

**SIERRA PACIFIC SYNOD
EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN AMERICA
SYNOD COUNCIL MINUTES
DECEMBER 6, 2014 NOON
OFFICE OF THE BISHOP, SACRAMENTO, CA**

Present: Bp. Holmerud, Linda Lownes, Dennis Jones, Pr. Jeff Johnson, Gisela Daetz, Elaine Whitney, Jack Pease, Ed Nelson, Pr. Gabriele Schroeder, Pr. Carl Wilfrid, Pr. Kathryn Gulbranson, Pr. Tuhina Rasche, Larell Fineren

Absent: Mark Nelson, Pr. Adisa Armand-Miller, Nicki Schedler, Joseph Husary, James Anderberg, Jordan Haley, Sheela Boddu, Pr. Patricia Vargas

Staff: Pr. Nancy Nelson, Pr. Katy Grindberg, Pr. Jose Luis la Torre IV, Karen Idler, AIM

Visitors: Irv Lownes

Vice President Whitney called the meeting to order at 12:44 PM on December 6, 2014.

SC14.12.65 MSC (Johnson/Fineren) moved that the meeting move into executive session to discuss a question with synod attorneys.

Executive Session concluded at 1:00 PM

Opening Devotions

Vice President Whitney provided devotions during the morning training session.

AGENDA:

SC14.12.66 MSC (Pease/Daetz) moved the proposed agenda with the following additions:

Add to the consent agenda:

- Reappoint Becky Burad and Jack Pease to the Lutheran Social Services (LSS) Board
- Appoint V. Anne Chernok to the LSS Board

Move the *adoption of the agenda* and the *approval of the minutes* from the morning training session agenda to the formal Synod Council Agenda in the afternoon.

Approve Synod Council minutes of September 26-27, 2014 meeting

SC14.12.67 MSC (Daetz/Wilfred) moved approval of minutes as corrected.

Kristina Garabedian Resignation/Replacement

We are awaiting suggested nominees from District E. Deans. Will discuss nominees at the January meeting.

Synod Resource Center

The Director will resign 12/31/14. The question of the future of the Resource Center will be discussed at the January Synod Council meeting when there is time available. At this meeting members tried to identify information that will be needed to make informed decisions at the January meeting.

Ed Nelson is the liaison between the Synod Resource Board and Synod Council. He has only been in this position a few months and does not have knowledge of the history of the Resource Center or its Board. He has been able to gather some information and will make a report to the Council in January. Pr. Nancy offered to help him gather information as she has some history with the Center.

Questions that members would like answered in January included:

- Is the Resource Center a **501 (c) 3** entity?
- How and when was the Resource Center Board formed, by whom?
- What is the Board's authority and/or what authority have they assumed?
- What is the history of the funding for the center-including funding for the director and center operations?
- Is there an ongoing commitment from one or more of the nearby congregations to support the Center?
- There reportedly has been discussion of expanding the clientele of the Center. Is this possible/advisable?
- There will be a gap in time between 12/31/14 when the existing Director leaves and when decisions are made about future operations. Is there a local congregation that will receive/distribute materials on behalf of the Center during this interim period?
- Is it possible to keep the Center open in the interim in any other way? If so, how?
- Does the Center Board have any recommendation for the Council?

SC14.12.68 MS (Johnson/Daetz) moved that the Council thank Margie for her service and let folks know that the resource center will be temporarily closed.

SC14.12.69 MSC (Nelson/Daetz) moved that the prior motion be tabled until the January meeting.

Living into the Decisions of the Special Assembly

Bp. Mark talked about the hard decisions that will have to be made to reduce current activities and/or staff in order to live within the income based budget that was passed at the Special Synod Assembly on October 11, 2014. He indicated that the fiscal reductions necessary to have a balanced budget have been increased as a result of:

- Substantial increases in Portico cost for Synod employees

- The decision of Churchwide to provide a 1/26/15 full time DEM beginning 1/26/15 and not offset part of Pr. Nancy's compensation with a \$40,000 grant.
- Potential additional costs for severance packages should any existing synod employees be terminated/leave synod employment as part of the 2015 budget plan.

Are we going to have a Special Synod Assembly in 2015?

There was wide ranging discussion about whether we should have a Special Synod Assembly in the fall of 2015 as we did in 2014 and, if so, how should it be structured. The following ideas were expressed by one or more Council member:

- We should replicate what we did in 2014
- We should return to a single Synod Assembly in the Spring as we have in the past
- We should have information budget meetings before the Spring meeting as we did before the October meeting last year
- We should have a meeting in October-but it should not be a Special Synod Assembly and it should not be about the budget. We should have a speaker/other agenda items. The meetings should be tied to District meetings
- We should expand the current synod assembly agenda planning process to include the Synod Council-so the Council has input

SC14.12.69 MS (Pease/Johnson) moved that we have a Special Synod Assembly meeting in the fall of 2015 with the single focus of the budget. **Motion did not carry**

SC14.12.70 MSC (Lownes/Schroeder) moved the Consent Agenda below:

- Extend On Leave from Call Status for Pr. John Ridenour
- Extend On Leave from call status 2 years for Pr. April Almas
- On Leave from call status for Pr. Douglass Merritt
- Appoint Tracy Jensen to ECA Board
- Appoint Greg Lederman to ECA Board
- Appoint Lori Peterson to ECA Board
- Reappoint Becky Burd to the Lutheran Social Services (LSS) Board
- Reappoint Jack Pease to the LSS Board
- Appoint V-Anne Chernok to the LSS Board

Vice President Whitney adjourned the meeting at 3:00 PM

Respectfully Submitted
Dennis Jones, Synod Secretary

SC14.12.71 MSC (Holmerud/Jones) moved the following motion to be voted on electronically during the period 12/22/14 to 12/27.14: Invite Pr. Kemp Seggerhammer and Jim Carlson to serve as members of the Cal Lutheran Convocators.

Synod Council Meeting Schedule for 2014/2015

Dates	Location
October 11, 2014	5 locations
December 6, 2014 <u><i>Maybe?</i></u>	Sacramento
Jan 30-31, 2015	Sacramento
May 28, 2015	St. John's, Sacto
June 26-27, 2015	TBD