

APPROVED MINUTES
Sierra Pacific Synod
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
Synod Council Meeting, September 23-24, 2016
Office of the Bishop, Sacramento

Present: Bishop Mark Holmerud, Vice President Elaine Whitney, Treasurer Linda Lownes, Secretary Jeff Pennington, Pr. Patricia Vargas, Sue Michaelsen, Pr. Gregg Brown, Stephanie Leong, Theresa Landi, Jordan Haley, Pr. Kathryn Gulbranson, Andrew Stevens, Paula Barton, Larell Fineren, Pr. Don Haven, Sherrill Heinz, Pr. Susan Birkelo, Gail Kiyomura, Ed Nelson, Pr. Tuhina Rasche, Pr. Nancy Feniuk Nelson

Staff: Pr. Katy Grindberg, Pr. Carlton Monroe, Laurie Gaumer, Debbie Cook, Patty Monteiro

Absent: Tony Burns, Randy Presuhn, Pr. Tita Valeriano

Visitors: Parliamentarian Cammie Chen, Irv Lownes

The meeting was called to order by Vice President Elaine Whitney at 2:00 PM. Pastor Kathryn Gulbranson led an opening devotion. Introduction of council members appointed in June to fill vacancies—Pr. Susan Birkelo and Pr. Gregg Brown.

Adoption of the Agenda

SC16.9.44 MSC (Haven/Lownes) moved adoption of the agenda with the following changes:

- Add “Synod Council Call to Interim Ministry for Pr. Nancy Feniuk Nelson” to consent agenda
- Add “Executive Session” at 6 p.m.
- Note that synod mission to go under Old Business.

Approval of Minutes of June 24-25, 2016 Synod Council Meeting

SC16.9.45 MSC (Fineren/Leong) moved passage of the draft minutes for June 24-25, 2016 .

SC16.9.46 MSC Elaine presented the consent agenda as a recommendation from the Executive Committee.

SC16.9.47 M Andrew moved to sever the Nominating Committee appointment from the consent agenda.

SC16.9.48 MSC (Fineren/Leong) moved passage of the consent agenda without the Nominating Committee.

SC16.9.49 MSC (Fineren/Holmerud) moved to appoint the Nominating Committee.

Andrew asked for background information on the members of the committee, and asked about the length of terms of the members. Pat Cash and David Anderson have served before or currently serving; their terms have expired, and they expressed an interest in continuing to serve. The others are new.

David Anderson is a layperson in Livingston, active in a Spanish-speaking congregation and former council member. Pat Cash is former synod secretary, expert on constitutions, also been an officer of WELCA. Elaine and Pastor Nancy worked with Pat to find a mixture of lay-clergy, ethnic diversity, geographic diversity, people who know the synod and who know a fair number of people in their areas who have the gifts which would be useful for the synod's various committees. Pastor Sarah Pearson is a young clergy member in the South Bay; Pastor Adisa Armand and Joseph Husary are from the Bay Area, people of color, and former members of synod council. Pastor Cindy Beck is in the Sacramento area and is involved in interim ministry. Perry Gray-Reneberg is from the Eureka area, also involved in church and served on the synod council. Still need someone from Nevada to serve on the Nominating Committee.

Recommended that the Nominating Committee itself decide its own classes of terms, i.e., who would serve one year, who would serve two years, and who would serve three years from the outset.

Motion carried.

Bishop Mark's Report

Began and ended his sabbatical with Bishop Eaton. Bishop Mark distributed an electronic report of his sabbatical. He discussed his experience over the summer as a civilian at an Army War College program. Thanked everyone on the staff, especially Acting Bishop Nancy Feniuk Nelson, for the hard work they did in his absence, and he appreciated the welcome upon his return.

Pleased with the online "virtual" assembly on September 17.

Discussed the "synod minister" position and the three people already trained: Pastor Jody Golden-Lund, Pastor Tom Miller, and Pastor Kathryn Gulbranson. Possibly looking to increase the number of synod ministers to cover a greater geographic area.

Announced that applications have been received for the posting of the position for Assistant to the Bishop, and a review committee looked over the applications and are moving forward with interviewing selected candidates.

Bishop's Associate Report

Synod council thanked Pr. Nancy for her role as Acting Bishop during Bishop Mark's sabbatical with a hearty and heartfelt round of applause.

Interim Steering Committee (Pastor Cindy Beck and Pastor Chris Berry)

Five members on the Synod Interim Ministry Steering Committee, led by Pr. Nancy. Meet approx. 6 times a year, more if needed. See themselves more as an advisory committee and work closely with Executive Staff. Assist synod staff in keeping track of people in the synod trained for interim ministry. Also assist others who are seeking credentialing in interim ministry. Committee members do mentoring for those going through credentialing program. Have offered advice on the updated call manual.

Requested that council endorse that a "Letter of agreement between a former pastor & congregation" be sent to retiring pastors by the Office of Bishop. There was a lengthy discussion on a draft document/letter presented as Appendix 3 in the new call manual.

SC16.9.50 MSC (Barton/Lownes) moved that council endorse that a “Letter of agreement between a former pastor & congregation” be sent to retiring pastors by the Office of Bishop. Motion carried, with 1 abstention and 1 nay.

Jordan Haley requested that a copy of the final version of the letter be sent to Council by the Office of the Bishop.

Treasurer's Report

Linda went over the August Mission Support and Designated Giving Report. Linda thanked Ed Nelson who contacted congregations who had not reported. Linda presented a Balance Sheet Summary. We paid off the synod’s Honda. Reminded the Council that the Mission & Ministry Endowment Fund is Council-designated, and recommended that Council consider renaming the fund by taking out the word “endowment.”

Explained that the Warner Trust is for youth and education projects.

Linda went over the August 2015 and 2016 Operating Account Comparisons

2nd-quarter statements mailed the 1st week of September, except for letters to those who have given no mission support so far this year.

Reported that the ELCA Credit Union is not yet up and running for any sort of corporate accounts, and probably will not be able to offer corporate accounts for another year or more.

Vice President’s Report

Elaine reiterated that synod assembly with the Presiding Bishop was a pretty awesome thing.

Churchwide assembly—was on the front row for Jesse Jackson!

Attended the Region 2 consultation in southern California.

Online synod gathering—a lot of interesting ways to think about the Reformation and some really good conversations around it.

We need to share our Jesus stories!

Property Updates and Actions

Oromo Christ Evangelical Lutheran Church

SC16.9.51 MSC (Haley/Michaelsen) moved that the facility, space, buildings and property currently being used by the Oromo Christ Evangelical Lutheran Church be transferred to that congregation.

Bishop Mark explained the clear expectations and conditions of how the synod is gifting this property. Transfer tax and other fees are to be borne by the congregation.

Linda answered that this transfer will remove from synod assets the value of the property, approximately \$2 million. She further stated that Oromo has not provided any mission support for 2016.

Hand vote taken; motion carried, with 1 abstention.

Hilmar property

Recommendation by the DEM Pastor Carlton that the Sierra Pacific Synod gift to the Our Redeemer/Nuestro Redentor congregation in Livingston the facility, space, buildings and property of the Hilmar property held by Sierra Pacific Synod, contingent upon what oversight the Sierra Pacific Synod Council deems appropriate. Discussion of the nature of a "gift," i.e., would the property be transferred, or, for the time being, would Our Redeemer/Nuestro Redentor take over property management of the Hilmar property on a contractual basis?

Sue will look at physical property issues and report back to council in January 2017.

We will review this issue at the January 2017 council meeting.

Executive Session

Council entered Executive Session at 6 p.m. Met on personnel matters. Executive session closed at 6:14 p.m.

Report by the Gender Identity Inclusivity (GII) Committee (Andrew, Larell, and Jordan)

Andrew went over the GII committee's Provisions for Election and its recommendations for changes to the synod's bylaws and continuing resolutions.

SC16.9.52 MSC (Holmerud/Leong) motion to approve Synod Continuing Resolution

S6.04.A16 This synod interprets synod provision S6.04, and ELCA constitutional provision 5.01.g, on which S6.04 is based, as fundamentally inclusive statements of participation within the life and work of the synod. While these provisions make specific reference to "male" and "female" members, this synod acknowledges and celebrates the full spectrum of gender identities claimed by children of God throughout our church. In no way shall the binary language of "male" and "female" in any provision of this synod's governing documents be used to exclude an individual from full participation in the life and work of this synod if they claim another gender identity. The Synod Council shall work to communicate, uphold, and implement this interpretation as necessary. The Synod Council shall update this continuing resolution and any provision of these governing documents referencing gender upon the conclusion of the 2019 ELCA Churchwide Assembly.

(Must report this out to congregations within 60 days)

Establishment of synod Fund for Leaders

Linda explained the ELCA Challenge Fund for Leaders and the procedures for establishing a synodical Fund for Leaders. Various questions were raised, and Linda will bring back some answers to council at the January 2017 meeting, as well as come back to council with the policies to accompany the establishment of the Fund for Leaders.

SC16.9.53 MSC (Leong/Haven) motion to send proposed changes to SB9.01.01 regarding the “Provisions for election as Churchwide Voting Members” to the Synod Assembly for consideration.

**Provisions for election as Churchwide Voting Members
these are bylaws changes**

- SB9.01.01 Voting members of the Churchwide Assembly shall be elected by the Synod Assembly in the following manner:
- a. The bishop shall automatically be a member, in accordance with ELCA Constitution 12.41.11.
 - b. The Vice President shall automatically be a member.
 - c. The Assembly shall elect ~~an~~ three ordained ministers on the roster of this synod, ~~one~~ three lay ~~man~~ males and ~~one~~ three lay ~~woman~~ females to serve as Churchwide Voting Members from each electoral district. Preliminary nominations for these positions ~~may be~~ will be made by the conferences. The particular nominations to be made by each conference (Clergy, Lay Male, Lay Female) shall be determined in the year prior to the election by means of a lottery conducted by the Synod Council Executive Committee. ~~additional nominations may be made from the floor at the Electoral District Caucus with the consent of the nominee. Each Caucus shall select two persons for each position from among those nominated by the Conferences of the Electoral District or from the floor at the time of the Caucus. The~~ Two nominees for each position selected by the ~~Caucus~~ Conference shall be presented to the Synod Assembly; no additional nominations shall be permitted. The Assembly shall elect one person for each position to serve as a member of the Churchwide Assembly. A member who subsequently moves out of the ~~electoral district~~ Conference from which ~~he or she was~~ they were elected shall continue to hold office until the next election, provided ~~he or she~~ they continues to hold membership in a congregation of this synod.
 - d. Additional members-at-large sufficient to complete the assigned delegation number shall be elected from nominations made by the Nominating Committee, with further nominations from the floor permitted. The election of the at-large members, if necessary, shall take place after the elections of the members from the ~~districts~~ conferences have been completed. In the event that the number of Churchwide Assembly members assigned to the Synod precludes electing ~~three~~ nine persons described above ~~from each Electoral District~~, the Synod Council shall determine how best to distribute the members to be elected.
 - e. The runner-up in each election shall be the first alternate for the seat. In the event the elected voting member or alternate is unable to serve, the Synod Council or Executive Committee shall appoint additional alternates as necessary.

Discipling Teams, Synod Ministries and Committees, and Council Liaisons to them

2016-17 Synod Council Member Liaisons

Ministry Partners

Council Member Liaison

Pacific Lutheran Theological Seminary

Larell Fineren

Mt. Cross

Pr. Kathryn Gulbranson

Lutheran Social Service

Elaine Whitney

Warner Trust

Theresa Landi

LEANN

Jordan Haley

Lutheran Office of Public Policy

Andrew Stevens

Elder Care Alliance

Pr. Gregg Brown

Council of Deans

Pr. Don Haven

Global Mission

Bp. Mark Holmerud

Campus Ministry

Jeff Pennington

Resource Center

Ed Nelson

Committees

Finance

Gail Kiyomura

Candidacy

Pr. Susan Birkelo

Assembly Planning

Discipling Teams

<i>Witness</i>	<u>Stephanie Leong</u>
<i>Stewardship</i>	<u>Sherrill Heinz</u>
<i>Leadership</i>	<u>Pr. Patricia Vargas</u>
<i>Congregational Life</i>	<u>Pr. Tuhina Rasche</u>
<i>Justice and Advocacy</i>	<u>Sue Michaelson</u>
<i>Racial and Ethnic Ministries</i>	<u>Pr. Tita Valeriano</u>
<i>Worship for Baptismal Living</i>	<u>Jordan Haley</u>

SC16.9.54 MSC (Michaelson/Burton) moved to approve minutes of July 28, 2016 e-vote to approve the hire of Ms. Pamela Reynolds, seminarian at the Pacific Lutheran Theological Seminary, to serve as Director of Evangelical Mission Pastor Carlton Monroe’s part-time assistant.

SC16.9.55 MSC (Holmerud/Michaelson) moved On Leave from Call status for Pr. Pamela Sue Schaefer Dawson.

Will discuss the Covenant at January 2017 meeting. Documentation will be sent to Council before the meeting.

Andrew spoke about the LOPP’s recommendations for ballot measures and about the upcoming Advocacy Sunday on October 16.

SC16.9.56 MSC (Lownes/Michaelsen) to remove Dennis Jones and Nancy Feniuk Nelson as check signers; will retain Bishop Mark Holmerud, Elaine Whitney, Linda Lownes, Pr. Katy Grindberg, and Pr. Don Haven as check signers; and will add Jeff Pennington as a check signer.

Went through the Action Item list.

The meeting was adjourned by Vice President Whitney at 11:42 AM.

Respectfully submitted,
Jeff Pennington, Synod Secretary