

Southern Ohio Synod – ELCA
Synod Council Meeting
All Saints Lutheran Church
6770 N. High Street, Worthington, Ohio 43085
January 25, 2020

Call to Order:

Vice President Ellis called the Synod Council meeting to order a 10:03 AM.

Roll Call:

Members present: Rev. Matthew Byrd, Rev. Mark Combs, Bp. Suzanne D. Dillahunt, Mr. David Drumm, Ms. Marjorie Ellis, Ms. Holly Fischer, Mr. Richard Freudenberger, Mr. Steve Goff, Ms. Jeni Gray, Mr. Roy Hart, Rev. Stephen Kimm, Rev. Laura Leach-Shreffler, Mr. Kevin Pyle, Ms. Michelle Riesbeck, Ms. Laura Schmidt, Mr. Steven Schnittke, Ms. Cindy Schrader; Ms. Kathie Skamfer, Ms. Morgan Walker, Mr. Doug Ware, Rev. Dr. Kenneth R. Witt, Rev. Ralph Wolfe, Ms. Susan Wyckoff.

Members excused: Rev. Cheryl Siegenthaler.

Members absent: Ms. Carol Swank.

Review and Approval of Agenda of the 1/25/2020 Meeting:

The Agenda for the day was reviewed.

VOTED:

SC.20.01.01 To approve the 1/25/2020 Agenda. (Schmidt/Drumm) APPROVED.

Pastor Wolfe opened with devotions. He utilized a compilation of 2020 monthly devotions that may be used by congregation councils throughout the next year and led with a devotion prepared for the month of January, based on Isaiah 43.

Review and Approval of Minutes of the December 7, 2019 Meeting:

The Minutes of the 12/7/2019 Meeting were reviewed.

VOTED:

SC.20.01.02 To approve the Minutes of the 12/07/2019 meeting as submitted. (Hart/Wolfe) APPROVED .

Reports of the Officers and Executive Committee:

Vice President

1. Vice President Ellis welcomed Mr. David Lentz, Secretary, ELCA Church Council. Mr. Lentz expressed appreciation for the Synod's support of Jacob's Porch (an OSU campus ministry).

2. Ms. Ellis welcomed Sheryl Melvin, who introduced herself and shared her background with the Council members.

**VOTED:
SC.20.01.03**

To approve Ms. Sheryl Melvin to fulfill the At Large Lay Female spot on Synod Council (Term 2021A-ALF). (Fischer/Pyle) APPROVED.

It is noted that subsequent to her approval, Ms. Melvin was present and participated in voting on Council matters.

3. Ms. Ellis welcomed members of the Finance Team, who introduced themselves.

Secretary

1. Secretary Fischer reported that the following actions were taken by the Executive Committee on January 13, 2020: (a) the Committee approved a 2.5% salary increase for Synod employees, as authorized by the Fiscal Year 2020 Mission and Ministry Plan adopted at the June 7-8 2019 Synod Assembly, as to those employees employed by the Synod as of the effective date of the Assembly authorization; (b) the Committee authorized Bishop Dillahunt and Vice President Ellis to sign documents on behalf of the Southern Ohio Synod at a real estate closing for the sale of Synod property located at 300 S. Second Street, Columbus; and to sign lease agreement with the Buyer, on behalf of the Synod, for continued Synod use of the real estate post-sale.

Treasurer

1. Treasurer Pyle indicated that Finance Team member Becky Witt would be presenting information regarding the Team's recommendations related to the sale of Synod real estate located at 300 S. Second Street, Columbus. The Bishop reported that the real estate closing occurred on January 23, 2020, and she confirmed receipt of a \$50,000.00 donation to Thrive! from the Buyer. Ms. Witt presented and provided information concerning the following recommendation on behalf of the Finance Team, on how best to handle the proceeds from the sale of the Synod real estate located at 300 S. Second Street, Columbus.

A. The Finance Team recommended the following actions be taken by the Synod Council:

Finance Team Recommendation for Disposition of Proceeds from Sale of Synod Real Estate at 300 S. Second Street, Columbus

1. Retain \$50,000.00 of the proceeds from the sale of the Synod real estate located at 300 S. Second Street, Columbus in unrestricted funds. The rationale is to provide positive unrestricted assets available at the end of the year.
2. Designate the remainder of the proceeds from the sale in a Council-designated fund to adequately provide for the expenses associated with relocating the Synod office to a leased facility, including but not limited to, moving expenses, office furniture, technology expenses, lease expenses and remodeling expenses. The rationale is to make the leased space functional and adequate for Synod use.
3. Designate 10% of the net proceeds (after relocation expenditures) from the sale to the Thrive! Council-designated fund. The rationale is to demonstrate Synod commitment to the campaign.
4. Rename the Council-designated fund for Building Improvements to “Leasehold Improvement”. The rationale is to ensure that adequate funds continue to be accumulated and dispersed for leasehold improvements in the future.

Discussion

Ms. Witt responded to questions from Council members related to the Finance Team Recommendation. The Bishop provided information related to a potential office space located in the Central Ohio (Polaris) area. The Synod is considered “first in line” for lease of the space, which has ample parking, office and meeting room, is accessible from I-71 and is in close proximity to other corridors (270, U.S. Rt. 23). While multiple options have been considered, a geographic location central to Synod operations is the rationale for remaining in Central Ohio.

**VOTED:
SC.20.01.04**

To adopt the Finance Team’s Recommendation regarding the disposition of proceeds from the sale of Synod real estate located at 300 S. Second Street, Columbus. (Pyle/Witt) APPROVED

2. Mr. Pyle presented the SOS Mission & Ministry Plans for 2021-2022, with proposed revisions to the 2020-2021 Plan and a proposed 2021-2022

Plan recommended by the Finance Team. Ms. Witt provided information on behalf of the Finance Team regarding the Team's recommendations.

A. Regarding the 2020-2021 Mission & Ministry Plan approved at the 2019 Synod Assembly, Ms. Witt discussed the revisions and the rationale for each revision, which are necessitated in significant part by the sale of Synod real estate. For example, line 4 is revised to "0" to reflect no building income and expenditures based on building maintenance are also zeroed out. Gifts designated for SOS are reduced to \$20,000.00 as a more realistic figure.

B. Ms. Witt then reviewed the Finance Team's recommendation for the 2021-2022 Mission & Ministry Plan.

VOTED:
SC.20.01.05

To approve, as recommended by the Finance Team, the revisions to the Mission & Ministry Plan for 2020-2021. (Wolfe/Schnittke) APPROVED.

VOTED:
SC.20.01.06

To approve the Mission & Ministry Plan for 2021-2022 as recommended by the Finance Team. (Schmidt/Skamfer) APPROVED.

3. Mr. Pyle introduced Finance Team member Christopher Clothier, who presented a proposed Synod Gift Policy. Mr. Clothier noted that previously the Synod has not had a gift policy, and it would assist both the Synod and potential donors to clarify issues that can arise. Discussion ensued. Council members discussed that, for example, the Synod may not want to assume ownership of assets with certain liabilities or costs, or that are inconsistent with the Synod/Church mission and values. Mr. Clothier noted the Gift Policy, if adopted, would be posted on the Synod's website and may be a useful resource for congregations.

VOTED:
SC.20.01.07

To approve the Southern Ohio Synod Gift Policy as submitted by the Finance Team. (Schrader/Fischer) APPROVED

Prayer was then offered by Bishop prior to the lunch recess.

Vice President Ellis declared a recess for lunch at 11:47 AM.

Vice President Ellis then reconvened the meeting at 12:38 PM.

Bishop

Bishop Dillahunt noted that her written report was distributed to the members of the Synod Council. The Bishop's Report is attached to these minutes for review. The following are highlights:

1. Bishop Dillahunt reviewed the closing on the Synod real estate on January 23, 2020, discussed above. The Bishop noted the Synod is now substantially debt-free.

2. The Bishop noted, regarding Thrive!, that some of the smallest congregations have made significant contributions. Pastor Donner continues to conduct training sessions for congregational leaders. Rev. Kerrigan provided a report on the Stewardship for All Seasons (SAS) trainings. She noted a 3rd cohort training is underway and participation has been enthusiastic.

3. Bishop Dillahunt asked for prayers for the United Methodist Church as it works toward a resolution to issues divisive to its membership.

4. The Bishop reported that she was asked by Bishop Eaton to be the ELCA liaison with Federal Chaplains. This will entail a meeting in Washington, D.C. in the summer, and a late fall/early winter meeting at another location.

5. The Bishop shared that the theme for the May 16, 2020 Synod Assembly is Stronger and Better Together . . . On the Way: Be the Light. Preparation for the Assembly, to be held at Epiphany Lutheran, Centerville, is in the works. The ELCA Representative will be Bishop Bill Gafkjen. The Bishop discussed a Nominating Committee will be formed shortly for Synod Council nominations. She noted that paper balloting will be utilized at the Assembly.

6. The Bishop noted that St. Peter Lutheran, Lancaster's vote for disaffiliation failed. Mr. Hart reported that Rev. Leslie Fox is proposed to become an Intentional Interim Minister beginning February 1, 2020. Rev. Abrams answered questions regarding the difference in responsibilities of an Interim vs. an Intentional Interim Minister, the latter being essentially a full-time commitment that involves intensive work with a congregation to identify its future goals/congregational ministry needs.

7. The Bishop asked Rev. Kimm to provide information regarding Camp Noah. Rev. Kimm provided an update and a written handout on the March 2020 camp at Peace Lutheran. The \$125,000.00 goal, to fund five camps, is at approximately \$46,500.00. The need for recovery is still great. Families and children continue to live in damaged and/or unheated dwellings. Rev. Kimm expressed appreciation for small groups and others

that are helping. Mr. Freudenberger noted that the bulk of the tornado damage hit already impoverished areas.

Report of Auxiliaries

1. The Synod Council received written reports from the Women of the ELCA and Lutheran Men in Mission. Mr. Drumm provided a verbal report, indicating that things are going well. Ms. Wycoff provided highlights, in addition to her written report, regarding Women of the ELCA events. She noted a contribution to Camp Noah, and highlighted upcoming Spring Gatherings.

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

VOTED:

SC.20.01.08

**To remove Rev. Neil Cadle from the ELCA Roster. (Wolfe/Byrd)
APPROVED.**

EN BLOC

VOTED:

SC.20.01.09

**To approve the En Bloc Recommendations. (Drumm/Pyle)
APPROVED.**

Rostered Ministers Status

On Leave from Call

RECOMMENDATION:

- Rev. Marjorie McDaniel, 2nd yr (4/22/19)
- Rev. Brian Whitton, 1st yr (1/1/2020)

Retired Status

RECOMMENDATION:

- Rev. James V. Bosse (4/1/2020)
- Rev. Orinda Hawkins-Brinkley (1/1/2020)

Disability Status

RECOMMENDATION: N/A

Extension of Call

RECOMMENDATION:

- To approve Rev. Leslie Fox to serve as the intentional interim at St. Peter, Lancaster OH, beginning February 1, 2020.
- To approve a non-stipendiary call for Deacon Rachel Lammi to serve at St Paul Lutheran Church Dayton OH for Children's Education, beginning January 1, 2020.
- To approve an extension of call for Rev. Mary Laymon to serve as the called priest at St. Simon's Episcopal Church, Cincinnati OH, beginning January 25, 2020.
- To approve Rev. Dale Linder to serve as the Chaplain at Ohio Health Riverside Hospital, beginning January 25, 2020.

Affirmation and Renewal of Appointment of Synod Authorized Ministers

RECOMMENDATION:

- To affirm the appointment of Synod Authorized Ministers; Ms. Gabrielle Hudecek, Pr. Alvin McCay, Mr. John Meister, Ms. Patti Morrow, Mr. Jonathan Moyers and Mr. John Rushmeyer.

Affirmation and Renewal of Synod Council Calls

RECOMMENDATION:

- To affirm synod council calls: Deacon Nicholas Bates, Pr. Lisa Bernheisel, Pr. Ronald Calvert, Deacon Tammy Eady, Deacon Jennifer Frantz, Pr. Callon Holloway, Deacon Daniel Jacob, Deacon Rachel Lammi, Deacon Elaine Malzahn, Deacon Rebecca Mastalerz, Deacon Diane Montgomery, Pr. Ipyana Mwakabonga, Pr. Sally Padgett, Pr. Tracy Paschke-Johannes, Pr. Gilbert Santiago, Deacon Linda Sprick-Kruse, Pr. Alexander Sumo, Pr. Robert Swanson, Pr. Andrew Tucker, Chap. Patricia Vargas, Chap. Julija Volfa, Pr. Larry Welin.

Removal from the ELCA Roster

RECOMMENDATION:

- *See above SC.20.01.08*

Legal and Governance

RECOMMENDATION:

- To appoint Mr. Chris Clothier, Rev. Bonnie Gerber and Rev. Gil Santiago to the 2020 Audit Team.
- To appoint Rev. Kristin Santiago and Mr. Matthew Hazzard to serve on the Candidacy Committee for a five year term beginning January 2020 thru December 31, 2024.
- To approve the merger of Trinity Lutheran Church, Englewood OH in to North Riverdale, Dayton OH effective January 1, 2020.

Information:

St. Peter Lutheran Church, Lancaster OH - disaffiliation vote failed on December 15, 2019

Other Business: None.

Meeting adjourned at 1:30 PM to prepare for Communion Service. Vice-President Ellis reconvened the meeting at 1:40 PM, at which time the Bishop led members in a Communion Service.

SC.20.01.10 To adjourn the meeting (Byrd /Walker) APPROVED.

Bishop Dillahunt then declared the meeting adjourned with the Service of Godspeed and Farewell.

The meeting was then adjourned at 2:04 PM.

Respectfully submitted,



Holly R. Fischer
Synod Council Secretary