



Living in
God's
Amazing
Grace



Called to Lifelong Learning
And Discipleship

Pacifica Synod

19th Annual Synod Assembly ♦ May 18-20, 2006 ♦ Irvine Marriott

“Hangin’ Out” - One Body, Equipping the Saints

Thursday Review - May 18

Bible Study – The Rev. Dr. Pamela Cooper-White

Following the opening singing and a few brief introductions, the Rev. Dr. Pamela Cooper-White led the Assembly in a study on Ephesians 4:1-7, 11-16. Dr. Cooper-White stressed the need for one another in building the Body of Christ. We are construction workers for the realm of God. She stated, however, that we not only need each other, but also the grace of God: “We live in god’s amazing grace.” There was a brief pause, during which those gathered were asked to ponder our special gift for the Assembly.

Dr. Cooper-White said that one particular word stood out for her in the scripture – to “equip.” This is the same Greek word defined as: “to mend, to adjust (as in putting back into joint) or to mend (as nets).” God’s grace helps heal us, restore us, puts us “back into joint,” weaves us together. It is the peace and love of Christ that accomplishes this.

It is Eastertide, and the Easter story begins in fear, yet continues with the angelic message: “Do not be afraid.” Joy becomes possible – joy outside of oneself, opened to new beginnings, new hope. Then, the word: “Go, tell.” We experience movement out from a house of fear to a house of love – from fear and trembling to joy and freedom.



Treasurer

Loren Fry highlighted Section 2 of the notebook. \$3.7 million was given in mission support. First 54% goes to ELCA to continue their ministry. Next 10% goes to grants, 34% goes to Pacifica Synod staff and facilities. Loren then presented an overview of the ministries and persons who were touched by the outreach of the Pacifica Synod congregations throughout the past year, including relief for Hurricane Katrina. 100% of designated funds went straight to where they were intended. Net shortfall of congregational funds \$14,535.



Bishop Murray Finck shares a moment with the Rev. Drs. Michael and Pamela Cooper-White.

Honored for the 50th anniversary of their ordination were:

Melius E. Bollesen
M. Laurel Gray
Eugene E. Hannemann
Paul C. Oas
Edward J. Volkmann
Everett P. Wuebbens

Honored for the 25th anniversary of their ordination were:

Dan L. Hill
Simon W.S. Lee
Philip A. Tukua
Richard W. Vevia
Raymond W. Wade

Recognitions

2006 is the tenth anniversary of the consecration of Diaconal Ministers in ELCA.

Also recognized current candidates for Diaconal Minister and those new to the Synod and candidates for ministry

Video Presentation from the Texas/Louisiana Gulf Coast Synod

The Texas/Louisiana Gulf Coast Synod offered a video presentation on the tragic consequences of Hurricanes Katrina and Rita, and Lutheran Disaster Response’s ministries. The report showed devastation followed by relief work, instilling hope and life back into broken communities. Dave Kieffer invited members of the Pacifica Synod to join in a work team headed for the Gulf Coast on June 25 (Honolulu) or June 26 (Los Angeles) through July 2, 2006. Cost will be airfare from your location to New Orleans, plus \$20 per day (for food and housing). For more information, please contact the Pacifica Synod office.

Keynote – The Rev. Dr. Michael Cooper-White

The keynote address was given by The Rev. Dr. Michael Cooper-White, as he explored the theme: “Living in God’s Amazing Grace.” He asked the Assembly to recall those “extraordinary moments of unmerited and unexpected grace” that have come to all of us at one time or another. In whose presence have you felt most comfortable, most free to be yourself? He said, “I have often caught the clearest visions of the Divine, or seen the face of God in those who are most different from myself, or who live in radically different context and culture.”

Spirituality can be seen as “lived faith plus a path.” In other

words, daily discipleship. However, the path may vary for each of us. Possible spiritual pathways might include: corporate worship, private devotion or personal mediation, travel (being in the presence of the “other”), or physical exercise combined with prayer. Another key to living in God’s amazing grace is the regular exercise of what St. Paul refers to as the ministry of encouragement. For who do you, in the words of Joseph Sittler, “hang the holy possible?” Hang the holy possible – that, said Sittler, is the whole purpose of a sermon – to “hang the holy possible in front of the mind of the listeners.”

Dr. Cooper-White then challenged those gathered to consider the current immigration issues. Although there is not “a” Christian position, he said our witness, as people of faith, can be offered in how we talk about these matters. As Christians, we are people of “two kingdoms.” We belong to the one, holy, catholic and apostolic Church that exists throughout the world and transcends borders, and we are citizens of the United States. We have one foot in the realm of law and the other in the arena of the Gospel. He said, “How we treat strangers, foreigners and aliens among us seems to lie very close to the heart of the Scripture and the beating heart of the Scripture’s author.”

Dr. Cooper-White closed with a quote from Chilean poet, Pablo Neruda, who wrote; “Oh how I love to be in the city in the morning when the bread wakes up.” He talked about the smell of fresh bread in the towns of Chile. This is a metaphor for living in God’s amazing grace. Every morning offers a new awakening to the world of the Bread of Life that can and does give strength for the day’s journey.

Silent Auction

Rod Anderson, Vice-President of the Pacifica Synod, told those gathered that there will be a Silent Auction in order to raise funds for Synod Council lay members to attend Synod Assembly in Hawaii in 2007. Several items are available for bids, including wood crafts, a Big Bear cabin stay, and dinner for eight to



Peterson & Peterson plug their auction item.

be cooked and served by the “Chefs Boys R D” (Gordon Peterson and Lyle Peterson – the Minnesota “Twins”).

Workshops

The afternoon closed with a variety of workshops — everything from *Dollars and Sen\$e* to *The Jonah Factor* to *Prepare to be Prepared*. Response was enthusiastic. Mark Young from Shepherd of Life L.C. in Lake Elsinore, commenting on *Prepare to be Prepared*, said, “As Lutherans, we try to be prepared for eternity with Christ, but this class is a good reminder that if we are not prepared down here, eternity can come sooner than later.” Jeannie Sullivan from Joy of Christ L.C. in Pearl City, Hawaii, commented on *The Jonah Factor* workshop, “Not ‘my’ will but ‘thy’ will. Discern God’s will for us in vocation.” From the *Preparing*



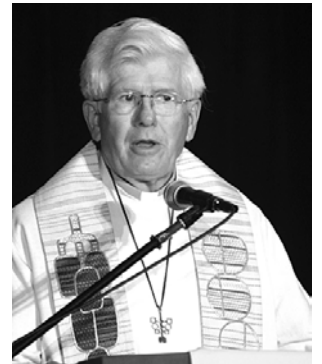
Global Learning workshop

Adult Lay Leaders in Mission and Ministry (PALLMM), Tom Tiede from Grace L.C. in Huntington Beach “enjoyed hearing the visions involved here. Hispanic programs/classes are the future for Southern California. The Gospel seems to be sufficient to reach them.” And finally, Rosalyn Nelson from St. Mark’s L.C. in Chula Vista said about *Dollars and Sen\$e* workshop, “Loved the 17 camels! I liked having a dialogue with information from others in the session. I want to come to the January all-day workshop.” More workshops are planned for Friday afternoon.

Worship

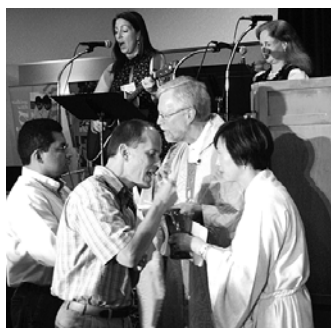
Prior to beginning worship, Steven Toshio Yamaguchi, the Executive Presbyter of the Los Ranchos Presbytery, Presbyterian Church USA and Bishop Dean Nelson of the Southwest California Synod, ELCA brought greetings from their respective church bodies. Both praised Bishop Murray Finck for his ecumenism.

The message of this evening’s service was delivered by former bishop of the Pacifica Synod, the Rev. Robert Miller. He recalled the history of the church, how the ELCA was formed through a union of three Lutheran bodies and what high hopes those pioneers of the faith held. He asked the question: “How has the dream turned out?” His conclusion was, while we may have a way to go, we are not doing badly. He said his teenage grandson speaks of “hangin’ out.” And, perhaps that is just what lifelong church members do – hang out where God has promised to be. While hangin’ out, we may be confronted with hungry or hurting people, and we’ll discover how we may help. In other words, hangin’ out may just equip the saints for ministry and mission.



The Rev. Robert Miller

Following worship, Newport Harbor LC, in honor of their 60th anniversary, offered a gift CD to all attendees.



Worshippers receive communion.

Friday Review—May 19**Bible Study – The Rev. Dr. Pamela Cooper-White**

Numbers 11:16, 24-30

Someone tells Moses that “unauthorized prophesying by unordained people” is taking place. Moses responds, “Would that all Yahweh’s people were prophets...” The tattle-tale’s mistake was in believing that the authority for the 70 elders came from Moses. Dr. Cooper-White said passages like these witness to us that what God wants is much wider than where humans can imagine – even perhaps those of whom we disapprove. And when we don’t approve and God does, well, look out: Jesus said “If any of you put a stumbling block before one of these little ones who believe in me, it would be better if a great millstone were hung around your neck and you were thrown into the sea!” There is peril here, for those of us in the church who presume to evaluate the calling of others.

In the stories they are prophesying and casting out demons; they are trying to heal the breach between people and God. It’s not about who is “in” or “out,” but about the distinctive, joyful, and life-enhancing calling that is given uniquely to each one of us.

It is equally important to note that the mark of true calling is that it is never for ourselves alone, but always for the sake and service of others. This is what Frederick Buechner notes when he defines vocation as “the place where your deep gladness meets the world’s deep need.”

In addition, the idea of calling moves beyond the demands of human time – of kronos time – to the kairos time – time-in-eternity, ushered in by Love.

Reports were given by:

WELCA – Eunice Hanson

Lutheran Credit Union – Miriam Kusserow

PALLMM – Marv Combs, Esaul Salomom, & Terri Robertson



Voting Members show approval for the salary increase.

Vice-President Rod Anderson

Directed attention to his printed report.

Recommended 3% salary increase for rostered leaders:

PASSED

Recommended Constitution/Bylaws changes.

Reasoning behind the changes – last bishop election revealed a constitution/bylaw conflict. This will correct the conflict. PASSED

Change – p.5-11 (sent to us from Churchwide. PASSED

Bishop Finck thanked the Synod Council and especially Rod for his leadership.

Churchwide representative –

Secretary of the ELCA, Lowell Almen, began by thanking Karen Parker for her service to Churchwide and Jim Myers, who



served on Board of Augsburg during a particularly difficult time.

Introduced DVD from ELCA Presiding Bishop Mark Hanson, who urged the ELCA to be more intentional about who we are.

Piggy-backing on the video presentation, Almen asked: Who are we? We are part of 121 congregations making up the Pacifica Synod. He said it is good to be reminded of the work we share through our churchwide

ministries.

Then he offered thanks for mission-support dollars, as he listed missions funded by these dollars – Global Mission, Outreach, and Vocation and Education account for more than 50% of the dollars available for churchwide ministries.

Almen noted the strong response the Pacifica Synod has had in mission sharing. Giving toward hunger appeal was \$17.7 million the past year, in addition to the \$36.8 million given to Disaster Response.

Finally, Almen lifted up those in military chaplaincy. He said they deal with significant challenges. He asked that we please remember these persons in our prayers in our local congregations. He also noted that it is a challenge to recruit military chaplains because the average age of ordinands is about 42, meaning ½ of them are ineligible for chaplaincy. Almen then related a story of being with a chaplain at Ramstein AFB as he greeted a plane of wounded soldiers returning from Iraq. The chaplain explained that this practice had developed after the battle of Falujah, when soldiers were first evacuated to Ramstein. Many of those who were wounded and who were just coming out of drug induced comas thought they had been captured. They would strike out at the doctors, nurses and corpsmen caring for them. But, when a chaplain came aboard, they would see the emblem of the cross and settle down.

ELCA Bureau of Federal Chaplaincy Ministries –

The Rev. Kay Reeb asked those who have served in military, as well as those who have children/grandchildren in military to raise their hands. Then she asked who has prayed for those in the military. It was the entire body. Last March Reeb was in Falujah and told how much letters and prayers meant to the soldiers who received them. She offered thanks to the Assembly for all the churches do to help be the Body of Christ.

Report of Resolution from last year – Next year’s Assembly to Hawaii May 2-5

Jim Myers, planning committee for the 2007 Synod Assembly, introduced a video showing a snowy 2007 Assembly set to take place at the Howard Johnson Hotel in Minneapolis, Minn. When it appeared that “those” people had left the presentation, Jim (on the video) switched from Minneapolis to Honolulu. He said that some congregations may be miffed about sending members to a “boondoggle” assembly in Hawaii, but it will be a real assembly – an “assembly without walls.” Saying that “there are even Lutherans in Hawaii,” the video then showed the Lutheran Churches in the islands, each of which have been sending their members to mainland assemblies for 19 years. Now they would like to host you in “Aloha” spirit. Outings related to the Assembly will include visits to many of the diverse places on Oahu and experiences of the multi-cultural life. The video concluded back at Howard Johnson’s Hotel in snowy Minneapolis, Minn.



(Continued from page 3)

Jim Myers said the Hukilau Conference will do anything in their power to make this affordable for people from the mainland, and asked members to rank options on the “Educational and Cultural Outings” list provided on each table. He said Aloha airline’s offering discount rates (probably others too), as is the Marriott Hotel. In fact, the Hotel will give the discounted rate to anyone who mentions the Synod Assembly and will extend the rate for three days prior to and following May 2-5. More information, including a copy of the video for each congregation, may be found at the booth in the lobby.

Bishop Finck asked for any questions/concerns, saying that it is better to hear them now rather than on the phone Tuesday morning.

Fund raising idea – have a luau at your church

Donated airline miles may be “given” through the synod

Congregations wishing to help those less able to afford the cost may send gifts designated to the Synod

DVD – Doug Knutson-Keller “Invisible Children”

Doug Knutson-Keller introduced a video called “Invisible Children.” More information may be found at *invisiblechildren.com*.

Personal Privilege

Bishop Finck told the Assembly that his son, Adam, is on his second tour with Invisible Children right now. He said he is grateful for Doug promoting this in the Synod, as well as thankful and encouraged that there are college-aged people who view a video produced by their peers and are motivated to go to Africa and work with these children. The word is getting out and things are changing. Bishop Finck said he does not apologize for his emotional attachment to this issue and cause. Doug noted that DVDs are available at the table display in the lobby.

Bishop Finck’s Report

Bishop Finck introduced the Synod staff, noting that the Rev. Tom Dudley will leave the staff to assume a full-time position with the Mission Investment Fund and that Lyle Peterson will retire at the end of June.

He then drew attention to the list of Mission Support that churches have given and urged all to go the extra mile in funding our ministries. He asked that we include in our prayers the whole process of pastoral mobility and rostered leaders moving into new areas, especially those involving housing and the high cost of living within our Synod boundaries

Issues still ahead of us include: poverty, world hunger, the ONE campaign, immigration policies and our sense of hospitality and welcome, and growing and planting new congregations (seven new in the last few years).

Bishop Finck once again reiterated the vows he shared when he first became Bishop and his Scriptural theme – “Let there be light.”

He thanked all for the privilege of allowing him to serve as our Bishop. Then he re-introduced Rhoda and thanked her for all her support and closed with “God be with you all.”

Approval of the Budget

The 2007 Budget (Section 2)

Congregational Support -- \$2.151 million: PASSED

The Rev. Dr. Larry Stoterau -- LCMS District President brought greetings from our brothers and sisters in the local Missouri Synod churches.

Keynote Speaker – The Rev. Dr. Michael Cooper-White

The Rev. Dr. Michael Cooper-White, in his 2nd keynote address said, “When we don’t talk about [power] openly, the use of power in

the church has an insidious way of going underground and rearing its head in all kind of ugly ways.” Nearly everyone in the church thinks that someone else has all the power! The real story is that there is power in the church. He said, “If you take nothing else away from my time with you at this assembly, I hope you’ll remember these three words: CLAIM YOUR POWER! CLAIM your power. Claim YOUR power. Claim your POWER. For it is God-given power to embrace life, to make something of your life as the Spirit lives in you.” He suggested we embrace conflict. It’s normal and “if dealt with lovingly and carefully it’s often the key to growth.”

Living in God’s amazing grace is possible to do as the Church if we do more to help our congregations become true communities of grace. But we need to get “beyond programmatic busy-ness that is so American and middle-class and get more in tune with the parish rhythms of Latin America or Africa – get beyond all those things that get in the way of true worship.”

Dr. Cooper-White said, “In my experience, there is more resistance to planning in the Church than in any other arena... [but] the ones that plan together stand together.” The ELCA needs to plan to become a more public church. Lutheran confessional documents are not theological lectures or sermons. They are public documents, declarations to be heard by princes and government leaders as well as religious authorities.

All of this will take courage. Dr. Cooper-White prays the Pacifica Synod will have waves and waves – indeed a tsunami of courage!

Bishop Finck offer a prayer for those who are involved in secondary education.

Friday Evening

A reception was held in honor of Lutheran Social Services’ 60th anniversary. Each attendee was asked to bring canned food to be used as table center pieces, with the food being donated to LSS. The evening wrapped-up with the banquet, honoring the Lay Recognition recipients and then a presentation of “A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to Jericho.”



- Honored for Lay Member Recognition:**
- Doris Heramb ~ Sonshine Conference
 - Eric Sessing ~ Rejoice Conference
 - Helen Bergen~ West San Diego Conference
 - Albert Krohn~ Mariposa Conference
 - Deborah Schupp ~ Raincross Conference
 - Helen Riggs ~ Big Bear Conference
 - Peter Mackauf~ Harvest Conference
 - June Welton ~ Son & Surf Conference
 - Jackie Chattopadhyay ~ Saddleback Conference
 - Dale Noble ~ Hukilau Conference

Saturday Review - May 20

Bible Study

Using texts from the gospels of Luke and John and photos of Jesus as portrayed in art, the Rev. Dr. Pamela Cooper-White's third and final Bible study focused on The Ascension. She spoke about the event's peculiar nature, quoting a theologian friend who refers to the "hovering Jesus" who gets "sucked up into the sky!" For Cooper-White the images give a glimpse of a Church that was finally "becoming ready to let go of the protective, guiding, immediate presence of Jesus as they had known him" – to begin to take responsibility for the Gospel themselves. And, while the gospels may disagree as to the details of the story, it is clear that the disciples see that it is now up to them to proclaim the good news of peace and justice to the world. Another message we get from the gospel accounts of The Ascension: There are many different images and understandings of Jesus, and, "as Marcus Borg and others have written, the risen Christ has come to encompass, but also transcend these particularities.. No single image... can fully capture the full nature of Christ... To the extent that any one 'version' of Jesus is too narrow, it can become idolatrous. And all too often our narrow visions of Jesus are more connected to our own agendas, than to God's greater vision for humanity." We should be strengthened by our encounters with one another, challenged by our differences and consoled by our companionship as the body of Christ.



Assembly offered words to family of Pastor Charles Daley

At Bishop Finck's request, and led by Cantor Mary Shaima, the entire assembly recorded the song, "Calm to the Waves." Bishop Finck then brought condolences to the family in our name.

Habitat for Humanity

Mary Stohlman deferred to the work crew to speak. Steve Biegler spoke about how the cost of owning a home is prohibitive for many within the boundaries of the Pacifica Synod, especially for those in Orange County. In partnership with Thrivent Financial for Lutherans, more Habitat for Humanity homes are being built. In north Orange County, a two house project is planned for this summer.

Bob Heineman, an enthusiastic participant in Habitat for Humanity in OC, spoke about his experiences. For more information, contact Habitat for Humanity Orange County.

Introduction of Colleague Leaders

Pastor Karen Parker thanked the synod's colleague leaders: Pastors Tim Phillips, Marda Ruth Roberts, Deb Hippen, Judith Stone, Dave Kupka, Ken Caudill, Ray Wade, Carl Zimmerman and Fred Lubs.

Lutheran Retreats, Camps and Conferences

– Anthony Briggs

Read letter from a mom on how important camps are in the lives of kids and families.

Bishop Finck introduced Dr. Phyllis Anderson from PLTS

Dr. Phyllis Anderson brought greetings and thanks for the support the school receives from the Synod and Churchwide, especially for the gift over and above (\$152,000! – Church of the Cross in Riverside closing funds) – "There was a great deal of rejoicing!" Showed a DVD.

Report on the Silent Auction

Total of last night's live auction and the silent auction is more than \$3000.

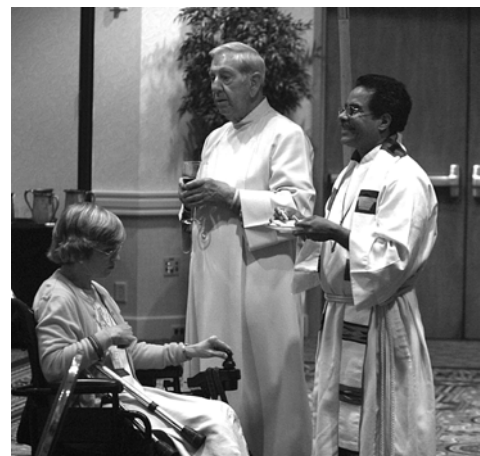
Plenary Work Session

"Technical and Adaptive Changes for the Mission Church"
Gordon Peterson – Continued from noon yesterday.



Closing Worship

The Synod Assembly closed with a Eucharistic worship service led by Bishop Murray Finck. The synod's Mission Interpreters were installed. They are: Barbara Norton - Shepherd of the Valley, La Mesa, Sue Connors - St. Mark, Chula Vista, Roz Nelson - St. Mark, Chula Vista, Barbara Hagen - First, San Diego, Terri Robertson - Peace, Corona, Jack Pavelich - Lord of Life - Moreno Valley, Margaret Jensen - St Paul, Fullerton, Joy Mangan - King of Glory, Fountain Valley, Charon Schalge - St. Timothy, San Diego; Coordinator



Election and Resolution Results

ASSEMBLY ELECTIONS

Synod Council

Vice President (4-year term, 341 votes cast)
Mr. Rodney Anderson, 326 votes

Secretary (4-year term, 333 votes cast)
Ms. Meri Jo Petreivelli, 277 votes

2 Clergy at Large (3-year term, 568 votes cast)
The Rev. Steve Biegler, 166 votes
The Rev. Molly Knutson-Keller, 252 votes

Lay at Large (3-year term, 337 votes cast)
Mr. Lyle Roberts, 214 votes

Conference Elections

West San Diego Conf. #2 Clergy (3-year term, 36 votes cast)
The Rev. Karen Marohn, 34 votes

Raincross Conf. #4 Clergy (3-year term, 33 votes cast)
The Rev. Charles Aden, 18 votes

Saddleback Conf. #7 Clergy (3-year term, 39 votes cast)
The Rev. Bill Snyder, 38 votes

Son & Surf Conference #8 Lay (3-year term, 35 votes cast)
Ms. Sheila Wenzel, 19 votes

Churchwide Assembly

Sonshine #1 - Lay, Female: Pam Prescott, 34 votes
West San Diego #2 - Clergy, Female: The Rev. Maria Santa Cruz, 19 votes
Harvest #3 - Lay, Female: Linda Jacobson, 40 votes
Raincross #4 - Youth: Courtney Robertson, 32 votes
Big Bear #5 - Lay, Male: Felton Anderson, 20 votes
Mariposa #6 - Clergy, Male: James Pike, 13 votes
Saddleback #7 - Lay, Female: Susan Garnett, 18 votes
Son & Surf #8 - Clergy, Person of Color or Primary Language Not English:
The Rev. Minh-Hanh Nguyen, 30 votes
Rejoice #9 - Lay, Male: Skip Becker, 32 votes
Hukilau #10 - Clergy, Female: The Rev. Ruth Peterson, 21 votes

Churchwide Program Committee

Marda-Ruth Roberts, 301 votes

New Mission Development Endowment Fund Committee

Ric Webber, Gloria Dei, Dana Point, 299 votes
Rollo Pickford, Red Hill, Tustin, 298 votes
John Garner, Red Hill, Tustin, 292 votes
Pete Moenter, King of Glory, Fountain Valley, 296 votes

ASSEMBLY RESOLUTIONS

Resolutions

Section 5 of notebook

5-3&4 "Honoring 100 Years of Lutheran Campus Ministry"

Rich Ajer urged passage of this resolution
Pat Patterson asked about University of Hawaii

Judi Miller noted that the colleges and university listed are those that come through the tri-synodical campus ministry board

Following a spirited discussion of grammar and the proper use of the words "are" and "be," all amendments/changes failed to pass.

Original Resolution 5-3&4. PASSED

Section 5-5 "Grabbing Hunger by the Roots – Networking Together Against Hunger" <Blue sheet on table to substitute for one in book>

Doug Knutson-Keller spoke in favor of fair-trade coffee program for local congregations, urged support for resolution

Carol Hodgeson also urged support of fair-trade program and urged that fair-trade be used for future assemblies.

Paul Kirschner plugged Kona and Kawaii coffees for fair-trade consideration as well.

Steve Herder encouraged congregations to attend workshop this afternoon regarding this issue. PASSED

Section 5-13 "In Thanksgiving 100 Years of Lutheran Campus Ministry"

Resolved that each congregation of the Pacifica Synod be encouraged to provide an additional second mile gift of \$1 per baptized member in celebration of campus ministry during the 2007 centenary year. PASSED

Visit www.pacificasynod.org for more information on the recent gathering.

Matt & Lori Seargeant ~Communications Team
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