

**SIERRA PACIFIC SYNOD
EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN AMERICA
MINUTES OF SYNOD COUNCIL MEETING
JUNE 21-22, 2013
SACRAMENTO OFFICE OF THE BISHOP**

Present: Pr. Newt Kerney, Gisela Daetz, Elaine Whitney, Sue Hertless, Jack Pease, Kristina Garabedian, Larry Struve, Pr. Carl Wilfrid, Jordan Haley, Joseph Husary, Pr. Susan Birkelo, Sheela Boddu, Pr. Adisa Armand Miller, Mark Nelson, Doug Miller (Vice President).

Saturday Arrivals: James Anderberg, Pr. Sarah Meekler Tate

Staff: Karen Idler, AIM; Pr. Katy Grinberg; Pr. Jose Luis La Torre Cuadros; Pr. Jim Hytjan (Interim DEM); Pr. Nancy Nelson; Bp. Mark Holmerud

Absent: Kay Valler; Steve Herzfeldt, Pr. Jeff Johnson, Linda Lownes (Treasurer), Dennis Jones (Secretary)

Guest: Pr. Dawn Roginski (Witness Discipling Team); Pat Cash (Secretary Pro Tem)

FRIDAY, June 21, 2013

The meeting was called to order at 2:15pm
Opening Devotions were led by Pr. Carl Wilfrid.

Vice President Miller welcomed all, especially new members Jack Pease and Jordan Haley.
Group members introduced themselves.

SC13.06.48 MSC (*Garabedian/Daetz*) to adopt the Agenda with additions:

- a. Consent Calendar- *Rev. Sanna Reinholtzen*, non-stipendary 1 year term call to Associate Pastor, University Chapel, Berkeley; *Rev. Anna Binaro*, on leave from call; *Rev. Anita Warner*, appointment to the Racial and Ethnic Ministries DT
- b. Request from Justice and Advocacy DisciplingTeam
- c. Request from Nominating Committee

SC 13.06.49 MSC (*Daetz/ Hertless*) to approve 5/1/13 Synod Council meeting minutes.

Job Description for Synod Council Members This process was led by Nancy Nelson and Katy Grinberg
Copies of Synod Constitution, Article S10.03, which describes the functions of the Synod Council, were distributed and presuppositions for Council members were listed.

- Synod Council meetings are a priority
- Members expected to read and respond to emails in a timely manner
- Members are to read materials ahead of time

- We participate in meetings
- We make ourselves available between Council meetings within our geographic area
 - To visit congregations
 - To attend conference/district meetings
 - To represent the office of the Bishop and/or Synod as needed
 - And whatever else is identified later during the brainstorming session

It was noted that added to the list should be a statement that the Vice president or Secretary be notified prior to the meeting if a member is not able to attend.

Council members then engaged in an exercise to respond to the question: *How shall we be together.* Each person present was asked to list 5 'behavioral' items. Members shared their responses and Katy took notes. She and Nancy would incorporate responses into a Covenant and present it to the Council.

Report by Bishop and Bishop's Associate

Bishop's Associate Nancy Nelson:

- The report of the Assembly Committee of 8 been has discussed with Stewardship DT. There was discussion that perhaps a theme "A Year of Growing Stewards" is something the Team can offer for 2014-15 as an emphasis.

Bishop Mark:

- State of Synod: down on staff and there are 38 pastoral vacancies (each requiring a minimum of 58 hrs of staff members time)
- Vacant Staff positions:
 - Director of Finance and Administration- St John's, Sacramento, is likewise seeking this position and has agreed to refer candidates to the Office of the Bishop for consideration. It is hoped to have this position filled in July or August.
 - Director of Evangelical Mission: Pr. Jim Hytjan is currently serving again in a part time capacity and will do so until after the 2014 Assembly and Bishop's election.
 - Assistant to the Bishop, Fresno, is being evaluated.
- Bp Mark indicated his thankfulness for All Synod Staff members and the opportunity to work with them.
- He distributed a list of Synod congregations, their allotted voting members and payment status, highlighting congregations that sent no voting members and thus remitted no assembly fees as well as those who sent some or all voting members and did not pay in full.
- He also distributed a list of congregations showing the dates of their last parochial reports, noting that 41.9% of congregations did not submit their parochial reports this year alone.
- Health Assessment: once again did not reach goal, this year by 10 submissions and once again lost the financial benefit.
- July/August schedule- CW Assembly and Continuing Ed course at CLU.

Treasurer's Report

Vice-President Miller noted the summary report from Treasurer Linda Lownes and the list of Mission Support giving to date. Further financial information will be available. Treasurer Lownes was not in attendance.

Report from Witness Discipling Team Chair, Pr. Dawn Roginski. The DT engaged in visioning at their Spring meeting. Emphasis will be placed on support for new and renewing congregations and receiving the training that the mission developers get so new and renewing congregations can use those tools. Additionally, work is planned with smaller congregations before they get to new and renewing status.

Consent Calendar

SC13.06.50 MSC (Daetz/Kerney) to approve the Consent Calendar follows

- Lutheran Church of the Good Shepherd, Reno: Constitutional Changes
- First Lutheran, Palo Alto: Constitutional Changes
- *Rev. David Arends*, on leave from call
- *Rev. Tom Miller*, Special call as Chaplain at Shasta Regional Medical Center
- *Rev. Sanna Reinholtzen*, non-stipendary 1 year term call to Associate Pastor, University Chapel, Berkeley
- *Rev. Anna Binaro*, on leave from call
- *Rev. Anita Warner*, appointment to the Racial and Ethnic Ministries DT

Covenant

Katy and Nancy reported back on the 5 item Covenant:

Council was asked to consider the list overnight and offer comments on Saturday morning.

1. We promise to pray
 - on schedule
 - as needed
 - while we're away
2. We promise to speak the truth in love
 - but not twice unless everyone has had opportunity to speak once
 - taking into account people's differences
 - including the use of humor, but never as a put down
3. We promise to listen actively
 - by coming prepared
 - by staying engaged
 - by questioning and challenging as needed, but only to the group as a whole
 - by maintaining confidentiality (particularly when requested)
4. We promise to respect
 - one another as sisters and brothers in Christ

the agenda as a guideline
the keeping of the meeting as a safe place where we can speak from the heart without worry

5. We promise to live into our accountability
 - to God and one another
 - to the synod as a whole
 - to our governing documents
 - to our process and our decisions

Assembly Committee of Eight Report and Next Steps

Information on the process of the Committee of Eight was shared. The Committee looked at both long and short term financial/asset management and the clarification and transparency needed to be addressed regarding the work of the Synod Council. Items discussed included the committees listed in the “fund” description/policy which need to be fleshed out. The Stewardship DT is tasked with reaching congregations. The overall vision of the Synod Council was supported by the committee but should have been more transparent related to the council decision surrounding the Golden Gate gift.

Questions arose regarding whether we can allot \$5 million in properties for 3 congregations (Oromo, Taiwanese, Grace Lao.) What funds could have been generated? What are the current market values for the properties in question? Do we want to have a special meeting just to focus on such issues?

A Council sub-group (Gisela, Newt, Carl, Larry, Elaine, Joseph, Jack) will meet over lunch to develop a letter requesting the names of individuals who have the necessary gifts and training to populate the committees listed in the “Fund” policy.

Date for an additional Council meeting will be determined.

Property Management Items

Former Redeemer Lutheran Church, 940 S Stelling, Cupertino, currently Taiwanese LC outreach

When Redeemer closed, the property was deeded to the Synod with the requirement that an Asian ministry be developed, but if not viable as of Oct 31st 2013, the property was to be sold and distributed as follows:

20% LWR

20% LSS

20% Chaplaincy Endowment Fund Sunny View Lutheran Communities

40% SPS for support of new and existing congregations.

Former members of Redeemer determined that the ministry was not viable and requested that that the Synod sell the property.

SC13.06.51 MSC (Wilfrid/Garabedian) to have Bp. Holmerud contact Synod attorneys regarding the Stelling Property and the original agreement with Redeemer Lutheran, Cupertino.

Hollister property. The owner of a Montessori School requested a long term lease to develop a portion of the property with portables for the school. The building is currently leased to a church. Future disposition or development of the property is unknown at this time.

SC13.06.52 MSC (*Wilfrid/Daetz*) to decline the request by a Montessori school for a long term lease of the Hollister property.

Grace Lutheran, Richmond is currently being served by Dr. Wally Stuhr, voluntarily. Another clergy person, Dr. Shaw (no longer in ELCA candidacy process), has developed a music ministry outreach to community which has been very successful. There is no longer any income from outside sources. Council has been encouraged by Neil Harrison, CSM, to vote for involuntary synodical administration of the congregation.

SC13.06.53 MSC (*Pease/ Hertless*) to empower the Executive Committee to make the decision regarding a move to involuntary synodical administration of the congregation at Grace, Richmond.

Emmanuel Lutheran, San Jose. Initially, the congregation approved voluntary synodical administration but later voted to end that agreement.

SC13.06.54 MSC (*Daetz/Garabedian*) to empower the Executive Committee, working with attorneys and staff, to make decision to move to involuntary synodical administration at Emmanuel, San Jose.

2013 Assembly Review

Assorted comments included: the recognition of clergy anniversaries over the course of the evening didn't go well; dance was great; one individual didn't care for Dr Lose; would have liked congregations celebrating the anniversaries to have their congregations 'on screens'; moving to the other building for workshops not good; liked praying in native languages; small gift of recognition for special clergy would have been nice; facility issues at hotel (too few elevators functioning); better information to registration folks regarding council members, etc.; needed breaks; need to highlight more about what is going on in congregations; display area isolated; resolutions committee-great job vetting the submissions-important to staff it with excellent folks; liked Susan Brieht; Linda's presentation of budget... the best Walter May from CW had ever seen; resolution(s) missing from the assembly highlights

The 60%/40% split of voting members (lay/clergy) was not achieved this year. With the election of a Bishop in 2014, it is vital that it be met or elections can be challenged. Currently, there are 10% of the retired clergy serving as voting members. There were 20 this year (and the synod covers their expenses). The formula, etc. needs review. This also relates to the issue of current parochial reports and congregations not sending their voting members.

Billing of congregations which did not register for 2013 was discussed. Fees for assembly are the congregation's support of this gathering whether or not they attend. Non attendance affects the 60/40 split as well as the finances of the synod. What should be done to remedy the situation?

SC13.06.56MSC (*Haley/Husary*) to send a carefully stated letter to congregations that neither sent voting members nor remitted their fees for the Synod Assembly.

SC13.06.57MSC (*Struve/Boddu*) to explain future plans regarding a 'billing statement' for assembly fees.

SC13.06.58MSC (*Wilfrid/Daetz*) to institute a billing system for 2014 assembly.

SATURDAY, June 22, 2013

Meeting resumed at 9:15am

Morning devotions were offered by Pr. Carl Wilfrid.

Council Subgroup on Assembly Committee of Eight recommendations Reported back with a draft letter to be sent to all who were at Assembly, posted on the weekly Synod newsletter and distributed through any other contacts available. Council asked to review the letter.

Old Business

Mt. Cross Update The partnership with LCMS is being dissolved. Katy explained the proposed structure. The Synod needs to enter into discussion with LCMS District representatives regarding dissolution. Two council members were selected to participate in this meeting along with staff: Kristina Garabedian and Dennis Jones. (Kristina to ask him).

SC13.06.60 MSC (*Wilfrid/ Daetz*) to approve the plan for restructuring Mt Cross and to have Kristina Garabedian and Dennis Jones be part of the negotiating team.

Election of Executive Committee

Nominations: Elaine Whitney; Newt Kerney; Sue Hertless; Gisela Daetz; Sheela Boddu

SC13.06.61 MSC (*Nelson/ Haley*) to close nominations for Executive Committee with 5 names on the ballot.

SC13.06.62 MSC (*Nelson/ Garabedian*) to elect the committee members in accordance with the ELCA representational guidelines.

Rev. Newt Kerney elected by acclamation

Elaine Whitney and Sheela Boddu were declared elected by written ballot.

SC13.06.62 MSC (*Pease/Whitney*) to adopt the proposed process for the election of the Bishop in 2014.

Non-financial audit The Bishop explained the process regarding the interviews/questions about synod. There was a low response.

SC13.06.63 MSC (Haley/ Nelson) to approve Nicki Schedler (Advent,Citrus Heights) to serve as **Council Youth representative.**

SC 13.06.64 MSC (Daetz/Nelson) to appoint Pat Cash (All Saints, Novato) to the Synod Nominating Committee.

New Business

Bright Stars of Bethlehem- A request was received asking for synod participation through publication of information on these cultural events and a sponsorship of \$1000. Concern was expressed based on reaction to support of a conference two years ago. Joseph explained Mitri Rahab's work in Bethlehem with Stars of Bethlehem which is about bringing justice to all.

SC13.06.65MSC (Daetz/Husary) to support the efforts of Pr Mitri Raheb and Bright Stars of Bethlehem for the Sept. 26-Oct.3, 2013 Festival and contribute \$200.

Individual Council members expressed interest in supporting this work: *Note website and address information:* www.brightstarsbethlehem.org PO Box 185 Mount Morris IL 61054

Lutheran Social Services report. Jack Pease indicated that LSS needs board members: ELCA, LCMS or from the community. Meetings are in Concord, Sacramento, and San Francisco. The Concord Office is currently in a former ELCA congregation's facility which was gifted to LSS at the congregation's closing. LSS has decided to sell the Concord property to a developer.

Justice & Advocacy DT request. Larry Struve presented the request from the Justice and Advocacy DT to set aside one Sunday for the Synod to celebrate Justice and Advocacy and another to celebrate stewardship of all God's creatures

SC13.06.66 MSC (Struve/Wilfrid) to establish Jan 19, 2014 as Justice and Advocacy Sunday.

SC13.06.67 MSC (Struve/ Wilfrid) to approve a Council e-vote on the recommendation of the Justice and Advocacy Discipling Team date for a Stewardship of all God's Creatures Sunday.

Synod Council Appointments/volunteers. Doug reviewed liaison assignments and sent around a sign up sheet for volunteers to lead devotions and take care of refreshments for the Council meetings.

By consensus, Council approved the Synod Liaison Appointments. Pr. Susan Birkelo and VP Doug Miller will also liaise to the Nominating Committee.

Appoint the chair of the Consultation Committee: Nominees: Merle Hanson, Dave Anderson (in that order)

Appointments to chair of Discipline Committee: Nominees: Frank Espregen, Anita Warner, Kent Madsen (in that order)

SC13.06.68 MSC (*Whitney/Pease*) that Bp. Holmerud to select from the nominees, 4 people to serve on the Consultation Committee.

SC13.06.69MSC (*Whitney/Daetz*) for Bp. Holmerud to select from the nominees individuals to serve on the Discipline Committee.

Archive and History, Documents Committee: Refer to nominating committee for appointment recommendations.

Finance Committee

SC13.06.70MSC (*Whitney/Daetz*) to empower the executive committee to approve the appointment of the Finance Committee.

Conference Assignments: Suggestion that SC voting members serve their districts and arrange among themselves what events each will cover was accepted by **consensus**
Council members may be asked to accompany staff who visit with congregations under 100 dresses program; to serve as listeners; attend and report at district/conference gatherings.

Nominating Committee request: Council is asked to offer 3 names each to the Nominating Committee for the Discipling Teams, clergy or lay, with contact information. Nancy will send an e-mail to all as areminder.

Proposed Letter related to Assembly Committee of Eight report.

SC13.06.71 MSC (*Daetz/Nelson*) to approve the draft letter to solicit people with the gifts/skills needed to staff the committees as delineated in the report from the Synod Assembly Committee of Eight.

Covenant

SC13.06.72MSC (*Nelson/ Daetz*) to adopt the Covenant as developed.

Disposition of Office Items

SC13.06.73MSC (*Garabedian/ Daetz*) to approve the disposition of assorted office items, with any funds received to be placed in the General Fund.

SC13.06.74 MSC (*Kerney/Garabedian*) to approve the Council meeting schedule as below:

- Sept 20-21, 2013 Sacramento Office
- December 7, 2013 Pleasanton/Dublin/San Mateo
- January 24-25, 2014 Location TBD
- May 29, 2014 Burlingame (before assembly)
- June 27-28, 2014 Location TBD

SC13.06.75MSC (*Garabedian/ Hertless*) to use Doodle to schedule a meeting date (between Aug. 1 and Sept.19) for the sole purpose of addressing in detail the report of the Assembly Committee of Eight.

SC13.06.76MSC (*Nelson/Garabedian*) to adjourn, 12:36pm, June 22, 2013.

Respectfully Submitted

Pat Cash, Secretary pro tem

ATTACHMENTS

Prayer Partners 2013-14

Linda Lownes and Mark Holmerud

Larry Struve and Jose Luis La Torre Cuadros

Dennis Jones and Kristina Garabedian

Susan Birkelo and Jordan Haley

Laura Gaumer and Adisa Armand-Miller

James Anderberg and Nicki Schedler

Nancy Feniuk Nelson and Katy Grindberg

Karen Idler and Giesla Daetz

Joseph Husary and Steve Herzfeldt

Sarah Meckler-Tate and Sheela Boddu

Carl Wilfrid and Doug Miller

Newt Kerney and Jack Pease

Elaine Whitney and Mark Nelson

Sue Hertless and Jeff Johnson

2013/14 Synod Council Member Liaisons

Ministry Partners

Pacific Lutheran Theological Seminary

Elaine Whitney

Mt. Cross

Giesla Daetz

Lutheran Social Service

Sue Hertless

Warner Trust

Carl Wilfrid, Kristina Garabedian, Nicki Schedler

LAMN

Larry Struve

Lutheran Office of Public Policy

Joseph Husary

Elder Care Alliance

Newt Kerney

Council of Deans

Carl Wilfrid

Global Mission

Jeff Johnson

Campus Ministry

Sarah Meekler Tate

Committees

Candidacy
Assembly Planning

Susan Birkelo
Kay, Kristina

Discipling Teams

Witness
Stewardship
Leadership
Congregational Life
Justice and Advocacy
Racial and Ethnic Ministries
Worship for Baptismal Living

Giesla Daetz
James Anderberg
Steve Hertzfeldt
Larry Struve
Adisa Armand Miller