

**SIERRA PACIFIC SYNOD
EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN AMERICA**

SYNOD COUNCIL MINUTES

**December 4, 2010
SPS Synod Office
9985 Folsom Blvd
Sacramento, CA 95827-1405**

Present: Doug Miller-Vice President, Lou Smith- Treasurer, Pat Cash-Secretary, Pr. Adisa Armand Miller, Kay Valler, Pr. Susan Birkleo, Pr. Tom Beck, Pr. Newt Kerney, Joseph Husary, Merle Hansen, Perry Gray-Reneberg, Gisela Daetz, Pr. Jeff Johnson, Suzanne O'Dea, Pr. Brian Malison, Pr. Jose Luis laTorre, Larry Struve, Bp. Mark Holmerud.

Discipling Team Chairs: Kent Madsen (Witness and Service), John Valentine (for Leadership), Ann Watkins (Word and Sacrament)

Staff: Laureen Sullivan, Karen Idler, Pr. Harvey Blomberg, Pr. Jim Goldsmith, Pr. Nancy Feniuk Nelson.

Finance Committee: Scott Taylor, Linda Lownes, Paul Kolarik.

Guest: Irv Lownes

Absent: Ann Brannen, Don Strauch, Maurie Hamilton, Kristina Garabedian, Mark Nelson

CALL TO ORDER– 10:00am

OPENING PRAYER- Bishop's Associate Pr. Nancy Feniuk Nelson led the Council in prayer.

ADOPTION OF AGENDA-

SC10.12.57 MSC (Gray-Reneberg/Armand Miller) to adopt the agenda as revised to include reports from LAMN, the Synod Outreach Fund Task Force, and the Resolution 03-10 Task Force, and the approval of Synod Staff Housing Allowance allotments.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES –

SC10.12.58 MSC (Daetz/ Kerney) to approve the September 25-6, 2010 Council Minutes as corrected with the addition of Merle Hansen as not present.

CONSENT CALENDAR

On Leave From Call- Rev. Andreas Pielhoop, Rev Chung Woo Kim

Change Designation from On Leave from Call to Specialized Call/Interim

Ministry- Rev. Kirk Shipley

Three year renewal of Call to Special Ministry/ SF Night Minister- Rev. Lyle Beckman

Ratify E-Vote - Rev. David Dahl, Counseling Ministry

Special Call- Rev. Jeri Gray-Reneberg, St Francis Episcopal

Assembly Planning Committee Appointment- Sam Kanenwisher

SC10.12.59 MSC (Valler/O'Dea) to approve the Consent Calendar, one abstention.

Synod Outreach Fund- The Task Force (Gisela Daetz, Pr. Jeff Johnson, Kent Madsen, Pr. Jim Goldsmith (Advisor) and Lou Smith, Treasurer) has been in discussion regarding Synod Policy 97-002/amended 05/09. Currently, the management of this fund is under Witness & Service DT. The Fund totals \$6million plus (\$510,000 cash with the rest invested and in real estate). The policy and its amendments and provisions are being reviewed. More flexibility is desired with respect to accessibility of funds for immediate ministry needs. The Task Force would like to merge the Endowment Fund and this Fund, with new language that states that this Synod Fund would be designated for new and renewing congregations and innovative ministries. They also will suggest a gift acceptance policy. Bp. Mark requested information on the percentage that is related to property value and how this Synod compares (asset wise) with other synods, suggesting that the Task Force check with CW Treasurer. Additionally, he suggested that the Task Force determine what other synods may have developed. Pr. Brian Malison questioned as to whether these proposed changes should be taken before the Assembly for approval.

Biennial Synod Assemblies- Pr. Tom Beck, Don Strauch, and Perry Gray-Reneberg will offer information for the January Council meeting with respect to the constitutional issues, costs, etc. in the changes suggested by the Resolution 3-10 regarding this matter.

LAMN- Larry Struve reporting. As part of the Churchwide cutbacks, funding for Nevada's advocacy program has been eliminated. This represents a loss of \$6000 for LAMN. Larry distributed a draft of a resolution that speaks to ways of covering the estimated total short fall of \$10,250 projected for 2011 and the need for approval of a fundraising plan/event

MS (Daetz/Johnson) that we approve the sense of the draft motion as presented. Larry indicated that official action be taken at January meeting. After some discussion, **MSC** (Daetz/Johnson) to withdraw the motion.

Staff Housing Allowances:

SC10.12.61 MSC Beck/Kerney) (Bp Mark abstaining) to approve the housing allowance allocations for Bishop's staff as follows: Bp Mark Holmerud: \$42,000, Pr. Nancy Nelson: \$55,000, Pr Jim Goldsmith: \$32,000. (see attachments A, B, and C)

Funds from Golden Gate/Staffing- Pr Nancy spoke to the actions already taken with respect to the special gift from Golden Gate Lutheran, SF. First, a tithe of the gift was sent to the ELCA and allotments set aside for St Francis and First United as requested by members of Golden Gate. Staff has been discussing the broader sense of what 'transition' is about, including looking at the staffing plan for the Synod. Synod Staff has suggested that a Bishop appointed committee look at the staffing needs at Synod level as well as congregations that we can gift in ways that will assist in transitions at the local level e. g. *fund for leaders, First Call Theological Education, assembly scholarships, etc.* Can we help to meet needs that are there? Might we be able to fund congregations in ways that will help them make the changes needed to transition faithfully into the 21st century role of the church? Of the 1.7million, \$300.000+ has already spoken for. There is a hope to leave the meeting with approval to recruit folks for this team. Comments included a need to wait and see how this idea fits into the Outreach Fund policy work and a concern for the need to fund additional staff positions.

SC10.12 62 MSC (Malison/O'Dea) that the Bishop's staff articulate a plan to proceed with the establishment of such a committee to address transition needs for congregations of the synod and present it at the January Council meeting. One abstention.

Synod Youth Committee Funding Request –

SC10.12.63 MSC (Daetz/Johnson) to approve changing the designation of the \$2000 previously approved for the Western States Gathering to the youth leadership training event.

Nominating Committee Chair-

SC10.12.64 MSC (Daetz/O’Dea) to appoint Pastor Peggy White chair of the Nominating Committee.

2011 Spending Plan and 2012 Budget

Vision of the Synod:

Bishop Mark introduced this time of sharing and discussion with these questions: How do we frame the budget with respect to the Vision of the Synod: e. g. the Synod Assembly? What does the budget say about our priorities- and can we have Council members speak to the various aspects of it at the Assembly?

Pr Nancy: Fundraising and Stewardship are not equivalent. We need to look at a life-style that is stewardship and view budget planning from a faith perspective.

Pr. Harvey: the vision piece is hard for some people: what is God up to and how do we discern it? What are the non-negotiables? How do we discern over time as a synod- with Scripture and prayer. There seems to be a hunger in the synod to talk about what it is that God up to. Perhaps the Council can sit together with scripture and prayer and seek discernment.

Pr Jim: There has been a season of change in church and society and paradigms continue to change. Congregational and individual giving has changed along with where we place funds for ministry. We need to emphasize that we are working with God’s abundance not our own scarcity. Ultimately it is not up to us. We need to put everything into God’s hand.

Other comments: We need to help congregations develop local mission/community service. Ask for all mission statements from congregations and look at them at assembly for table discussion. Ask congregations for stories of ministry here in the Synod, collect local stories into a document and/or videos and the weekly e-newsletter.

Mission Support Updates – For 2011, only 4 “Statement of Intent” forms have been received to date. Forms will be available on line.

Proportionate Share Report /Financial Reports – October 2010 numbers were reviewed. Suggestions/requests from Council and Discipling team members were as follows:

- Add trend lines to the report and add year to date information
- RE: page 2 of the report as we now receive it, suggest that the format be changed for easier interpretation
- Please show starting as ending income/expenditures as part of the report each time.
- Under agencies please clarify numbers and show which funds are pending disbursement.

2012 Budget Proposal

- Show projected staffing; two Assistants to the Bishop would be approximately \$200,000 (benefits and salary)
- Recommendation is to use funds from Golden Gate to cover staff positions and balance the budget, and demonstrate that in the budget in some fashion.
- Requests from the Discipling Teams: Leadership- \$33,000 (shown at 27,500); Word & Sacrament– as shown; Witness & Service- \$65,000.
- Present a budget that represents economic reality

The Synod Finance Team will take all recommendations under consideration and work on the format of reports and the proposed budget for presentation at the January Council meeting.

Churchwide Update – Bishop Mark- LIFT conversations regarding restructuring continue with respect to the size and number of Synods. The SPS will very likely not look the same in the future—perhaps a return to a much larger synod as before the merger or more and smaller synods.

Investment Policy – Lou Smith

Kent Madsen, Lou Smith, Pr Jim Goldsmith and Scott Taylor comprise a group working on a draft for an investment policy which will be brought to Council for discussion and approval. It was indicated that the group needs to have a more inclusive demographic. Names of additional people should be sent to Lou.

Additional Check Signer

SC10.12.65 MSC (Hansen/Johnson) to add Linda Lownes as a signer Synod accounts.

Electronic Banking Account

SC10.12.66 MSC (O’Dea/Johnson) that another checking account be established that will allow for electronic payment of bills. Funds will be transferred in as needed for the bill payments

Reimbursement Policy Laureen discussed the Expense Reimbursement form. Allotted amounts for meals and travel will be recommended at the January meeting for approval.

Respectfully Submitted
Pat Cash, Secretary
Sierra Pacific Synod Council

2011

- Jan 28-29 Synod Council — Synod Office, Sacramento *tent.*
- May 12 Synod Council—Burlingame
- May 13-15 Synod Assembly—Burlingame
- June 24-25 Synod Council
- Sep 23-24 Synod Council

HOUSING ALLOWANCE RESOLUTION

In order to permit Bishop Mark W. Holmerud to benefit from the provisions of Section 107 of the Internal Revenue Code, the Sierra Pacific Synod Council specifies(SC10.12.61) that the total compensation paid to him during the fiscal year ended December 31, 2011 includes a housing allowance. Bp. Holmerud estimates that he will spend \$42,000 during the year for housing expenses. Since such approval by the Synod Council would permit him to deduct that amount from his taxable income and has no further effect upon the Synod or Synod budget, it was

RESOLVED,

That the total compensation of \$ 90,952 paid to Bp. Holmerud include a housing allowance of \$42,000.

HOUSING ALLOWANCE RESOLUTION

In order to permit Pastor Nancy Feniuk Nelson to benefit from the provisions of Section 107 of the Internal Revenue Code, the Sierra Pacific Synod Council specifies (SC10.12.61) that the total compensation paid to her during the fiscal year ended December 2011 includes a housing allowance. Pastor Nelson estimates that she will spend \$ 55,000 during the year for housing expenses. Since such approval by the Synod Council would permit her to deduct that amount from her taxable income and has no further effect upon our Synod or Synod budget, it was

RESOLVED,

That the total compensation of \$ 85,000 paid to Pastor Nelson include a housing allowance of \$ 55,000 .

HOUSING ALLOWANCE RESOLUTION

In order to permit Pastor Jim Goldsmith to benefit from the provisions of Section 107 of the Internal Revenue Code, the Sierra Pacific Synod Council specifies (SC10.12.61) that the total compensation paid to him during the fiscal year ended December 2011 includes a housing allowance. Pastor Goldsmith estimates that he will spend \$32,000 during the year for housing expenses. Since such approval by the Synod Council would permit him to deduct that amount from his taxable income and has no further effect upon our Synod or Synod budget, it was

RESOLVED,

That the total compensation of \$ 67,000 paid to Pastor Goldsmith include a housing allowance of \$ 32,000.