

**Sierra Pacific Synod
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
Synod Council Minutes
September 22 – 23, 2017
Office of the Bishop, Sacramento**

Present: Sue Michaelson, Linda Babcock, Nicholas Hayes, Bill Turner, John Allured, Gail Kiyomura, Pr. Clark Brown, Carl Brodt, Pr. Jason Bense, Pr. Tita Valeriano, Sheela Boddu, Bishop Mark Holmerud, Vice President Elaine Whitney, Treasurer Linda Lownes, Secretary Jeff Pennington

Absent: Pr. Gregg Brown, Pr. Paul Clark

Staff: Pr. Katy Grindberg, Pr. Kathryn Gulbranson, Pr. Ron Zoesch, Patty Monteiro, Diana Suruki, Laurie Gaumer, Olivia Belisle

Visitors: Pr. Dawn Roginski, Pr. Heidi Hester, Pr. Kemp Segerhammer, Irv Lownes

The meeting was called to order by Vice President Elaine Whitney at 2:10 PM., who then welcomed our Discipling Team visitors. Pastor Jason led an opening devotion.

Adoption of the Agenda

SC17.09.34 MSC (Bense/Holmerud) moved to adopt agenda as updated.

Approval of Minutes of June 22-23, 2017 Synod Council Meeting

SC17.09.35 MSC (Boddu/Brown) moved approval of minutes of the June 22-23, 2017 meeting.

Approval of Consent Agenda

SC17.09.36 MSC (Holmerud/Babcock) moved approval of Consent Agenda.

- Move Pr. Steve Blair (St. James, Hanford) to the retired roster
- Move Pr. Linda Vogelgesang (St. John's, Antioch) to the retired roster
- Synod Council call to Interim Ministry for Pr. Tim Phillips

Bishop's Report

Attended the Rostered Ministers Gathering in Atlanta, part of a 3-year cycle of gatherings: Churchwide Assembly, Youth Gathering, Rostered Ministers Gathering

Will be attending the Conference of Bishops in Chicago

Still working with churchwide to press them to move forward with a call process for a DEM

Announced that the property on which PLTS was located has been sold to Zaytuna College

Read a letter from Pr. Patricia Vargas, who has accepted a call in southern Ohio

Announced that he'll be on sabbatical during the month of November; will be located along the southern border with Mexico working on immigration and social issues, and will continue to build on his knowledge of Spanish

Pastor Katy Grindberg, assistant to the bishop

- introduced Olivia, whose working half-time at synod offices and half-time at the Belfry at UC Davis
- working a lot on mobility; will be going to Chicago for a training session on "Transforming White Privilege"
- Oct. 9 prayer service at St. John's, Sacramento, together with local Roman Catholic community, commemorating the Reformation

Pastor Kathryn Gulbranson, assistant to the bishop

- working with ongoing call processes;
- continues to preach 3 out of the 4 Sundays at different congregations throughout the synod;
- working on the Professional Leaders Conference planning team;
- working with the Discipling Teams

Pastor Ron Zoesch, interim DEM

- Working with Latino ministry in Fresno
- "Farming Hope"—Jamie Stark has developed a ministry working with homeless people in San Francisco, teaching them gardening and urban farming, and working with people who need food assistance, and then offering worship to volunteers and those working with him

SC17.09.37 MSC (Bense/Lownes) moved adding "Farming Hope" proposal to the agenda.

Vice-President's Report

- If you have the power, use it!
- Announced that she's allowing her name to go forward to stand for a 2nd term as Vice President
- Will be meeting with other Vice Presidents and Bishops at the Conference of Bishops gathering in Chicago
- Going to Charlottesville, VA in November to connect with people on a local level

Discipling Team introduction and envisioning

Leadership: members are committed to thinking about ways to support the rostered ministers within the synod, including the Professional Leaders Conference and a workshop on Mutual Ministry Committees; functions well with a combination of people who have been on for a long

time, and others who are quite new and who aren't afraid to ask "why do we do this?" or "why do we do things this way? Couldn't we do it another way?"

Worship for Baptismal Living: providing resources to congregations for worship, e.g., music workshops; training in the catechumenate

Witness: works closely with the DEM to support new starts and restarts, to revitalize congregations

Stewardship: functions well, meets at least twice or thrice per year; can serve as a resource not only for congregations, but also for other discipling teams

Original hope for the teams was to combine energy and effectiveness in supporting the mission and ministry of the synod.

How do we get more people engaged? How do we encourage more participation?
Is there a way to get conferences more directly involved?

Goals:

- Maintain the currently active discipling teams
 - Gather the team chairs and the conference deans for an initial brainstorming session
 - Reestablish the periodic meeting between team chairs and executive staff
 - Possibly organize a retreat with team chairs, conference deans, synod executive staff, synod council, and an outside facilitator to discern goals and strategies and actions
 - Request information from all Discipling Teams about actions and upcoming activities
- Continue to support the rebuilding of the Racial & Ethnic Mission Strategies Discipling Team
 - Provide \$10,000 to the three working groups within the REMS Task Force to assist in moving toward rebuilding the REMS DT and developing a synodical anti-racism policy
 - Possibly to engage a facilitator to assist with this work
- To support the justice and advocacy work in our synod and to encourage communication between the different groups working in this field
 - Gather and disseminate information about justice and advocacy groups in the synod
 - Request information from all Discipling Teams about actions and upcoming activities
- Each conference to have one representative or liaison on each discipling team
 - Consider changes to Continuing Resolutions regarding populating Discipling Teams
 - Synod Council members support and attend Discipling Team and synodical activities

Merger of St. John, Sunnyvale with St. Luke, Sunnyvale:

SC17.09.38 MSC (Michaelsen/Lownes) moved Synod Council assent of the proposed merger of St. John Lutheran Church, Sunnyvale with St. Luke Lutheran Church, Sunnyvale.

SC17.09.39 MSC (Michaelsen/Lownes) moved to extend a special synodical call to The Reverend Sarah Erickson as Co-Executive Director of Mt. Cross Ministries.

Synodically Authorized Worshipping Community: “Farming Hope”

SC17.09.40 MSC (Whitney/Michaelsen) moved to authorize “Farming Hope” as a synodically authorized worshipping community of the Sierra Pacific Synod and designates Jamie Stark as its servant leader.

SC17.09.41 MSC (Holmerud/Lownes) moved to take \$10,000 from “Money Market 14” account 1-1031-000 unrestricted funds to support the working groups who are working to rebuild the REMS DT and related synod-wide activities.

Treasurer’s Report

Synod Business Manager Diana Suruki thanked Linda and Irv Lownes and Lou Smith for setting up a new data set which can make it easier to draw financial reports from ACS.

Diana introduced to Council sample reports which can be produced from ACS.

Treasurer Linda Lownes presented an analysis of Revenues & Expenses for the period February – August 2017 and the Balance Sheet for September 2017.

Presentation on Pacific Lutheran Theological Seminary, Pastor Ray Pickett, Rector of PLTS

- 83% of PLTS budget comes from congregations and synods
- Moved to new offices in downtown Berkeley
- Developing new directions in theological education, including
 - a new curriculum
 - a new MA in Spiritual Formation and Community Organizing

Property Committee report

- Have executed an extension of the Burlingame office lease for 2 years.
- Announced that the Executive Committee decided to move forward with the sale of the Hilmar property

Stewardship Discipling Team overview

- Serves all of the discipling teams, as well as all congregations in the synod
- Familiarized Council members with the “mission narrative budget” model

- The art of “thank you” is so important
- Encouraged Council members to reach out to and visit congregations within their conference

Meeting adjourned at 12:00 p.m.

Dates of future meetings (Sacramento Office of the Bishop, unless otherwise indicated):

Friday, January 19 – Saturday, January 20, 2018

March 10, 2018 (one-day budget meeting)

Thursday, May 31, 2018 (pre-assembly meeting)

Friday, June 22 – Saturday, June 23, 2018