

**Southern Ohio Synod – ELCA  
Synod Council Meeting  
Trinity Lutheran Seminary  
September 9, 2017**

Call to Order:

Bishop Dillahunt called the Synod Council meeting to order at 9:37 AM.

Pr. Ralph Wolfe opened the meeting with prayer.

Review and Approval of Agenda of the 09/09/2017 Meeting:

The Agenda for the day was reviewed and approved with the addition of the appointment of Christopher Clothier along with Jonathan Bull to the Southern Ohio Synod Finance Team.

**VOTED:**

**SC.17.09.01            To approve the 09/09/17 Meeting Agenda as amended.  
(Schrader/Moder) APPROVED.**

Trinity Lutheran Seminary Interim President, Dr. Stan Olsen, was welcomed to the meeting.

Pr. Mike Ward was also welcomed to present information regarding a Southern Ohio Synod Capital Campaign.

Vice President Ellis conducted opening devotions from Chapter 4 and biblical marks in the devotional book, The Mission Table, with much discussion.

Review and Approval of Minutes of the 07/08/2017 Meeting

The Minutes of the 07/08/2017 meeting were reviewed and approved.

**VOTED:**

**SC.17.09.02            To approve the minutes of the 07/08/17 meeting. (Riesbeck/Kaelin)  
APPROVED**

Roll Call:

Members present:

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, Mr. Ronald Moder, Ms. Melanie Powderly, Mr. Kevin Pyle, Pr. Roger Quay, Ms. Michelle Riesbeck, Ms. Cindy Schrader, Pr. Jonathan Schriber, Ms. Carol Swank, Pr. Justin Van Orman, Mr. Bennett Whitaker, and Pr. Ralph Wolfe

Members excused: Maj. Gen. (Ret.) Deborah Ashenhurst, Mr. Mike Johnsen, Mr. James Renshaw, Mr. Steven Schnittke, Ms. Kathie Skamfer, Pr. Robert Swanson

Members absent: Mr. Brandon Huston

Staff present: Pr. Bob Abrams, Pr. Katie Kerrigan, Pr. Jeff Wick, and Ms. Kim Uemura

Staff excused: Mr. Gary Pecuch

Staff absent: None

Bishop Dillahunt then introduced Dr. Stan Olsen to the Synod Council. Dr. Olsen is the Interim President of Trinity Lutheran Seminary who will guide the Seminary through December 31, 2017. Dr. Olsen opened his remarks by saying that Trinity Lutheran Seminary is exploring its mission on the road to integration with Capital University. He expressed thanks for all of the types of support given to the Seminary during this interim period. Asked why there seems to be a decline in Candidacy applications, Dr. Olsen stated that he believes that there is a decline because the pool of candidates is smaller in that the church has not invited diverse persons into Candidacy, because American culture has changed, and because of the financial burden placed upon the candidates. Dr. Olsen closed his remarks by thanking the Bishop for the invitation to address the Synod Council.

Bishop Dillahunt then declared a recess from 11:10 AM to 11:21 AM, whereupon the Council resumed its regular session of activities.

Reports of the Officers and Executive Committee:

- Vice President:
1. Ms. Ellis reported that her term on the Church Council ended August 31, 2017. She expressed her thanks for being able to participate in the church at the national level.
  2. The Vice President then informed the Council about various upcoming Reformation events, including the ELCA Reformation service at the National Cathedral in Washington, DC on October 29, 2017.
  3. Ms. Ellis also reported that Pr. Katie Kerrigan would address Council about Synod Ambassador assignments.

- Secretary:
1. The Secretary reported that pursuant to directions from the July Synod Council meeting, a letter was sent to Ms. Penny Christensen, Executive Director of LOMO, regarding the recent action of the Synod Council involving the proposed LOMO constitutional changes. A copy of the letter is attached to these minutes.

Treasurer:

1. Mr. Pyle reported that the General Fund Budget February-July 2017 shows a deficit of \$28,339.91 year-to-date.

2. Discussion then turned to the restricted funds in The Advancing God's Mission fund in the sum of approximately \$129,862.65 and the need to unrestrict the funds so as to be available for other projects.

**VOTED:  
SC.17.09.03**

**To unrestrict the Advancing God's Mission Funds in the approximate sum of \$129,862.65 so as to make said funds available for other projects. (Kaelin/Van Orman) APPROVED.**

3. The Treasurer reported that the Synod received a gift of \$2,500.00 from the law firm of Volkema, Thomas, Miller & Scott. He stated that the next issue is where to allocate the gift. Much discussion ensued about the possibility of designating the gift to the newly-formed Synod Resource Team to assist congregations in difficult decision-making situations. It was also suggested that the gift be allocated to the Training Academy. The merits of both ideas continued to be discussed.

**VOTED:  
SC.17.09.04**

**To call the question. (Quay/Wolfe) APPROVED.**

**VOTED:  
SC.17.09.05**

**To allocate the gift of \$2,500.00 to the Synod Resource Team. (Whitaker/Swank) APPROVED.**

4. Mr. Pyle stated that the Mission and Ministry Plan is "in the black" by the sum of \$19,539.00.

5. The Treasurer informed the Council that the Synod has signed all the papers (application, cover letter, three years of audits, financials, etc.) in order to refinance the building with the Mission Investment Fund for \$360,000.00 for ten years at a fixed interest rate of 4.875%. He expects the process to be settled in November, 2017.

6. Mr. Pyle reported that the Synod Executive Committee has accepted three gifts: 1) a \$10,000.00 endowment from WELCA, with earnings (only) distributed annually and designated for education of girls in East of Lake Victoria, Tanzania; 2) \$175,000.00 from St. Jacob, Tarlton, designated for Seminary and Lay Education, distributable as grants authorized the Bishop; and 3) \$20,000.00 from St. Jacob, Anna,

designated for Companion Synod travel, with authorization by the Bishop as expenses are incurred.

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

1. On October 22, 2017, a Southern Ohio Synod Reformation Service will be held at Prince of Peace, Dublin, followed by a German dinner. Bishop Dillahunt suggests that offerings collected at the service be designated for Southern Ohio Synod New and Renewing Congregations Fund.

**VOTED:**  
**SC.17.09.06**

**To designate the offerings received at the Reformation Service on October 22 for Southern Ohio Synod New and Renewing Congregations Fund. (Moder/Powderly) APPROVED.**

2. On October 29, 2017, Wittenberg University will host an annual Reformation Service, Bishop Dillahunt presiding.

3. A service of Common Prayer will be held on November 5, 2017, at Epiphany, Centerville, with our Roman Catholic sisters and brothers.

Prayer was then offered by Mr. Bennett Whitaker prior to lunch.

Bishop Dillahunt declared a recess in proceedings for lunch at 12:18 PM.

At 12:52 PM, Council returned from lunch recess to resume its activities.

Bishop Dillahunt introduced Mr. Mike Ward to the Synod Council. Mr. Ward is a professional fundraiser who has been invited to speak to the Council about a Synod-wide Capital Campaign, beginning with a feasibility study to "test the waters". He explained that a capital campaign is about connecting with people and congregations. A feasibility study can help determine how far the Synod's Mission and Ministry Plan can go. Mr. Ward talked about identifying the people who are passionate and who care. The funds raised would be directed to support seminary students, lay leadership, new and renewing congregations, and congregation vitality.

**EN BLOC**  
**VOTED:**  
**SC.17.09.07**

**To approve the En Bloc Recommendations. (Whitaker/Schriber) APPROVED.**

## En Bloc Business Recommendations

### Professional Leaders Roster

On Leave from Call

#### **RECOMMENDATION:**

- Pr. Laura Book, Family Leave, 3rd year (4/11/15)
- Pr. Elizabeth Buuck, 1st year (8/16/17)
- Pr. Lynette Schroeder, 2nd year (8/1/16)
- Pr. Christine Widrig, Education Leave, 4th year (11/10/14)

Extension of Call

#### **RECOMMENDATION:**

- To extend a synod council call to Deacon Daniel Jacob, to serve as Ministry Associate, at Wittenberg University, Springfield, OH, effective August 1, 2017.

### Legal and Governance

Committees, Task Forces and Partnerships

#### **RECOMMENDATION:**

To appoint Jonathan Bull and Christopher Clothier to the Southern Ohio Synod Finance Team.

**VOTED:**

**SC.17.09.08**

**To go into Executive Session. (Schriber/Van Orman) APPROVED at 2:22 PM.**

**VOTED:**

**SC.17.09.09**

**To return to Regular Session. (Van Orman/Kaelin) APPROVED at 3:18 PM.**

Discussion ensued regarding a change in the Agenda to provide for an asterisk to be added next to the name of Pr. Shannon Vogeletzang to indicate that her matter is not to be treated as an En Bloc matter similar to the designation of the Lutheran Outdoor Ministries in Ohio matter that is also not to be treated as an En Bloc matter.

**VOTED:**

**SC.17.09.10**

**To correct the Agenda in order to add an asterisk next to the name of Pr. Shannon Vogelezang to indicate that her matter is not to be treated as an En Bloc matter. (Pyle/Whitaker) APPROVED.**

Much discussion then took place regarding a Conference of Bishops extension of Shannon Vogelezang's status of On Leave from Call. It was noted that a Conference of Bishops Extension Request was to have been initiated by Shannon Vogelezang, and that no request had been received by Bishop Dillahunt as of September 8, 2017.

**VOTED:**

**SC.17.09.11**

**To make it a matter of record that Pr. Shannon Vogelezang has requested no Conference of Bishops Extension of her On Leave from Call status as of September 8, 2017. (Pyle/Van Orman) APPROVED WITH ONE ABSTENTION.**

The matter of proposed amendments to the Lutheran Outdoor Ministries in Ohio Constitution returned to the Synod Council for its consideration after the first proposal was disapproved (SC.17.07.08) at the Synod Council meeting of July 8, 2017. A copy of the proposed amendment is attached. The language of the revised proposal reads as follows:

**Article V. Board of Directors Membership**

Section 1.

The LOMO Board shall consist of up to fourteen members, with a minimum of 75% of whom must be members of Ohio ELCA congregations. The Ohio Synods will appoint three members each. Up to five at large members will be appointed by the LOMO board members in office at the time a vacancy occurs.

**VOTED:**

**SC.17.09.12**

**To approve the revised Lutheran Outdoor Ministries in Ohio constitution change in order that Article V, Section 1 reads as follows:**

**Article V. Board of Directors Membership**

Section 1.

**The LOMO Board shall consist of up to fourteen members, with a minimum of 75% of whom must be members of Ohio ELCA congregations. The Ohio Synods will appoint three members each. Up to five at large members will be appointed by the LOMO board members in office at the time a vacancy occurs.**

**(Powderly/Leach-Shreffler) APPROVED WITH ONE DISSENT  
AND WITH ONE ABSTENTION.**

The Bishop then introduced Mr. Adam Barclay to the Synod Council. Mr. Barclay updated the Synod Council regarding the Bellbrook church property and the Oklahoma property.

Pr. Katie Kerrigan reported to the Synod Council regarding the progress being made with the Synod's Ambassador Program as well as what is happening with the Stewardship Team.

Pr. Bob Abrams then presented information to the Synod Council regarding the newly-formed Resource Team whose members will be trained to assist congregations in decision-making situations.

**Report of Auxiliaries**

1. The Synod Council received a written report from the Lutheran Men in Mission.
2. Ms. Robin Kaelin presented an oral report on behalf of the Women of the ELCA.

**The Reports of the Officers, Executive Committee, and Lutheran Men in Mission were then received by the Synod Council.**

Other Business: None

**VOTED:  
SC.17.09.13 To adjourn the meeting. (Kaelin/Van Orman) APPROVED.**

The meeting was then adjourned at 4:06 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Roy E. Hart  
Synod Council Secretary