

**Sierra Pacific Synod  
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America  
Synod Council Minutes  
December 14, 2019  
Mt. Cross Lutheran Ministries  
Ben Lomond, California**

**Present:** John Allured, Treasurer Pastor Sharon Amundson, Linda Babcock, Sheela Boddu, Carl Brodt, Pastor Clark Brown, Pastor Paul Clark, Sophia Hofmann, Bishop Mark Holmerud, Vice President Gail Kiyomura, Joseph Paxton, Secretary Jeff Pennington, Luke Price, Jennifer Teer

**Absent:** Pastor Jason Bense, Nicholas Hayes, Sue Michaelson

**Staff:** Pastor Katy Grindberg, Pastor Kathryn Gulbranson, Pastor Tita Valeriano, Diana Suruki

**Saturday, December 14, 2019:**

The meeting was called to order by Vice President Gail Kiyomura at 10:00 AM.

Morning devotions led by Linda Babcock.

**Adoption of the Agenda**

**SC19.12.43** Agenda approved by unanimous consent.

**Approval of Minutes**

**SC19.12.44** Minutes of September 21, 2019 Synod Council meeting approved by unanimous consent.

**Adoption of Consent Agenda**

**SC19.12.45** Consent Agenda approved by unanimous consent.

- Move the Rev. Dorothy (Dot) Lundgren to the Retired Roster, effective March 9, 2020
- Appointment of Esther Koch to Board of Elder Care Alliance, term expiring 2022
- Reappointment of Tom Briody to Elder Care Alliance, term expiring 2022
- Approval of revisions to congregation constitution of Hope Lutheran Church, El Sobrante, CA
- Approval of revisions to congregation constitution of St. Mark's Lutheran Church, Fairfield, CA
- Approval of the constitution of Esperanza Bilingual Ministry (Fresno, CA) Synod Authorized Worship Community
- Approval of the constitution of Grace Lao Lutheran (Richmond, CA) Synod Authorized Worship Community
- Approval of housing allowances in order to benefit from provisions of Section 107 of the Internal Revenue Code

○ Bishop Mark Holmerud

In order to permit the Rev. Mark Holmerud to benefit from the provisions of Section 107 of the Internal Revenue Code, the Synod Council specifies that the total compensation paid to him during the fiscal year ending December 31, 2020 includes a housing allowance.

Pastor Holmerud estimates that he will spend \$45,000 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 budget, it is RESOLVED, that the total compensation include a housing allowance of \$45,000.

○ Rev. Katy Grindberg

In order to permit the Rev. Kathryn Grindberg to benefit from the provisions of Section 107 of the Internal Revenue Code, the Synod Council specifies that the total compensation paid to her during the fiscal year ending December 31, 2020 includes a housing allowance.

Pastor Grindberg estimates that she will spend \$26,000 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 the synod budget, it is RESOLVED, that the total compensation include a housing allowance of \$26,000.

○ Rev. Kathryn Gulbranson

In order to permit the Rev. Kathryn Gulbranson to benefit from the provisions of Section 107 of the Internal Revenue Code, the Synod Council specifies that the total compensation paid to her during the fiscal year ending December 31, 2020 includes a housing allowance.

Pastor Gulbranson estimates that she will spend \$32,000 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 the synod budget, it is RESOLVED, that the total compensation include a housing allowance of \$32,000.

**Bishop's Report: Bishop Mark Holmerud**

- Talked about the uniqueness of Mt. Cross Camp, nestled in the redwoods of the Santa Cruz Mountains
- Spoke about his recent trip to Rwanda, Greece, and Italy
- Mentioned that ELCA VP Bill Horne will be our churchwide representative at the 2020 Synod Assembly
- Spoke about those congregations which have recently held votes to disaffiliate from the ELCA: Holy Cross, Pacifica, CA and New Hope, Foresthill, CA

**Vice President's Report: Gail Kiyomura**

- Thanked everyone for participating in their fall conference gatherings
- Attended the Professional Leaders Conference and spoke about the 2020 Bishop elections
- Also attended the Region 2 consultation of the five synods in Region 2: Sierra Pacific, Southwest California, Pacifica, Rocky Mountain, and Grand Canyon

**Treasurer's Report: Pastor Sharon Amundson**

Pastor Sharon introduced herself; stated that the proposed FY21-22 budget will be introduced later in the meeting

**Director for Evangelical Mission Presentation: Pastor Tita Valeriano**

- Spoke about the development of synod authorized worshipping communities (SAWC) in our Synod and the fact that the term "congregations under development" is being phased out; new ministries and congregations are now expected to become SAWCs
- Talked about the new Synod Vitality Strategy

**Synod Resource Center**

**SC19.12.46 MSC** (Boddu/Babcock) moved that the Synod Resource Center board can conduct a search for a Center director.

**PASSED**

**Continuing Resolution**

**SC19.12.47 MSC** (Brown/Holmerud) moved approval of proposed continuing resolution S13.01.A19. regarding seasonal member voting for congregations of this synod in accordance with the provisions of \*C8.02.e. in the Model Constitution for Congregations.

**PASSED**

**Revisions to Policy 11-003 Investment Policy**

**SC19.12.48 MSC** (Amundson/Brown) moved approval of proposed revisions to Policy 11-003 Investment Policy.

**PASSED**

**Revisions to Policy 13-001 Policy on the Sale, Retention and Management of Real Property**

**SC19.12.49 MSC** (Amundson/Babcock) moved approval of proposed revisions to Policy 13-001 Policy on the Sale, Retention and Management of Real Property.

**PASSED**

Moved into Executive Session at 1 p.m. to discuss a personnel issue.  
Moved out of Executive Session at 1:10 p.m.

**SC19.12.50 MSC** (Brown/Rasche) moved appointment *en bloc* of the following committee members for three-year terms, starting in January 2020:

- **Candidacy Committee**
  - Ann Sandberg Schinske, Trinity, Pleasanton, CA
  - Susan Scott, First Lutheran, Palo Alto, CA
  - Rev. Dorothy Lindstrom, retired

- **Mission and Ministry Endowment Fund**
  - Rev. Frank Espegren, St. John's, Sacramento, CA

**PASSED**

**SC19.12.51 MSC** (Rasche/Holmerud) moved nomination of Jeffrey Pennington as Synod Council nominee to the position of Secretary of the Sierra Pacific Synod.

**PASSED**

**Synod Assembly Planning Report: Pastor Clark Brown, Synod Council liaison to the Synod Assembly Planning Committee**

Announced that the Synod Assembly theme scripture will be 1 Peter 4:10, "*As generous distributors of God's manifold grace, put your gifts at the service of one another, each in the measure you have received.*"

**SC19.12.52 MSC** (Brown/Pennington) moved that the registration fees for 2020 Assembly of the Sierra Pacific Synod be as follows:

- Voting Member Registration: ..... \$225 each
- Non-Voting Registration: ..... \$175 each
- Non-voting registration (Saturday lunch only): .. \$75 each
- Kids meals: ..... \$15 per meal
- Display Tables: ..... \$75 each
- Late fee, registrations after deadline: ..... \$75 each
- Late fee, on-site registration: ..... \$100 each

**PASSED**

**SC19.12.53 MSC** (Brown/Rasche) moved that the monetary offering collected at the 2020 Assembly of the Sierra Pacific Synod be donated to the following organizations, one-third each:

- Sierra Pacific Candidacy Committee
- ELCA Lutheran Disaster Response
- Mt. Cross Ministries

and be it further moved that in-kind offerings be donated to:

- Breaking the Chains, Fresno.

**PASSED**

**SC19.12.54 MSC** (Holmerud/Pennington) moved appointment of the following committee chairs for the 2020 Synod Assembly:

- Credentials Committee: Randy Presuhn
- Elections Committee: Sue Michaelsen
- Resolutions Committee: The Rev. Jeremy Serrano

**PASSED**

**SC19.12.55 MSC** (Brown/Rasche) moved to approve the establishment of the Debbi and Mark Holmerud Legacy Fund.

**PASSED**

**SC19.12.56 MSC** (Babcock/Rasche) moved endorsement of the Synod Vitality Strategy Concept Paper.  
**PASSED**

**SC19.12.57 MSC** (Brown/Boddu) moved approval of a special fundraising appeal by the Sierra Pacific Synod Youth Committee and sale of t-shirts at the Synod Assembly to raise funds for scholarships.  
**PASSED**

**SC19.12.58 MSC** (Amundson/Clark) moved that the biographical information form for “pre-nominees” for the 2020 Bishop election be sent to them electronically and that the deadline for receipt of the form be extended to February 1, 2020.  
**PASSED**

Meeting adjourned at 3:45 p.m.

**Future council meeting:**

Thursday, April 30, 2020, 2 p.m., Trinity Lutheran Church, 3973 North Cedar Avenue, Fresno, CA 93726

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jeffrey A Pennington". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, prominent "P" for Pennington.

Jeffrey A Pennington, Secretary  
Sierra Pacific Synod