

Recommendations of the Synod Council

To discontinue the Faith Church Loan Fund

Whereas, Faith Lutheran Church, near Williamsport, was organized on April 4, 1954, and dissolved on December 1, 1985; and

Whereas, the congregation voted to dissolve on October 27, 1985, and included in its plan for distribution of assets a contribution of 10% to “C.P. Synod Church Development Friend [sic]”; and

Whereas, the Upper Susquehanna Synod (USS) formed in 1987/8 with the merger that created the ELCA, and funds from the Central Pennsylvania Synod were divided between the three new synods (USS, Allegheny, and Lower Susquehanna), including funds from the “Parish Development Fund” in the amount of \$131,147.87; and

Whereas, minutes from the September 13, 1988, meeting of the Executive Committee state, “\$21,000 has been received from the sale of Faith Church, near Williamsport”; and

Whereas, the Faith Church Loan Fund served to provide loans to congregations of the synod for small capital projects; and

Whereas, no loans have been requested or issued to congregations since 2005; and

Whereas, synod leadership has determined it no longer has the capacity to manage a loan program; therefore it is

RESOLVED, that the treasurer of the Upper Susquehanna Synod be directed to discontinue the Faith Church Loan Fund (4-452-0000) and redirect the fund balance to the ELCA Grants Fund (2-602-2204).

Recommendations of the Synod Council

To establish a Bold Ideas Grants Fund

Whereas, the Synod Council on November 9, 2024 voted to "*establish an ad hoc committee, convened by the DEM, to develop policy recommendations for a new synod Mission Fund, funds to come from the Faith Church Loan Fund and ELCA Grants funds*"; and

Whereas, the Committee, in its report to the Synod Council on May 10, 2025, recommended establishing a Bold Ideas Grants program; and

Whereas, the Committee, in its report to the Synod Council, recommended "a team of four people, including the DEM, to implement the grant application and application process, to review and implement grants; and further to develop an ongoing means of evaluating the grant program" therefore it is

RESOLVED, the Upper Susquehanna Synod Assembly thanks the ad hoc Committee to Develop Policy Recommendations for a new synod Mission Fund for its work. And it is further

RESOLVED the Upper Susquehanna Synod Assembly directs the synod council to use the ELCA Grants Fund (2-602-2204) to establish a Bold Ideas Grants Fund as a temporarily restricted fund that will offer grants to congregations from \$5,000 to \$50,000. And it is further

RESOLVED the Upper Susquehanna Synod Assembly directs the Bishop and Synod Council to appoint a Bold Ideas Committee of four members, including the synod Director for Evangelical Mission, to implement the Bold Ideas Grants program by developing guidelines and an application process for approval by the Synod Council and serving as the grants review committee. And it is further

RESOLVED the Upper Susquehanna Synod Assembly directs the Synod Council and Bold Ideas Committee to evaluate this grants program after three years and maintain, adjust, or discontinue the program based on effectiveness of the program and changing needs of the synod.

Recommendations of the Synod Council

To discontinue the Student Loan Fund

To recommend to the 2025 Synod Assembly:

Whereas, an audit report from the Central Pennsylvania Synod states

"Initially, the loan is an advance for seminary tuition and book allowance. The advance is considered a loan until full-time church work is begun. At such time, the advance is considered a grant. If the student does not complete the seminary and enter church work, the advance becomes a note receivable in cash to the Synod at interest rates determined by the Executive Board. Notes are given to students in addition to the tuition and book allowance. These loans are repayable up to 50% through service. The remaining balance must be repaid in cash. No collateral is required. Interest is determined by the Executive Board."; and

Whereas, in 1989, the Upper Susquehanna Synod appears to have established a Student Loan Fund*, including funds distributed from the Central Pennsylvania Synod and from individual contributions; and

Whereas, the 1997 bishop's report to the Synod Assembly includes this statement: "I am pleased to report that a special gift was received last year from members of the synod. This significant gift has provided funds to support the Grow Campaign, to strengthen our synod's scholarship fund for full-time students preparing for ministry and to fund a mass media promotion of the Lutheran Church which will happen later this year"; and

Whereas, minutes from the 2000 Synod Assembly include the following:

"Bishop Main referred to a fund of about \$30,000—part of the inheritance from the Central Pennsylvania Synod—a fund which is used for the support of those preparing for full-time ministry in the church. The Committee for Ministry will be developing some specific guidelines, he stated, to encourage additional gifts to the fund and will submit the guidelines to the Synod Council for consideration later in the year"; and

Whereas, no loans have been issued since 2010; and

Whereas, the synod in 2019 closed out open loans by forgiving the debt; and

Whereas, synod leadership has determined it no longer has the capacity to manage a loan program; and

Whereas, the synod recognizes the need for both lay and ordained leaders for its ministries; therefore it is

RESOLVED, that the treasurer of the Upper Susquehanna Synod be directed to discontinue the Student Loan Fund (3-452-0000) and redirect the fund balance to the USS Fund for Leaders (2-602-3710); and it is further

RESOLVED, that the Upper Susquehanna Synod in assembly affirms the Synod Council's appointment of an ad hoc committee to review the guidelines of the USS Fund for Leaders and directs that committee to consider the changing environment of leadership in the church which includes both lay and ordained ministers.

**The Student Loan Fund appears on the chart of accounts of the synod from 1989; however, no record of action by synod assembly or synod council has been found to document the establishment of this fund. It may be that reception of these funds from the Central Pennsylvania Synod assumed the establishment of this fund.*