

**Southern Ohio Synod – ELCA
Synod Council Meeting
Trinity Lutheran Seminary
Columbus, Ohio 43209
December 03, 2016**

Call to Order: Vice President Ellis called the Synod Council meeting to order at 9:35 AM.

Review and Approval of Agenda of the 12/03/2016 Meeting:
The Agenda for the day was reviewed and approved.

VOTED:

**SC.16.12.01 To approve the 12/03/16 Meeting Agenda. (Wolfe/Kaelin)
APPROVED.**

Devotions were offered by Ms. Ellis. Excerpts from the book The Mission Table by Stephen P. Bouman were read by Vice President Ellis and other members of council. Discussion of the excerpts ensued. Prayer was offered by Marjorie Ellis.

Bishop Dillahunt installed Maj. Gen. (Ret.) Deborah Ashenhurst as a member to the Southern Ohio Synod Council.

Review and Approval of Minutes of the 09/10/2016 Meeting:
The Minutes of the 09/10/2016 meeting were reviewed and approved as corrected.

VOTED:

**SC.16.12.02 To approve the minutes of the 09/10/16 meeting as corrected.
(Cutter/Ashenhurst) APPROVED AS CORRECTED.**

Roll Call:

Members present: Maj. Gen. (Ret.) Deborah Ashenhurst, Pr. Todd Cutter, Bp. Suzanne D. Dillahunt, Ms. Marjorie Ellis, Mr. Richard Freudenberger, Mr. Roy E. Hart, Ms. Robin Kaelin, Pr. Laura Leach-Shreffler, Ms. Christine Miller, Pr. Roger Quay, Mr. James Renshaw, Ms. Michelle Riesbeck, Mr. Steven Schnittke, Ms. Cindy Schrader, Ms. Kathie Skamfer, Pr. Robert Swanson, Mr. Bennett Whitaker, and Pr. Ralph Wolfe

Members excused: Mr. Brandon Huston, Mr. Mike Johnsen, Mr. Ronald Moder, Ms. Melanie Powderly, Mr. Kevin Pyle, Pr. Jonathan Schriber, Ms. Carol Swank, Mr. Dave Tipton, Pr. Justin Van Orman

Members absent: None

Staff present: Pr. Bob Abrams, Pr. Katie Kerrigan, Mr. Gary Pecuch, and Pr. Jeff Wick

Staff excused: None

Staff absent: None

Reports of the Officers and Executive Committee:

Vice President:

1. Ms. Ellis reported that the Dakota Access Pipeline issue brought into focus by the protest staged by the Standing Rock Sioux tribal people, and by many others, created a unique situation at the last meeting of the Church Council. It was unique because there were bishops sitting on Council who identified with one side of issue or the other. Nonetheless, Church Council did want to make a public statement. It fell to the Presiding Bishop to make that statement; however, Bishop Eaton's statement on behalf of Church Council was not well-received by advocates on either side of the issue.
2. The Vice President reported to Synod Council that the ELCA is going through a restructuring phase, and as a result, the ELCA Regional Coordinator positions are to be eliminated as of March 1, 2017. Ms. Ellis indicated that the Coordinators were not included in the discussion and decision to eliminate the position churchwide. The decision was made October 31, 2016. Bishop Dillahunt filled in various details of the process and decision as she understood the situation. Many questions now need to be answered.
3. Ms. Ellis then updated SOS regarding several other matters that came before Church Council.
4. The Vice President reported that Council collected \$100 as a gift for Barbara Klatt who resigned her position of Vice President in July of this year.
5. The Vice President then reported that Bp. Dillahunt, Ms. Ellis, Mr. Whitaker along with Pr. Jeff Wick, Pr. Bob Abrams, and Pr. Katie Kerrigan attended a recent meeting at Grace, Westerville, where a vote occurred to disaffiliated from the ELCA and to join the NALC took place. During the discussions at the meeting, the NALC positions on various topics were characterized as the "norm" and the ELCA positions on those same topics were characterized as not the "norm". Comments were made by NALC Bp. Bradosky that led Mr. Whitaker to believe that NALC finances were tenuous.
6. Ms. Ellis introduced the concept of creating Synod Ambassadors to represent the Synod at various functions. Discussion ensued about the potential program, its positive aspects, and usefulness.

Secretary: 1. Mr. Hart reported that a recommendation from the Synod Council Executive Committee comes to the Synod Council regarding the 2017 Housing Allowances for Ministers of Word and Sacrament in the following amounts: Pr. Robert Abrams: \$27,500.00; Bishop Suzanne D. Dillahunt: \$28,000.00; and Pr. Jeff Wick: \$40,000.00. Discussion ensued.

VOTED:
SC.16.12.03

To approve the 2017 Housing Allowances for the Ministers of Word and Sacrament as recommended by the Southern Ohio Synod Council Executive Committee in the following amounts: Pr. Robert Abrams: \$27,500.00; Bishop Suzanne D. Dillahunt: \$28,000.00; and Pr. Jeff Wick: \$40,000.00. APPROVED.

2. The Secretary also noted that he attended a Region 6 Archives Board Meeting held on October 26, 2016, at Trinity Lutheran Seminary. Topics of discussion included the 2017 Archives budget; protocol regarding the handling of congregational documents containing mold and the remediation thereof; and consideration of a new lease with Trinity Lutheran Seminary for new and additional space.

Treasurer: 1. In the absence of Mr. Pyle, Vice President Ellis reported that the General Fund Budget Comparison February to October 2016 shows a \$22,575.31 deficit year-to-date as opposed to a \$70,424.78 deficit during the same period in 2015.

2. The Bishop then reviewed some of the Synod office line item expenses that were impacted by flooding and electrical issues.

3. Katie Kerrigan reported on activities of the Synod Stewardship Committee for Mission Support. Letters recently were sent out to congregations, and the Committee is receiving a positive response. The Committee has received about a 10% response to the Commitment Letter to date which is higher than in recent years.

4. Bishop Dillahunt reported that the AGM Foundation met in November to dissolve. The Board is now proceeding to wind up its affairs by the end of calendar year 2016.

5. The Bishop presented information about the Richard Rouff Fund of the Synod which now contains \$214,929.87 and about an update to accounting standards required by the Financial Accounting Standards Board. Based upon the new accounting standards, it is recommended that the Council-designated unrestricted Richard Rouff Fund containing

\$214,929.87 be released from its Council designation and be returned to unrestricted reserves. Details of the Richard Rouff Fund and its designation are attached to these Minutes. Discussion followed the presentation.

VOTED

SC.16.12.04

To approve the release of the unrestricted Richard Rouff Fund from its previous Council designation and to approve the return of the current fund balance of \$214,929.87 to the Synod's unrestricted reserves. (Cutter/Kaelin) APPROVED.

Prayer was then offered by Bishop Dillahunt.

Vice President Ellis declared a recess for lunch at 12:10 PM.

Vice President Ellis reconvened the meeting at 12:55 PM.

Bishop:

The Bishop's written report is attached to these Minutes to be reviewed. Highlights of the report follow, to-wit:

1. Bishop Dillahunt recently met with the First Call Theological Education pastors. The meeting went well. The Bishop stated that coaching will be expanded from just First Call Theological Education pastors to all pastors in 2017. Funding comes from congregational donations to the Synod discretionary fund.
2. Reformation Celebration events kicked off with a worship service in Lund, Sweden, between Roman Catholic Church and World-Wide Lutheran Church. In conjunction with the beginning of the Reformation Celebration, a joint statement was released by the Most Rev. Dennis M. Schnurr, Archbishop, Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Cincinnati, the Most Rev. Jeffrey M. Monforton, Bishop, Roman Catholic Diocese of Steubenville, and the Rev. Suzanne Darcy Dillahunt, Bishop, Southern Ohio Synod, Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. The Joint Statement encouraged shared prayer, study, and service to the world in observance of the Reformation. A copy of the full text of the Joint Statement is attached to these Minutes.
3. Bishop Dillahunt thanked Pr. Ralph Wolfe for organizing and participating in the response at Jacob's Porch to the terrorist attack at Ohio State University on November 28, 2016.
4. It is anticipated that a new Employee Handbook will be presented

to Synod Council for its consideration in January, 2017.

5. On November 7, 2016, Capital University and Trinity Lutheran Seminary announced that they intend to reunite after both boards approved resolutions expressing their mutual commitment to pursue reunion. Although autonomous since 1959, Capital University and Trinity Lutheran Seminary have had parallel visions, missions, and purposes. The two institutions will be stronger together than apart.

6. The Bishop reported that she will be teaching Lay Ministry School in January, February, and March, 2017, in Dayton, while Dr. Don Huber, Ph.D., will be instructing at the same time in Chillicothe.

7. Later in this meeting, a Call is to be extended to Deacon Mary Lasits to serve as Senior Associate Director, Leadership Giving, at Wittenberg University, effective December 3, 2016, and a Call is to be extended to Pr. Sally Padgett to serve as Pastor of First English Lutheran Church, Columbus, for a two-year term call, effective October 30, 2016.

8. Mr. Gary Pecuch is Youth and Family Ministry Coach for the Southern Ohio Synod. Mr. Pecuch oversees the Bishop's Youth Ambassador Program which trains youth to take ELCA information back to home congregations. About 25 youth are currently participating in the program.

9. The Bishop introduced a proposal recommending personal leave for faith which is to be distinguished from vacation time or academic sabbaticals. Discussion ensued.

VOTED

SC.16.12.05

To approve the removal of the Personal Leave for Faith and Sabbatical Proposal from the En Bloc vote. (Cutter/Swanson) APPROVED.

Further discussion ensued regarding the Personal Leave for Faith proposal.

VOTED

SC.16.12.06

To refer the Personal Leave for Faith and Sabbatical Proposal to committee for further study. (Whitaker/Miller) APPROVED.

Report of Auxilliaris

1. The Synod Council received no report from the Lutheran Men in Mission.
2. The Synod Council received a written report from the Women of the ELCA and highlights thereof were verbally presented by Robin Kaelin.

**The Reports of the Officers, Executive Committee, and Auxiliaries
were accepted by the Synod Council.**

Discussion then focused upon the En Bloc recommendations.

EN BLOC

VOTED:

**SC.16.09.07 To approve the remaining En Bloc Recommendations.
(Whitaker/Schnittke) APPROVED.**

En Bloc Business Recommendations

Professional Leaders Roster

Retired Status

RECOMMENDATION:

- Pr. G. Karl Gaston (1/1/2017)
- Pr. Carol Gesalman (12/1/16)

Disability Status

RECOMMENDATION:

- Pr. Miriam Schreck (7/31/16)

Extension of Call

RECOMMENDATION:

- Deacon Mary Lasits, to serve as Senior Associate Director, Leadership Giving, at Wittenberg University, effective 12/3/16.
- Pr. Sally Padgett to serve as Pastor of First English Lutheran Church, Columbus for a 2 yr. term call effective, 10/30/16.

Legal and Governance

Committees, Task Forces and Partnerships

RECOMMENDATION:

- To appoint Pr. Marjorie McDaniel-Burnett to serve the unexpired term on the Discipline Committee. (Pr. Katie Kerrigan)
- To appoint Mr. Jon Meister to serve the unexpired term on the Consultation Committee. (Ms. Lynn Spatz)
- All Shepherd Lutheran Church, Lewis Center constitution update has been approved by the constitution committee.

INFORMATION –

- Grace Lutheran Church, Westerville OH, to disaffiliate from the ELCA and to affiliate to the NALC effective, November 6, 2016.

VOTED:

SC.16.09.08

To adjourn the Synod Council meeting following the closing Eucharist and the installation of Pr. Katie Kerrigan as the Director of Evangelical Mission. (Dillahunt/Kaelin) APPROVED.

The members of the Synod Council participated in and Bishop Dillahunt presided over the closing Eucharist and installation of Pr. Katie Kerrigan as Director of Evangelical Mission.

The meeting was then adjourned at 1:56 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Roy E. Hart
Synod Council Secretary

RICHARD ROUFF FUND / FASB TRANSITION

Proposed Synod Council Action:

MOVED: That the council designation of the Richard Rouff Fund hereby be released, and the current fund balance of \$214,929.87 be returned to unrestricted reserves.

Background:

Several years ago, the synod received a bequest from the Richard Rouff estate which came with no restrictions on how it was to be used by the synod. At that time, the Synod Council set the money aside as the "Richard Rouff Fund" to be used as deemed appropriate in future years.

Because this designation was made by the Synod Council, rather than as a restriction by the donor, the fund has properly been treated as a council-designated portion of the synod's unrestricted net assets. Over the past number of years, congregational giving has declined and the synod has expended a significant portion of its available unrestricted net assets. The current administration has been working diligently to achieve a balanced budget and restore financial stability.

New Regulations:

The Financial Accounting Standards Board (FASB) recently issued Accounting Standards Update No. 2016-14, which is intended to improve and simplify the information displayed in financial statements of nonprofit organizations. For the most part, the changes are required—not optional; however, there is a bit of flexibility in implementation. Our synod accountant has suggested that we make this transition for our current-year financial statements, as the new format will make the reports more reader-friendly and reflect our ongoing dedication to financial transparency.

Why Action is Needed:

One of the changes required under the FASB update is a new schedule that will be included with the financial reports. The purpose of the schedule is to tell the reader how much cash the synod has on hand to pay current operating expenses for the following fiscal year. It starts by calculating the amount of cash available and then subtracts amounts that have prior claim on that cash, such as:

- Pass-through contributions that must be sent on to the designated recipients,
- Mission support committed to ELCA churchwide (40%),
- Net assets restricted by donors, and
- Net assets designated by Synod Council.

The obvious advantage to this presentation is that it shows the synod is not flush with available cash. However, because the schedule separates council-designated net assets from other unrestricted net assets, it is no longer practical to maintain the Richard Rouff fund as a separate designation of unrestricted net assets.

Please refer to the attached schedule, which reflects a sample of the new schedule using figures from October 31, 2016. Note that the first two columns represent the presentation based on our current council designations. The large negative bottom line indicates that the synod does not actually have

sufficient cash to cover all of the council-designated amounts in addition to the other amounts that have prior claim. In other words, the amount of unrestricted net assets currently designated by Synod Council exceeds the actual amount of unrestricted net assets available.

The proposed Synod Council action to release the council designation of the Richard Rouff fund will approximately balance the council-designated funds with the actual amount of unrestricted net assets available. The second set of columns on the attached schedule shows the presentation at October 31, 2016, after the Richard Rouff fund is released. You should note the following:

- There is still a small negative bottom line. With synod receipts normally higher in the last months of the fiscal year, it is anticipated that this situation would be corrected by the end of the fiscal year.
- While this action will approximately balance unrestricted net assets, it will not leave much margin for unanticipated expenditures that may arise.
- The Budget Allocation funds have been set aside for necessary future expenses, such as building repairs and replacement of synod automobiles and equipment. Release of these amounts to unrestricted net assets would create financial hardship for the synod in future years.
- The Living Christ fund has been set aside for congregational development/redevelopment, but it should not be fully expended as it could become necessary to release a portion of this fund to unrestricted net assets in the future.

ANALYSIS OF CASH AVAILABLE 10/31/16

	<u>October 31, 2016</u>	<u>October 31, 2016</u> <u>without Rouff</u>
Checking Account and Petty Cash	147,549	147,549
Savings Account	130,046	130,046
ELCA Mission Investment Fund	200,000	200,000
ELCA Endowment (10/31 FMV)	143,131	143,131
Total Resources	<u>620,726</u>	<u>620,726</u>
Accounts Payable	0	0
Mission Support and Pass-Thrus Payable	107,333	107,333
Donor-Restricted	316,396	316,396
Council-Designated: Living Christ	128,393	128,393
Council-Designated: Richard Rouff	214,930	0
Council-Designated: Budget Allocations	<u>74,721</u>	<u>74,721</u>
Total Unavailable	<u>841,773</u>	<u>626,843</u>
Net Cash Available for Current Operating	<u><u>(221,047)</u></u>	<u><u>(6,117)</u></u>

December 3, 2016

Synod Council Report

Bishop Suzanne D. Dillahunt

Grace and Peace be with you in this Advent Season as we prepare for the celebration of our Lord and Savior Jesus' birth.

1. My report for this meeting will be both written and oral. And I want to Thank You for your Leadership in the territory. Some of you have attended meetings above and beyond any expectation. And at this meeting I want to talk more about how you all can be Ambassadors for our ministry together to build up the Body of Christ.
2. Capital University and Trinity Lutheran Seminary are in the process of reuniting. At both board meetings in November, the boards made this historic decision. We continue to pray for both institutions as they move into a new future. The Statements were included in your pre council materials as information.
3. Stronger and Better Together...Joining Jesus in the Restoration of the World is this synod's vision. It is taking shape as implementation continues. Coaching for First Call Rostered Ministers is underway and Coaching for all Rostered Ministers begins in 2017. Pastor Abrams oversees this implementation.
4. Other Vision Activities: All Ohio Rostered Ministers Event in Huron, OH. Once again, this year, we are participating in the Sawmill Event with NEO and NWO. In 2018, SOS will have its own Rostered Ministers Event and planning begins soon. In August 2017, in Atlanta, GA the first ever all ELCA Rostered Ministers Event happens.
5. Please review the Personal Leave for Faith Sabbatical Proposal. This was presented to you in April and come with questions and comments. Pastor Wick works with the task force and they are hoping you will approve it so we can introduce it early next year.
6. Reformation@500 Website is launched thanks to Susan Barton-Nonno. This is a one stop shop for information and upcoming activities throughout this reformation commemoration year. If you were able to watch the Lund, Sweden worship service it was amazing. SOS Reformation events are in place and I will tell you more about them at the meeting.

7. One item I want to highlight with the Reformation is the Joint Statement made with Arch Diocese of Cincinnati and the Diocese of Steubenville with Southern Ohio. This statement is included in your pre council materials. Exciting things are happening.
8. Governance: At the ELCA Churchwide Assembly, changes occurred in the constitutions for Churchwide, Synods and Congregations. Some of these are mandatory and the Synod constitution is now updated with those changes. There are some other changes that are suggested but not mandatory, and the Synod Constitution Committee will review them and bring suggestions over the next months for your approval. Those changes will then go to the 2018 Synod Assembly.
9. Pastor Kerrigan has been working with the Stewardship Team and there will be a special Lenten emphasis this year. Mission Support is steady. Thank you! Quarterly reports and letters have gone out and we look with hopeful anticipation for a solid 4th quarter. Mission Support will remain at 40% and we pray for a slight increase in giving in 2017.
10. I had anticipated rolling out a new Employee Handbook at this meeting. This will happen now in January. We have worked closely with Meghan Hill who understands non-profit employment laws.
11. In November, I had the opportunity to travel to Lima, Peru with Pastor Mick Althaus for an ELCA Central and South American Consultation. Pastor Roseane from Brazil, one of our companion Global partners was also able to attend. It was a worthwhile trip and I appreciate the generosity of St. Jacob, Anna for their gift to allow both of us to attend.
12. Beginning March 1, 2017, the Regional system that we have known will change. On October 31, the current regional coordinators positions were terminated. This was a decision from the Domestic Mission Unit of the ELCA. I will bring you more information to the meeting and how this will impact Region 6 and SOS. I ask you pray for Deacon Marilyn Smith, Region 6 Coordinator and the others affected by this decision.

I look forward to seeing you all at the meeting. We will install Pastor Katie Kerrigan as the Director of Evangelical Mission. See you soon.



Southern Ohio Synod
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
God's work. Our hands.

Complete Story

10/28/2016

Joint commemoration statement between Ohio Catholic Dioceses and Southern Ohio Synod

The following joint statement was issued by the Most Rev. Dennis M. Schnurr, Archbishop, Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Cincinnati, the Most Rev. Jeffrey M. Monforton, Bishop, Roman Catholic Diocese of Steubenville and the Rev. Suzanne Darcy Dillahunt, Bishop, Southern Ohio Synod, Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to encourage shared prayer, study and service to the world in observance of the Reformation.

Joint Statement to Encourage Study, Prayer and Service in Commemoration of the 500th Anniversary of the Reformation

October 31, 2016 begins a 500th anniversary year, commemorating the beginning of the Lutheran movement and the Protestant Reformation. Remarkably this commemoration has become an ecumenical observance, focusing on the continued pursuit of unity in Jesus Christ for which He himself prayed. Therefore, Pope Francis and global Lutheran leaders together will inaugurate the anniversary with a Common Prayer service in Lund, Sweden. This liturgy takes its shape from the work of the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity and the Lutheran World Federation in the document, *From Conflict to Communion: Lutheran-Catholic Common Commemoration of the Reformation in 2017*. It will involve moments of thanksgiving, repentance, and commitment, placing at the center the gospel of Jesus Christ.

This observance emerges from years of productive dialogue between our two churches. Through these discussions, we have come to appreciate that more unites us than divides us. Among the substantial results achieved, we acknowledge that we share a common faith in the Triune God and the revelation in Jesus Christ, as well as recognition of the basic truths of the doctrine of justification. In the U.S., the joint statement of our bishops, a *Declaration on the Way: Church, Ministry, and Eucharist* identifies substantial agreements on these crucial issues and seeks to open further dialogue on remaining differences.

Furthermore, we give thanks for the occasions when our communities have prayed together for Christian communion. Among them, we celebrate the annual Week of Prayer for Christian Unity, and, this January, the theme will be "Reconciliation – The Love of Christ Compels Us." This reference to 2 Corinthians 5:14, inspired by Pope Francis's apostolic exhortation, *The Joy of the Gospel* and chosen by ecumenical consultation in the land of Martin Luther, highlights the special opportunity for further reconciliation between our communities offered by this commemorative year.

As bishops of Lutheran and Catholic communities in Ohio, we share the longing to move forward "on the way" to the unity to which Christ calls us. Here also we want to respond to this anniversary with efforts that allow us to deepen our own local relationships through shared study, prayer and service to the world. Thus, we invite our people at all levels to sustained, imaginative and prayerful engagement with one another.

In the coming weeks, the faithful in both Lutheran and Catholic congregations will be given resources designed to foster meaningful discussion about the faith that we share and what areas for further dialogue remain. We will promote opportunities for shared prayer for our unity in Christ. And, we will encourage joint engagement in Catholic and Lutheran ministries of charity and justice, as a common witness to the gospel that brings good news to a world in need.

These three things, study, prayer, and service, are important ways that the love of Christ can be shared among us and through us. We invite Lutherans and Catholics in our region to join in this year of commemoration, so that we may more effectively share the truth of the gospel with all.

Most Rev. Dennis M. Schnurr, Archbishop
Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Cincinnati

Rev. Suzanne Darcy Dillahunt, Bishop
Southern Ohio Synod
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

Most Rev. Jeffrey M. Monforton, Bishop
Roman Catholic Diocese of Steubenville

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