provides a means by which congregations may cooperate in
689 local, shared ministries that support the strategic directions of the synod.

690

691 The impetus to develop new, local, shared ministries may come from a congregation, lay member,
692 rostered leader, the conference ministerium, or the annual Conference Assembly. Shared ministries
693 may involve an entire conference, a small group of nearby congregations (may be known as a cluster),
694 or a smaller grouping of congregations with similar characteristics or interests (may be known as a
695 coalition).

696

697 Shared ministries help congregations to make Christ known by drawing upon a larger pool of people
698 and material resources, by spreading the influence of such ministries across a wider geographic area,
699 and by publicly witnessing to our calling to serve together as one body of Christ.

700

701 Possible shared ministries may include, but are not limited to, the following:

702

- 703 1. Joint worship services on occasions such as: Burning of the Greens, Epiphany of Our Lord,
704 Vigil of Easter, Vigil of Pentecost, Rogation, Ascension Day, Holy Cross Day, Blessing of
705 Animals, Reformation Day, Harvest Time, Vigil of All Saints, or Saint Nicholas Day.
- 706 2. Joint worship services of healing.
- 707 3. Shared youth ministry activities including planning and fundraising for special events. This
708 could include making arrangements for travel and lodging at the ELCA National Youth
709 Gathering; confirmation camp at Camp Mount Luther and other locations, and Vacation Bible
710 School. Emphasis can include reaching un-churched children and families, conference lock-
711 ins, intermural competitions, etc.
- 712 4. Conference-wide education/training programs in evangelism, stewardship, discernment of call,
713 etc.
- 714 5. Shared program/participation at a local community event, fair, festival, parade, etc.
- 715 6. Cooperative public evangelism efforts, such as a media campaign, publicity, etc.
- 716 7. Cooperative support for a missionary or social ministry program.
- 717 8. Development of a local social ministry program, such as a food pantry, after-school program,
718 ministry to those affected by HIV-AIDS, etc.
- 719 9. Joint church choirs for stand-alone performances or special appearances at community or synod
720 events.
- 721 10. Pericope study groups for those who preach and teach.

722

723 **CONFERENCE ASSEMBLIES**

724

725 The conference dean convenes the annual Conference Assembly no more than two months prior to the
726 annual Synod Assembly (Synod Constitution, S12.01.08). All rostered leaders and congregational
727 voting members to the Synod Assembly are expected to attend the Conference Assembly. (Synod
728 Constitution, S7.21, S14.21, and S14.31.d).

729

730 The agenda for every annual Conference Assembly will include:

- 731 1. Reviews and accepts the minutes of the previous Conference Assembly.
- 732 2. Elects either a conference dean (odd years) or secretary (even years).
- 733 3. Elects a Conference Nominating Committee chair for the following year.
- 734 4. Nominates and/or elects conference representatives to boards, councils, or committees of the
735 synod as well as college or seminary boards.
- 736 5. Has its minutes (including attendance) officially recorded by the conference secretary.

737

738 Annual Conference Assemblies may also:

- 739 1. Share together in worship or devotions.
- 740 2. Discuss published reports to the Synod Assembly and any proposed memorials or resolutions
741 that are available at that time.
- 742 3. Propose and discuss new memorials or resolutions to the Synod Assembly.
- 743 4. Participate in other program activities as arranged by the dean.
- 744 5. Propose, discuss, and/or appoint new ministry initiatives for the conference or smaller
745 groupings of congregations.
- 746 6. Elect or appoint a conference cabinet for representation or ministry needs.

747

748 A caucus may be held for the conference to discuss items of interest or concern, either before or during
749 a Synod Assembly, with adequate announcement of such a meeting. Other gatherings of the
750 conference may also be held for mission purposes, at the initiative of organizers. Care should be taken
751 to invite all congregations of the conference to participate in such gatherings, so as to promote
752 interdependent relationships among all congregations. The conference dean and secretary may assist
753 in developing and promoting such gatherings, though they need not serve as event organizers.

754

755

756 **CONFERENCE DEAN**

757

758 The conference dean is an ordained minister of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, elected
759 by the annual Conference Assembly in odd-numbered years to serve the conference for a two-year
760 term. Deans may be eligible for two consecutive terms (Synod Constitution, S12.01.11). In the event
761 of the resignation or death of the conference dean, the conference secretary assumes the functions of
762 the office of dean until the next Conference Assembly. (Synod Constitution, S12.01.14.a).

763

764 The dean assists the conference in promoting the strategic directions of the synod, serving as a
765 facilitator for building relationships and for the ministry functions of the conference. Deans play a key
766 role in promoting positive, collegial relationships among the congregations of the conference and their
767 leaders, and with the synod and churchwide expressions of the ELCA. They also remain alert to
768 emerging shared-ministry possibilities in their conference and encourage and lend support to the
769 efforts of the organizers.

770

771 The specific responsibilities of the conference dean include:

- 772 1. Attend deans' meetings with the bishop of this synod as requested, sharing information with the
773 bishop, other deans, and the rostered leaders of the conference in a timely manner.
- 774 2. Convene and preside at the annual Conference Assembly, ensuring that all rostered leaders and
775 congregations' voting members to the Synod Assembly are encouraged to attend.
- 776 3. Convene regular meetings of rostered leaders of the conference, ensuring that all are informed
777 in advance of such meeting times and locations.
- 778 4. Welcome and orient new rostered leaders to the conference.

- 779 5. Ensure that the Conference Nominating Committee chair is able to carry out his/her
780 responsibilities.
781 6. When asked, assist the bishop or bishop's staff in working with congregations in transition.
782

783 A conference dean may also:

- 784 1. Represent the conference, when possible, at significant events of congregations and rostered
785 leaders of the conference.
786 2. Convene occasional social events for conference rostered leaders alone or with their spouses or
787 families.
788 3. Encourage the development of conference gatherings, events, or shared ministries in addition to
789 the annual Conference Assembly.
790

791 **CONFERENCE SECRETARY**

792

793 The conference secretary is an ordained minister of the ELCA, elected by the annual Conference
794 Assembly in even-numbered years to serve the conference for a two-year term. Secretaries may be
795 eligible for two consecutive terms (Synod Constitution, S12.01.12). In the event of the resignation or
796 death of the conference secretary, the Synod Council shall appoint an interim secretary upon the
797 recommendation of the next regular meeting of rostered leaders of the conference, who shall serve
798 until the next Conference Assembly.
799

800 The conference secretary assists the conference in promoting the strategic directions of the synod by
801 providing record-keeping and communication within the conference.
802

803 The specific responsibilities of the conference secretary are as follows:

- 804 1. Maintain an unofficial roster of all rostered leaders with membership in the conference,
805 including current contact information.
806 2. Distribute communiqués as requested by the conference dean.
807 3. Record minutes of all official meetings of the conference, including Conference Assemblies,
808 and maintain a file of same.
809 4. Assist organizers of other conference shared ministries in communicating with congregations
810 and leaders.
811 5. Assume the functions of the office of conference dean in the event of his or her resignation or
812 death.
813

814 The conference secretary may also:

- 815 1. Publish and distribute to all congregations an occasional newsletter of conference activities.
816 2. Assist synod staff in collecting news from conference congregations to be shared across the
817 synod.
818 3. Other duties as deemed necessary by the dean or the Conference Assembly.
819
820

821 **CONFERENCE NOMINATING COMMITTEE CHAIR**

822

823 The Conference Nominating Committee chair is a member of a conference congregation elected at the
824 annual Conference Assembly for the following year's nomination process (Synod Constitution,
825 S12.01.15). In addition to managing their conference's nomination process in the subsequent year, the
826 chair also serves as their conference's representative to the Synod Nominating Committee for that
827 year.

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Prior to the annual Conference Assembly, the chair receives, from the synod office, a list of elected positions to be filled by representatives of the conference at either the next Conference or Synod Assembly. Working with the conference dean and secretary, the chair distributes a letter to all Congregation Council presidents and pastors of the conference, inviting their nominations for any elected position. Nominations are to be returned to the chair before the Conference Assembly.

Working with the conference dean, the chair selects and recruits three Congregation Council presidents to serve with him or her as the Conference Nominating Committee for that year’s process. Meeting before the Conference Assembly, the Conference Nominating Committee selects two nominees for each elected position for presentation to the Conference Assembly.

UPDATED TIMELINE FOR CONFERENCE AND SYNOD ASSEMBLIES

- March 1 Synod office mails to conference deans and Conference Nominating Committee chairs a list of elected positions to be filled by nominees from each conference as well as “at-large” elected positions
- March 15 Deans and Conference Nominating Committee chairs mail notices of Conference Assemblies and ballot openings (including nominations for dean or secretary) to all congregations, Congregation Council presidents, and other voting members to Synod Assembly; deans and chairs select and recruit three Congregational Council presidents to serve as Conference Nominating Committees
- April 15 Deadline for receiving conference or “at-large” nominations for ballots; Conference Nominating Committees meet to determine nominees for presentation to Conference or Synod Assemblies; chairs seek biographical information from all selected nominees
- May 1 First pre-assembly mailing (bulletin of reports) sent to all voting members
- Early May Conference Nominating Committee chairs meet with Synod Nominating Committee
- Mid to late May Conference Assemblies meet
- June 1 Deadline for submitting memorials, resolutions, Conference Assembly nominations and biographical information
- June 1-5 Committee of Reference and Counsel reviews proposed memorials and resolutions; makes recommendations
- June 7 Second pre-assembly mailing including ballot and biographical information, proposed resolutions and memorials sent to all voting members
- Mid-June Synod Assembly meets (*timetable would change if assembly date is moved*)

875 **SUPPORT INFORMATION CONCERNING THIS PROPOSAL:**

876

877 **CURRENT USS COMMITTEE STRUCTURE (2006)**

878

879 **Synod committees, appointed by the Synod Council:**

880

881 Committee for Church in Society

882 Committee for Evangelism and Committee for Christian Education

883 Committee for Small Church/Outreach

884 Committee for Global Mission

885 Committee for Campus Ministry

886 Committee for Ministry

887 • Candidacy Committee

888 • LINC Committee

889 • Authorized Lay Worship Leader Committee

890 • Continuing Education Committee

891 • Leadership Support Committee

892 Committee for Youth—FLOOD Council

893 Committee for Worship and Music

894 Committee for Stewardship

895 Committee on Ecumenical Relations

896 Fiscal Management Committee

897 Constitution Committee

898

899 **Appointed by Synod Council Executive Committee in consultation with the bishop:**

900

901 Mutual Ministry Committee

902

903 **Members elected by Synod Assembly:**

904

905 Consultation Committee

906 Committee on Discipline

907

908 **Appointed by the bishop:**

909

910 Synod Assembly Planning Committee

911 Elections Committee

912 Committee of Reference and Counsel

913 Memorials Committee

914

915 **Membership includes bishop, two Synod Council members, and one representative from each**
916 **conference:**

917

918 Synod Nominating Committee

919 **PROPOSED USS COMMITTEES and TASK FORCE GROUPS (2008)**

920

921 **Appointed/administered by the Synod Council:**

922

923 **OUTREACH MINISTRIES**

924 Church in Society task force

925 Evangelism task force

926 Outreach task force

927 Global Mission ministry team

928 Campus Ministry ministry team

929 Lutheran Men in Mission task force

930

931 **LEADERSHIP MINISTRIES**

932 Committee for Ministry/Candidacy Committee (admin. by synod staff)

933 Committee for Authorized Lay Leaders (admin. by synod staff)

934 LINC ministry team

935 Continuing Education task force (admin. by synod staff)

936

937 **CONGREGATIONAL LIFE MINISTRIES**

938 FLOOD Council or for Youth and Family Ministry

939 (admin. by synod staff) with task forces

940 Worship and Music task forces

941 Christian Education task forces

942 Stewardship task forces

943 Committee for Small Church Ministry moving to task force

944

945 **Members elected by Synod Assembly, administered by bishop:**

946

947 Consultation Committee

948 Committee on Discipline

949

950 **Appointed/administered by bishop:**

951

952 Committee on Ecumenical Relations

953

954 **Appointed/administered by Synod Council:**

955

956 Mutual Ministry Committee

957 Personnel Committee

958 Constitution Committee

959 Fiscal Management Committee

960 Synod Assembly Planning Committee (who administers/appoints:)

961 • Synod Nominating Committee

962 • Elections Committee

963 • Committee of Reference and Counsel

964

965

966

967 **Administered by synod staff:**

- 968
- 969 Congregational Leader Networks
- 970 • Youth leaders
 - 971 • Christian education leaders
 - 972 • Congregation Council presidents
 - 973 • Stewardship leaders
 - 974 • Church musicians
 - 975 • Outreach/evangelism leaders
 - 976 • Parish office secretaries

977

978

979 Glossary of new terms

980 Page 1:

981 Welcoming and safe – worship and ministries that would welcome all persons, and be a trusted,
 982 secure place for all, emotionally, financially, and relationally.

983

984 Page 2:

- 985 Committees—constitutionally mandated teams overseeing ongoing ministries
- 986 Ministry teams—teams overseeing ongoing ministries, appointed and reauthorized annually by
 987 the Synod Council,
- 988 Task forces—short-term teams appointed by the Office of the Bishop to carry out a specific
 989 goal or purpose
- 990 Congregational life ministries—defined on page 4
- 991 Congregational leaders networks—defined on page 4
- 992 Outreach ministries—defined on page 5
- 993 Leadership ministries—defined on page 5

994

995

996 Chart comparing number/status of called persons and employees:

997

CURRENT		PROPOSED	
<u>POSITION</u>	<u>STATUS</u>	<u>POSITION</u>	<u>STATUS</u>
Bishop	Full-time (elected)	Bishop	Full-time (elected)
Assistant to the Bishop	Full-time	Assistant to the Bishop	Full-time
Administrative Assistant	Full-time	Assistant to the Bishop	Full-time
Office Secretary	Full-time	Administrative Assistant	Full-time
Office Secretary	1/4 time	Administrative Secretary	Full-time
Custodian	1/4 time	Bookkeeper	1/4 time
Youth Coordinator	1/8 time	Custodian	1/4 time
Candidacy Coordinator	> 1/4 time		
Communications Coordinator	> 1/8 time		
Cantor	> 1/8 time		

998 Brief history of this process:
999

1000 In November of 2005, upon Bishop Main’s recommendation, the Synod Council appointed 9 people to
1001 serve on the Strategy for Mission Task Force (Mr. Charles Benner, Rev. Peter Bergstresser, Ms.
1002 Deborah Leidy, Rev. Kerry Maurer, Rev. Daniel May, Ms. Clarice Pellman, Rev. David Pennebaker,
1003 Mr. Michael Schrey, and Rev. Beth Ann Stone). This group was charged with the task of looking at
1004 our synod with critical eyes. They were to look at the overall structure, committee functions, Synod
1005 Council, all staff (called, employed, and volunteer), and to review what the functions of the synod
1006 could be and ought to be for the future.
1007

1008 The task force divided into three “tracks” to pursue their work. Track A took the course of
1009 interviewing the existing full-time staff and analyzing their comments and the current structure of how
1010 the office operates. This track also proposed the staffing positions described here and the position
1011 descriptions. Track B took a similar course with the committees of the synod, looking at how they
1012 function, what their self-described purpose is, and how well they are fulfilling it. This track also
1013 reviewed other synods’ structures for ideas and comparison and reviewed the synod’s conference
1014 structure and function. Track C held a series of focus groups around the synod. Two groups were held
1015 in each conference for lay persons (3 groups met in West Branch), as well as meeting with the pastors
1016 at conference meetings. Structure and process were also discussed by the deans at a number of their
1017 meetings.
1018

1019 The focus groups met and information was gathered and summarized by the end of March. The
1020 committee work and staff interviews were completed by the end of April. The task force then worked
1021 to put some of these comments and understandings together. Dr. Kenneth Inskip, Ms. Marcia
1022 Johnson, and Rev. Kathie Bender Schwich from the churchwide office were consulted. They provided
1023 some insights into the restructuring process as well as some examples of what other synods have done.
1024 They have also been sent copies of this document, to garner their input concerning this work.
1025

1026 In July and August of 2006, this plan was devised and revised at a number of meetings. On September
1027 11, 2006, this plan was shared with the Executive Committee of the Synod Council. They made a
1028 number of suggestions for clarity of this report and a few changes as well. On September 19, 2006,
1029 this document was presented to the whole Synod Council. About 90 minutes of discussion followed,
1030 again with many helpful suggestions for clarity and focus of this report.
1031

1032 Late in September this report was revised, in preparation to be mailed out to all rostered individuals,
1033 committee chairpersons, congregational lay presidents, staff, and others for their review and comment.
1034 Comments were returned to Michael Schrey at the synod office address (Upper Susquehanna Synod,
1035 ELCA, PO Box 36, Lewisburg, PA 17837) or by email to vp mike@dejazzd.com by November 15,
1036 2006. The task force reviewed these suggestions and comments, revised the plan, and will submit it to
1037 the Synod Council for discussion and vote at their February meeting. This will allow the plan to go to
1038 the Fiscal Management Committee in time for the budget process. Ultimately, this plan will go to the
1039 Synod Assembly in 2007 for final approval. If approved, the implementation of this plan will be
1040 gradual. February 1, 2008, is the date expected for full implementation.