

**South Dakota Synod, ELCA  
Synod Council  
Synod Office, Haugo Room  
Augustana College  
Sioux Falls, SD  
March 9, 2012**

**Present:** Bishop David Zellmer, Gary Steuck, Erik Gilbertson, Carla Borchardt; Travis Gerlach, Jesse Fonkert, Youth; LuAnn Denke, Duane Abata, Pastor Tom Opoien, Bear Butte; Holly Paulson, Lorne Tilberg, Prairie Rivers; Peggy Namanny, Pastor Tanya Rist, Northern Plains; Barbara Egbert, Steve Koenig, Southeastern; Gwen Bobbie, Crossroads; Verdelle Anderson, Pastor Carlene Rhody, Medary; Teri Gayer, Michael Miller, Pastor Janice FitzGibbon; Prairie Coteau; Lois Borchardt, Jim Schade, Cathy Larson, Suzanne Hansen, AIM

Vice President Gary Steuck called the meeting to order.

Pastor Carlene Rhody lead opening devotions.

**MSC to approve the agenda as presented.  
SC.12.03.01**

**Reports**

***Treasurer's Report***

Treasurer Erik Gilbertson presented the January and February 2012 financial statements, pending audit results. Bishop Zellmer explained the SD Synod and Augustana College building occupancy agreement and the gift from Augustana to the South Dakota Synod to pay off the remaining mortgage.

**MSC to receive the Treasurer's Report.  
SC.12.03.02**

***2013 Proposed Budget***

The 2013 proposed budget was presented.

**MSC to accept the 2013 proposed budget with a 3% increase in revenue to be presented to the 2012 SD Synod Assembly for adoption.**

	Adopted 2012	Revised 2012	Proposed 2013
<b>INCOME</b>			
<b>MISSION SUPPORT FROM CONGREGATIONS</b>	1,694,400	1,642,953	1,692,242
<b>Program Ministry Income</b>			
Pine Ridge Ministry Income	45,001	45,001	45,001
Other Program Income	100	-	-
Woyatan Income (EOCM Grant)	12,000	12,000	12,000
<b>Other Income Streams</b>			
SD Synod Mission Support	77,882	40,550	40,550

DEM Support Staff	15,000	15,000	15,000
Interest Income	13,500	13,500	13,500
SDS Transportation LLC Income	5,000	5,000	5,000
SDS Transportation/Plane Income	25,000	25,000	25,000
<b>TOTAL INCOME</b>	<b>1,887,883</b>	<b>1,799,004</b>	<b>1,848,293</b>
<b>EXPENSES</b>			
	<b>Adopted</b>	<b>Revised</b>	<b>Proposed</b>
<b>CHURCHWIDE MISSION</b>	<b>2012</b>	<b>2012</b>	<b>2013</b>
Mission Support to ELCA	762,480	731,114	769,970
% of Mission Support	45%	44.5%	45.5%
Region III	18,900	15,790	15,790
<b>SHARED MINISTRIES</b>			
<b>South Dakota Sustained Ministries</b>			
Campus Ministry	122,819	116,667	120,082
Campus Ministry Capital	1,030	1,030	1,030
Lutheran Planned Giving	48,410	48,410	48,410
Heartland Ephphatha	6,026	5,724	5,891
Lutheran Youth Organization	3,605	3,605	3,605
<b>South Dakota Supported Ministries</b>			
SD Ministries Support	21,525	4,523	4,928
Luther Seminary	69,651	66,162	68,099
Lutheran Social Services	69,651	66,162	68,099
Lutherans Outdoors	34,737	32,997	33,963
Church Colleges	6,026	5,724	5,891
Flandreau Indian School	13,522	13,522	13,522
Chaplaincy			
Association of Christian Churches	2,000	2,000	2,000
Chapel in the Hills	1	1	1
Good Samaritan Society	1	1	1
<b>Expense from Mission Support</b>	<b>399,004</b>	<b>366,528</b>	<b>375,522</b>
	<b>Adopted</b>	<b>Revised</b>	<b>Proposed</b>
	<b>2012</b>	<b>2012</b>	<b>2013</b>
<b>SOUTH DAKOTA SYNOD MINISTRIES</b>			
<b>Staff Leadership</b>			
Bishop	94,746	94,746	97,588

Associate Tesch	9,994	9,994	10,294
Associate Marone	72,558	72,558	74,735
Bishop/Associate Benefits	65,849	64,132	61,469
SDS Travel	39,500	49,500	49,500
Bishop/Assistants Travel & Cont Ed	12,800	9,970	9,485
DEM Travel	12,000	-	-
<b>Program Ministries</b>			
Native American Ministry	72,443	72,644	74,821
Synod Youth Ministry Coordinator	13,248	13,248	13,622
Companion Synod Coordinator	10,158	10,158	10,425
<b>Support Staff and Office</b>			
Support Staff Salaries/Benefits	135,102	130,742	134,431
Resource Center Supplies	1,000	250	250
Synod Office Expenses	61,801	57,301	57,884
Augustana College	21,000	21,000	19,233
<b>Synod Leadership</b>			
Synod Council	10,310	6,000	6,000
Support to Ministries Committee	12,900	6,000	6,000
Candidacy Committee	8,000	6,000	6,000
Electronic Communications	3,500	2,500	2,500
Multicultural Ministry Committee	1,700	1,700	1,700
Companion Synods Ministry Committee	2,000	2,000	2,000
Evangelical Outreach Committee	1,500	1,500	1,500
Mission Strategy Committee	2,000	2,000	2,000
<b>Ministry Projects</b>			
Stewardship Project	4,000	4,000	4,000
Congregational Initiative Grants	1,236	1,236	1,236
Continuing Education Projects	1,000	1,000	1,000
Rural Ministry Projects	500	500	500
Woyatan Program Expenses	12,000	12,000	12,000
<b>Outreach Ministries</b>			
Multicultural Center	15,000	15,000	15,000
Mission Congregation Start-up	4,000	4,000	4,000
Companion Synods	1,000	1,000	1,000
<b>Contingency</b>			
	4,654	12,893	6,838
<b>Subtotal SD Synod Ministries</b>	<b>707,499</b>	<b>685,572</b>	<b>687,011</b>
<b>Total Expense</b>	<b>1,887,883</b>	<b>1,799,004</b>	<b>1,848,293</b>
<b>Net Total</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>

SC.12.03.03

### ***Pine Ridge Retreat Center***

A report on Pine Ridge Ministry from Pastor Karen Rupp was distributed.

### ***Bishop's Report***

**MSC to send a letter of thanks to President Rob Oliver and Augustana College for their partnership in shared ministry and gift to the South Dakota Synod.  
SC.12.03.04**

Bishop Zellmer served as pastor to former Governor Bill Janklow and his family during the final days of his life.

An employee embezzled funds from the Northwest Minnesota Synod. Processes and procedures are in place to deter a similar situation in the South Dakota Synod.

Nicaragua – Kurt Osborne will lead a delegation to Nicaragua to participate in the seed/ farming project at Cedro Galan.

Cameroon – Lambert and Madeleine Bouta, administrator of the hospital, were killed in a vehicle collision. An agreement is in place and plans are being developed for pastoral exchange. The church will ordain three women this coming May. A delegation of women pastors from the South Dakota Synod will attend the ordination.

Seminarian Assignments – the South Dakota Synod has been assigned seven seminarians.

Partners Against Hunger – 33 entities are participating in this initiative which is being incorporated as a 501c3 organization. Fund raising efforts will focus on supplementing Feeding South Dakota. One of the workshops at the June 22-23, 2012, Global Mission Event in Sioux Falls will be presented by a representative from the USDA.

Chili with the Bishop – the bishop's office partnered with LSS and Lutherans Outdoors for these events which have been very successful.

National Youth Gathering – the SD Synod is sending the largest number of youth to the event in New Orleans this summer (approximately 1400). Susan Marone, AIM, and Suzanne Hansen, AIM, are members of the planning committee.

Conference of Bishops Meeting – there is ongoing conversation regarding restructuring of the national church. Twenty-five bishops will be elected in 2013, as well as the presiding bishop and ELCA secretary. It is important to carefully consider people elected to serve as voting members and alternates for the 2013 Churchwide Assembly. Bishop Zellmer is a member of the Churchwide Task Force for Reviewing Social Statements.

Portico, the board of pensions, will be reporting to the Conference of Bishop's March 2013 meeting proposed changes which might be coming due to the president's health care reform act. Bishop Zellmer will keep the Synod Council, rostered leaders and congregations informed as changes are finalized.

The bishop's office will host a sexual boundaries workshop for rostered leaders of the South Dakota Synod. Attendance will be required and certificates of attendance will be provided for attendees. Details to follow.

ELCA leadership has decided to proceed with collecting approximately \$5 million from 200 congregations who received partnership support from the ELCA, but subsequently have voted to leave the ELCA. Brett Koenecke has been hired to represent the ELCA in South Dakota. A demand letter will be sent to Christ the King in Yankton. Bishop Zellmer will keep the Synod Council and rostered leaders informed.

### ***Associates to the Bishop***

Reports from Pastor Bill Tesch and Susan Marone, AIM, were distributed.

### **Old Business**

None

### **Committee Meetings**

Committee meetings were held.

The meeting recessed for lunch.

The meeting reconvened and Committee reports were presented. Refer to meeting minutes for further information.

### **Congregation Matters**

Hope Lutheran, Freeman, has voted to leave the ELCA (first and second votes passed). Beaver Valley, Valley Springs, first vote failed. Vale Lutheran, Vale, first vote passed. The pastor currently serving Vale is not rostered in the ELCA. St. James, Leola, is in process. Bishop Zellmer has been asked to conduct a consultation in Arlington.

### **Roster Matters**

**MSC to grant Pastor Leslie (Les) Svendsen retired roster status.**

**SC.12.03.05**

**MSC to grant Pastor Robert (Bob) Ohnstad on leave from call roster status.**

**SC.12.03.06**

**MSC to grant Sonja Nelson, AIM, on leave from call roster status.**

**SC.12.03.07**

**MSC to reissue a non-stipendiary letter of call to Pastor Karen Soli to serve as Coordinator of Food to You Mobile Food Pantry, Sioux Falls.**

**SC.12.03.08**

**MSC to issue a non-stipendiary letter of call to Pastor Greg Johnson to serve as Innovation Designer for The Evangelical Lutheran Good Samaritan Society, Sioux Falls.**

**SC.12.03.09**

**MSC to issue a non-stipendiary letter of call to Pastor Ann Rosendale to serve as Campus Pastor at Augustana College, Sioux Falls.**

**SC.12.03.10**

**New Business**  
***Committee Vacancies***

**MSC to appoint Joel Laumer, Steve Koenig and Elaine Keenihan to the SD Synod Audit Committee.**

**SC.12.03.11**

**MSC to approve Rhonda Theel, Beresford, Georgia Johnson, Niobrara, NE, Reid Christopherson, Garretson, Pastor Marlin Haugrud, Sioux Falls, Marty Jans, Yankton, Pastor David Winterfeldt, Dell Rapids, Orrin Townswick, Crooks, Chuck Oster, Centerville, Pastor Nic Slate, Parkson, Travis Gerlach, Dimock (Synod Council representative) as members of the St. Dymas Associate Council.**

**SC.12.03.12**

**MSC to approve the nomination of Pastor Siri Sorenson, Grace, Sioux Falls, to complete the term as the Crossroads Conference clergy representative to Synod Council.**

**SC.12.03.13**

Voting members for the 2013 Churchwide Assembly will be nominated by spring conference assemblies and approved by the Synod Assembly.

***Proposed Bylaw Changes***

**MSC to submit proposed bylaws S11.07 and S11.07.33 to the 2012 South Dakota Synod Assembly; with initial committee members nominated by 2012 Conference Assemblies and ratified by the 2012 Synod Assembly, if the proposed bylaws are approved.**

**S11.07**

**The Evangelical Outreach Committee**

**The Evangelical Outreach Committee shall be composed of the Director of Evangelical Mission, and two persons, one lay person and one ordained minister, elected by each conference, and up to five additional members appointed by the Bishop. Conference elected members shall serve three-year terms with provision for a second term. Vacancies of conference elected members shall be filled by the conference in which the vacancy occurs in consultation with the Director of Evangelical Mission. Each conference is encouraged to seek members representing a diversity of backgrounds and cultures.**

**The Evangelical Outreach Committee shall:**

- a. Oversee the discernment and funding process for new, redeveloping, ethnic specific and renewing congregations.**
- b. Submit to the South Dakota Synod Assembly a strategic plan for mission in South Dakota that includes as a part of its plan: the development of new congregations, the renewal of congregations, the development of ethnic specific ministries, and the development of ministries with the poor.**

- c. Plan for and assist in the development of Local Area Mission Strategy tables which will conduct and carry out mission planning at the local level.
- d. Conduct annual reviews of funded ministries and report stories from each mission field to all the congregations of the South Dakota Synod.
- e. Maintain a relationship of mutual accountability with congregations, synod and the Churchwide organization for the benefit of new and renewing congregations.
- f. Seek generous financial giving, prayers and participation from churches and individuals toward the cause of new and renewing congregations, ethnic specific ministries and ministries with the poor.

**The Multi-cultural Committee**

**S11.07.33**

The Multi-cultural Committee shall be composed of the Director of Evangelical Mission, and two person, one lay person and one ordained minister, elected by each conference, and up to five additional members appointed by the Bishop. Conference elected members shall serve three-year terms with provision for a second term. Vacancies of conference elected members shall be filled by the conference in which the vacancy occurs in consultation with the Director of Evangelical Mission. Each conference is encouraged to seek members representing a diversity of backgrounds and cultures.

**The Multi-cultural committee shall:**

- a. Advise the Evangelical Outreach Committee on matters related to the oversight and funding of ethnic specific congregations.
- b. Develop strategies to help us become a more multicultural church.
- c. Advocate with and for ethnic communities at every level of ministry and leadership in our Synod, and stand in solidarity with people who experience injustice.
- d. Teach the people of our Synod how to listen and interact with different cultures, so that there may be a mutual blessing.
- e. Encourage congregations and leaders who are involved in multicultural ministry.
- f. Seek generous giving and participation from churches, individuals and organizations toward the cause of multicultural ministry.

**SC.12.03.14**

***Synod Assembly***

A memorandum from the Office of the Secretary, ELCA, regarding memorials and resolutions was distributed.

**MSC to set 2012 South Dakota Synod Assembly registration fees at \$130 for voting members and \$65 for non-voting members.**

**SC.12.03.15**

Pastors Heidi Binstock and Dwight Stensgaard presented recommendations regarding bishop election including proposed process, rules of procedure and resolutions to amend the South Dakota Synod Bylaws from the Bishop Elections Committee (Pastor Heidi Binstock, Our Saviors, Sioux Falls; John Rasmussen, Sisseton; Pastor Dwight Stensgaard, Calvary, Rapid City). A discussion was held.

**MSC the Synod Council supports the recommendations of the Bishop Elections Committee.  
SC.12.03.16**

**MSC the Synod Council requests the recommendations of the Bishop Elections Committee be reviewed and discussed at 2012 Conference Assemblies and Conference Caucuses during the 2012 Synod Assembly.  
SC.12.03.17**

Future meetings: June 9, 2012, immediately following the closing of the Synod Assembly. Pastor Tanya Rist will be responsible for devotions.

Pastor Carlene Rhody lead closing devotions.

The meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Carla Borchardt  
Secretary



**South Dakota Synod, ELCA Synod Council Meeting March 9, 2012  
Report on Pine Ridge Ministry**

Greetings from our Lutheran Lakota Shared Ministry at Pine Ridge. We continue to be humbled and grateful for relationships, new and old and growing networks of support from near and far.

During the previous year groups came from schools of nursing, medicine, sociology and theology to fulfill their cross cultural/educational requirements, filling about 17 weeks on our calendar. Lutheran Outdoors filled 2 weeks, and church groups from the Episcopal, Lutheran, Presbyterian, United Methodist and Covenant filled about 17 weeks. Other organizations and groups filled about 5 weeks. This coming year we look forward to hosting five additional groups, one from a Mennonite Multicultural church in Chicago, and we're receiving reservations for 2013. Groups pay \$1800 when we organize events; otherwise they pay \$15/person/night.

Our programs include lunch Mondays through Saturdays, usually a sandwich; Sanctuary program for young people, puppet ministry, teen night two to three times/month, services at Cohen Home, a residential facility for the elderly x 2/month; monthly services at St. John's Episcopal Church in N. Oglala, and pastoral care to the community as invited. For the community, we provide space for Department of Social Services to meet with clients for disability determinations and to the Partnership for Housing for their educational programs.

Our proposed budget for 2012-2013 is provided on a separate handout. As I try to transfer our manually maintained income/expense information onto QuickBooks, I realize how much I would appreciate our Retreat Center books and accounting being included in the SD Synod audit and hope we can commence with that process this year. We encountered a shortfall in the Synod budget last year. I apologize for not being more on top of that; I could have and should have sent a check for \$10,000 before Feb 1. I did send it at the end of February. That would have decreased the shortfall substantially. This year I'll monitor closely and commit to being proactive in addressing any anticipated shortfall.

I'm proposing new staff position for the Retreat Center (see separate proposal). In light of a shortfall last year, you might wonder how in world we can consider this addition. Alicia Koon who has been here as a J-term student from Southern Seminary three years ago, spent last summer with us and returned this summer, brings with her a commitment to ministry of word and service, hoping to complete the requirements to be eligible for rostering as a diaconal minister, also brings excellent communication skills, relationship building skills and gifts in music and dramatic arts. Several groups who have met and worked with Alicia have gone home and encouraged their church/organization to commit funds to support this position.

Calvin Institute awarded us a grant for worship renewal with money for a support person. We'll explore other grant opportunities and also do some organized fundraising. I'm also hoping to further cement our relationships with past and prospective visiting groups by making personal visits and presentations to increase awareness of our ministry needs.

The Calvin worship renewal grant project uses the traditions of the 4-D prayer meetings in holding events and a retreat with our ecumenical partners. Our committee met here on Monday of this past week. Violet and Loren Robinson of the Pine Ridge Presbyterian Church joined us as we initiated our plans to hold the next event at Pine Ridge Presbyterian Church and Pine Ridge Retreat Center with a theme of healing and reconciliation.

On a personal note, thank you all so much for your ongoing prayers and words of encouragement for us and for our son, Paul as he continues treatment following the bone marrow transplant in February. I continue to be very thankful to Bishop Zellmer and his staff and the synod council for ongoing words of encouragement, prayers and support for the ministry and for our family.

Respectfully submitted,

*Rev. Karen Rupp*

Rev. Karen Rupp, Director Native American  
Ministry, South Dakota Synod, ELCA

**PINE RIDGE RETREAT CENTER  
PROPOSAL FOR ADDITIONAL STAFF POSITION  
D r a f t**

TO: South Dakota Synod ELCA Synod Council  
RE: Request for approval for additional position of Diaconal Minister/Ministry support staff for the Lutheran Lakota shared ministry at Pine Ridge.  
DATE: 2/16/2012

Thank you for the support, prayers and encouragement for the Lutheran Lakota Shared Ministry at Pine Ridge.

The ministry has seen an increase in many areas. Due to continued growth in numbers and limited space, we've separated the young people into age groups, resulting in two weekly worship services and two meals served to the young people participating in our Sanctuary program.

Groups from schools and churches now come from March through December with only few dates not filled throughout the year, and many times we are requested to be in multiple places. Since we provide pastoral leadership to St. John's Episcopal Church in Oglala as well as continue our Presbyterian relationship, and accompany the groups who visit, additional staff will provide much needed support and presence for the groups and community services. We've been fortunate to have a Horizon Intern assigned in the past, but are not sure if this will happen. Last year the person assigned was unable to complete the internship and declined. I've not received information about this year's intern, though we did receive approval to be a Horizon Internship site.

Alicia Koon graduated from Southern Seminary last May and has been a positive presence in the ministry since June, independently raising funds to support her position there. She has developed strong positive relationships with the community and has demonstrated the ability to lead worship, deliver soundly theologically grounded messages and carry on the ministry independently during my absence. . Alicia also brings with her a strong background in communication. She is completing the requirements to become eligible for rostering as a diaconal minister and would be ideal to remain at Pine Ridge

We intend to continue to provide housing and seek out grants in addition to fundraising to support this position and look to Synod Council for approval and support. Some of the groups who have been here during the past year have sent donations designated to support this position and have indicated they've created of a line item in their church budget for this item.

Thank you.

**Bill Tesch, Associate to Bishop Zellmer and Director of Evangelical Mission  
Report to Synod Council, March, 2012**

Looking back to last march, it has been an exciting year for me and for the SD Synod as we have moved into the era of our new vision, "That All May be Fed." I believe that this vision give us as leaders some good "handles" for us to grab hold of as together we seek ways to accompany and energize our congregations' in their mission and ministry.

Here is a summary of my work over the last year:

- 1) Renewing Congregations: This is a key area of the work of the Director for Evangelical Mission. We have moved from building the capacity to renew congregations to implementing renewal opportunities across the synod. We have 9 congregations utilizing our partnership with Vibrant Faith and we have the capacity to have 8 more this year. We have a network of coaches and trainers who are able to coach and train congregations for the long-term, deep renewal process of transformational ministry. We had our first "cohort" of four congregations begin that process in February. We also have a small network of coaches who can accompany congregations in the Natural Church Development renewal process.
- 2) New Congregations: We have 6 new congregations under development in South Dakota. Our newest, WestSide Lutheran in Sioux Falls is off to a great start. This year we will start another in Aberdeen, SD – a remnant group out of Holy Cross. And we are exploring the possibility of yet another in the northern Black Hills. There are some pending changes for Rejoice! in Sioux Falls which I will share with you in my verbal comments.
- 3) Supervising and Training Mission Developers: (Please see the attached letter for an update on a recent training event for Mission Developers that I attended.) This is a key task for the DEM, and I have enjoyed working with these remarkable and gifted leaders. Note that we are dealing with a vacancy at Pueblo de Dios
- 4) Stewardship and Mission Support: This summer's Burgers with the Bishop were an opportunity for congregations to learn about al the great work that is happening thanks to their mission support and to hear a challenge to grow. Our Steward Leaders continue to do good work and have begun serving as our "Mission Support Strategy Table." "The Big Read" focusing on the theme of overcoming fear is a product of that work. Finally your council visits this last Fall were vital in us having a strong response with our mission support pledges. The congregations you visited increased their mission support by nearly 110,000 or about 9% overall over last year. Thank you! You can bet that we will be inviting you to consider doing this again!
- 5) Our New Vision and our Team: I enjoyed playing a key role in facilitating the visioning process for our Synod. It is a joy to be in ministry Bishop Zellmer who is providing excellent leadership on our new vision. Susan Marone is an excellent colleague and I benefit daily from her wisdom. I could not do this work without my daily partnership with Kevin Stillson. Jim Schade and Kurt Osborne are a delight and their wisdom and experience are a huge asset for us. Lois is incredibly patient with me; she stewards our resources with professionalism and grace. Crystal is always helpful and responsive to every request for information or help -- and I have many of those! Cathy is a true partner and her work with global mission is a gift. Suzanne keeps us grounded, and she is a great support and guide to our synod's youth ministers. She is a good sport with all the razing I give her. I feel blessed to be in ministry with fun and gifted people.

Thank you for your partnership,  
Peace,  
Bill Tesch



Lent, 2012

Dear Friends of our Brother Jesus Christ,

What an amazing picture of our emerging new ELCA was on display at the “Missional Leaders Training” in Houston, TX on February 16-19! The event was attended by new Mission Developers and leaders of newly forming congregations from all across the country. The room was colorful, vibrant and alive with the energy of people excited about God’s mission. The stories of our various mission fields announced a church where the Holy Spirit is powerfully at work calling people to the Gospel and leading them in acts of mercy and justice on behalf of their neighbor. It was a scene from Acts two: people from Liberia, Guatemala, Ethiopia, Mexico and India - with the faithful from Columbia and the Sudan – and even folks from closer-by in Minnesota, Maryland, California, South Dakota and Wisconsin. Together they were learning how to apply the basic principles of mission work in their diverse and wonderful contexts.

**Today there are over 330 new congregations under development in your ELCA!** This is a church that is boldly moving forward in God’s mission, rooted confidently in God’s grace and shaped by our Baptism into Christ. The new churches are urban, suburban, rural and small town. They are found on reservations, college campuses, in new suburbs and old neighborhoods. They are sprouting up everywhere (six in South Dakota, perhaps as many as eight in 2012!). You are there through your prayers and through your mission support dollars. **Yes, God is using your congregation’s generosity** to spread the good news in new, effective and powerful ways, and nowhere is that more evident than in our new missions that are spreading out like wildfire.

Martin Luther explains the part of the Lord’s Prayer that goes, “Thy Kingdom Come,” like this: “God’s Kingdom surely comes without our prayer, but we ask in this prayer that it come also to us.” Through our work together to start new congregations and to renew existing congregations, God’s kingdom is coming also to us! God in God’s mercy allows our humble gifts of time, talent and money to be used for great and eternal purposes. What a high and holy privilege!

On behalf of the thousands of people being reached by 330 brand new congregations all across the USA, **thank you for your generous mission support** which God is using for the work of God’s Kingdom.

Your Partner in God’s Mission,



Pastor Bill Tesch, Director of Evangelical Mission  
And Associate to Bishop Zellmer

PS: To learn more about new congregations or how to become a “Renewed Evangelizing Congregation,” contact me at [btesch@sdsynod.org](mailto:btesch@sdsynod.org).

March 5, 2012

Grace and Peace to you!

As you read this report, I will be in Florida on vacation with my husband! I didn't have the Synod Council meeting in my calendar and bought tickets without checking the date a little closer. I ask your forgiveness for my negligence and I will enjoy my much needed time off!

The last four months have been a mixture of many Parish Studies, First Call Retreat at Joy Ranch, Senior Pastor's Retreat at Scattergun, installations, traveling to New Orleans as the Synod Coordinator for preplanning of the National Youth Gathering, Chili with the Bishops, Candidacy meetings, Support to Ministry meetings, Campus Ministry meetings, the drafting of 7 Seminarians to our synod, and just plain dealing with mobility issues for pastors and congregations.

I would like to brag that SD AGAIN has the most youth attending the National Youth Gathering this July in New Orleans!! 1368 so far are signed up to go and a huge "Thank you" to the congregations and leaders that are supporting our youth! This time youth will be staying at the same hotel as all the other South Dakota Synod participants and will get to spend a day together with the Bishop.

I would to thank the Executive Committee for granting me a 3 month Sabbatical beginning August 15th and ending November 15<sup>th</sup>. I have been asked by Roy Oswald to become a leader for the Emotional Intelligence work that he is doing and will spend 2 weeks training with him. My other travel will be with a group of folks gathered by Layne Nelson, CEO of LOSD, to attend a workshop on Spiritual Leadership in a Supervisory Role. The rest of my time will be reading and spending time at home with my family. Again, I am grateful for this opportunity and feel very blessed to have this time of Sabbath.

I am also grateful for the great colleagues on the Synod Staff that make my work enjoyable and even fun at times! I continue to be inspired by my call and appreciate your work as a Synod Council!

Peace,  
Susan Marone

February 24, 2012

Dear South Dakota Synod colleagues and fellow leaders,

Greetings! In November (2011) our Synod Council, acting in accordance with the South Dakota Synod Constitution, appointed a 3-member Bishop Elections Committee to begin its work as we look forward to the 2013 Synod Assembly when the next Bishop election will take place.

We (Pastor Heidi Binstock, Our Saviors Lutheran Church, Sioux Falls – John Rasmussen, Sisseton – and Pastor Dwight Stensgaard, Calvary Lutheran Church, Rapid City) were appointed to be the 3-member Bishop Elections Committee.

One of the charges of our Committee is to review the ELCA's 2012 *Guidelines for Synod Bishop Elections*, which Walter May, Assistant to the Presiding Bishop, and David Swartling, ELCA Secretary, have prepared and posted on the ELCA Web site. Within the 2012 Guidelines is a directive which states: "*your governing documents must be reviewed and followed carefully to ensure a proper process that cannot be challenged*" (*ELCA 2012 Guidelines for Synod Bishop Elections, page 3*). We encourage you to read the Guidelines for Synod Bishop Elections posted on the ELCA Web site.

Over the last months, we have, as a committee and with Ruth Hamilton, ELCA Assistant to the Secretary, reviewed our Synod Bylaws. In the review, we have found the Bylaws of our Synod to be in need of amending. In our review, we have also been discussing the process of election when there is an incumbent Bishop. After careful thought and prayerful consideration, in consultation with other leaders in our synod and the ELCA, and in review of the processes of surrounding synods, we propose that we as a Synod elect our Bishop by ecclesiastical ballot at the Synod Assembly, beginning in 2013.

Therefore, we have prepared the enclosed "Resolution to amend the South Dakota Synod Bylaws for the Election of a Bishop" and "Process for nominating and electing the Bishop in the South Dakota Synod ELCA," which will be proposed at the 2012 Synod Assembly. These documents have been shared with Synod Executive Committee and will be shared with Synod Council at their March meeting. More information and time for conversation will be provided at Spring Conference Assemblies. We are asking you to review the documents because, as the ELCA *Guidelines for Synod Bishop Elections* begins, "electing a bishop is one of the most important responsibilities in the life of a synod in the ELCA and a key responsibility of the Synod Assembly" (*ELCA 2012 Guidelines for Synod Bishop Elections, page 1*).

We respectfully submit the enclosed Resolution for prayerful and careful consideration. If you would wish to speak with us about the Resolution, our contact information is enclosed.

God's Blessings,  
Bishop Elections Committee  
Pastor Dwight Stensgaard, Chair  
Pastor Heidi Binstock  
John Rasmussen

# Process for nominating and electing the Bishop

## February 15, 2012

### **PROCESS OF POTENTIAL NOMINEES LEADING TO THE ELECTION OF A BISHOP**

1. An incumbent bishop shall announce to the Synod Council whether he or she is willing to serve a subsequent term. Such announcement shall take place no later than the Synod Council meeting in November prior to the Synod Assembly during which a bishop is to be elected.
2. The processes for identifying potential nominees for Bishop and election of a Bishop shall apply for all elections of a Bishop except where an incumbent Bishop is eligible for a second term. IN THOSE CASES, THE CONFERENCE NOMINATING PROCESS WOULD NOT BE EMPLOYED. A significant consideration in the Bishop Elections Committee was whether this change gives unfair advantage to the incumbent, making it less likely that a synod may choose different leadership if the first term has not gone well. The experience in the first 22 years of the ELCA's existence is worth noting: there have been ten instances where incumbents were not re-elected; eight of them took place where an ecclesiastical ballot was used. If an incumbent bishop is willing to serve, and the conference nominating process is dropped, an ecclesiastical ballot for the election of a bishop continues as described in the amendment to the South Dakota Synod's constitution. The incumbent bishop would need three-fourths of the registered voting members of the South Dakota Synod Assembly to be elected on the first ballot. If the incumbent bishop does not receive three-fourths of the vote on the first ballot, the full ecclesiastical ballot process will be employed, following the process to elect a bishop in the South Dakota Synod constitution.
3. When there is not an incumbent bishop who is willing to serve a subsequent term, the Synod Council shall arrange for a Synod study to be completed six months prior to the beginning of the election process. The Synod study and any strategic planning adopted by Synod Council shall be distributed to rostered members and congregations of the synod six months prior to the election, providing guidance throughout this synod as potential nominees for bishop are identified.
4. At the assembly of each conference prior to the election of a bishop, the voting members will be asked to consider a set of topics developed by Synod Council designed to clarify the vision for this synod's mission, the issues they deem important for this synod, and the gifts desirable and necessary in a bishop. The secretary of each conference shall provide minutes of this discussion to the secretary of synod for use by the Synod Council.
5. At the same conference assembly, the voting members will be asked to identify currently rostered ELCA pastors whom the voting members believe have gifts desirable in a bishop. Identified pastors do not need to be members of the conference or of the South Dakota

Synod. All ELCA pastors are encouraged to give permission to be considered in the discernment process.

6. After all voting members have had opportunity to identify potential nominees possessing gifts for the office of bishop, the voting members will, at the same assembly, engage in a process of their own determination to select up to three potential nominees, the names of whom are to be forwarded to the synod for inclusion in the Potential Nominees for the Office of Bishop.

7. The dean of each conference will contact the individuals selected by the conference to confirm their willingness to have their names included with those selected by all the conferences as possessing gifts for the office of bishop. If these individuals reaffirm their willingness to be so identified, the dean will facilitate their completion of a biographical information form developed by Synod Council. The potential nominees are to submit these completed forms to the secretary of synod within ten days of the conference assembly.

8. The secretary of synod will post the names and biographical information of the Potential Nominees for the Office of Bishop selected by the conferences on the synod website 45 days before the Synod Assembly begins. Other information also may be posted.

9. While these individuals are identified as potential nominees for the office of bishop, the South Dakota Synod will continue to use the ecclesiastical ballot in which the name of any ELCA ordained minister may be placed in nomination on the first ballot. Any person identified as a potential nominee must still be nominated on the first ballot by a voting member at the assembly.

10. The Synod Assembly will adopt Rules of Procedure for the Election of a Bishop based upon the ecclesiastical ballot as required by the South Dakota Synod Constitution.

#### ***PROPOSED RULES OF PROCEDURE FOR THE ELECTION OF A BISHOP***

1. In accordance with the South Dakota Synod Constitution, the election of a bishop shall be by ecclesiastical ballot. There shall be no spoken nominations from the floor.

2. Any ordained minister in the ELCA is eligible for nomination for bishop. A valid ballot is to contain the nominee's full name as found in the clergy roster. All registered voting members of the South Dakota Synod Assembly shall be eligible to cast a ballot.

3. Three-fourths of the votes cast on the first ballot shall be necessary for the election of a bishop.

4. If no election occurs, the first ballot is the nominating ballot. This ballot becomes the total slate of nominees.



5. Clergy who are nominated on the nominating ballot and desire that their name be retained on subsequent ballots shall submit a completed biographical form to the secretary of synod.

6. Clergy nominated on the first ballot shall have the right to withdraw their names from subsequent ballots before the casting of the second ballot. A form requesting the name to be withdrawn must be secured from the Synod Secretary and must be returned to the secretary of synod by (insert time and day).

7. On the second and all subsequent ballots, the order of listing of the nominees on the ballot shall be from the greatest number of ballots cast to the least. Ties shall be listed alphabetically. Three-fourths of the votes cast on the second ballot shall be necessary for election.

8. Following the report of the second ballot, biographical data for the seven nominees (plus ties) who receive the greatest number of ballots cast on the second ballot shall be distributed to all voting members.

9. Before the casting of the third ballot, the seven nominees (plus ties) who receive the greatest number of ballots cast on the second ballot shall be invited to the stage and be introduced by name to the members of the assembly. There shall be no applause before, during, or after each individual introduction. After time has been allotted for all voting members to read the biographical information of the seven nominees (plus ties) who receive the greatest number of ballots cast on the second ballot, these seven persons (plus ties) will be invited to address the assembly on a subject of their own choosing, with each speech limited to five minutes. If any such person is not present at the assembly, the individual, if possible, may designate an alternate to speak on her or his behalf. A time keeper shall indicate to the speaker when 30 seconds remain of the allocated time and when the allocated time has elapsed. The sequence of the speeches shall be determined by lot. There shall be no applause before, during, or after individual speeches; only after all have spoken is there to be such affirmation. There shall be ten minutes' time allotted after these speeches for voting members to engage in prayer, reflection on the speeches, and informal conversation with other voting members before the third ballot is cast.

10. Two-thirds of the vote shall be necessary for election on the third ballot.

11. Prior to the fourth ballot for synod bishop, the three persons (plus ties) who received the greatest number of votes on the third ballot will be invited to participate in a question-and-answer period. The period shall be moderated by the designated presider for the election process. The same six questions shall be asked of each of the nominees. Only one nominee shall be in the assembly room at a time. The order that the nominees shall appear on stage to answer the questions shall be determined by the draw of names. Each nominee shall have a maximum of two minutes to respond to each question. If any nominee is not present at the assembly, that individual, if possible, may designate an alternate to answer on her or his

behalf. A time keeper will indicate to the speaker when 30 seconds remain of allotted time and when the allotted time has ended. Questions to be asked shall be determined by a committee appointed by Synod Council. Any voting member of the Synod Assembly may submit questions in a sealed envelope to the secretary of synod, or the secretary's designee (list date, day, and time certain for the deadline). The time for the question-and-answer period shall be a maximum of 45 minutes. There shall be no applause before, during, or after each answer; only after the question-and answer period has come to an end is there to be such affirmation.

12. Prior to the casting of the fourth ballot, there will be time for prayer, reflection on the speeches, and informal conversation with other voting members. 60% of the votes cast shall be necessary for election on the fourth ballot.

13. On ballots after the fourth ballot, the ballots shall be limited to the two nominees (plus ties) who receive the greatest number of votes cast.

14. On all subsequent ballots a majority of the votes cast shall be necessary for election.

15. The results of each ballot shall be printed, distributed, and announced to the assembly.

**Draft 2-15-2012**

# Resolution to amend the South Dakota Synod Bylaws for the Election of a Bishop

February 15, 2012

**From: The Bishop Elections Committee**

**Whereas**, Walter May, Assistant to the Presiding Bishop, and David Swartling, ELCA Secretary, have directed the synods of the ELCA who will be holding Bishop elections in 2012 and 2103 to: “review and follow carefully all the governing documents for the election of a Bishop to ensure a proper process that cannot be challenged” (ELCA 2012 *Guidelines for Synod Bishop Elections*, page 3); and

**Whereas**, “electing a bishop is one of the most important responsibilities in the life a synod in the ELCA and a key responsibility of the Synod Assembly” (ELCA 2012 *Guidelines for Synod Bishop Elections*, page 1); and

**Whereas**, electing a bishop by ecclesiastical ballot is the norm for most ELCA synods; and

**Whereas**, election by ecclesiastical ballot allows for the possibility of a large number of ordained ministers to be considered for the call of Synod Bishop; and

**Whereas**, election by ecclesiastical ballot would be good stewardship of synod resources and nominees’ time by eliminating the need to cover the travel expenses of numerous nominees for their participation in pre-Assembly open meetings; therefore, be it

**RESOLVED**, to amend the South Dakota Synod Constitution and Bylaws with the following additions and deletions (additions are underlined; deletions are ~~struck through~~):

**S9.04. The bishop shall be elected by the Synod Assembly. The Bishop shall be a pastor who is an ordained minister of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.** The Bishop shall be elected by the Synod Assembly by ecclesiastical ballot. The process of nomination and election shall be as provided in the bylaws. Three-fourths of the legal votes cast shall be necessary for election on the first ballot. If no one is elected, the first ballot shall be considered the nominating ballot. Three fourths of the legal votes cast on the second ballot shall be necessary for election. The third ballot shall be limited to the seven persons (plus ties) who received the greatest number of legal votes on the second ballot, and two-thirds of the legal votes cast shall be necessary for election. The fourth ballot shall be limited to the three persons (plus ties) who receive the greatest number of legal votes on the third ballot, and 60 percent of the legal votes cast shall be necessary for election. On subsequent ballots a majority of the legal votes cast shall be necessary for election. These ballots shall be limited to the two persons (plus ties) who receive the greatest number of legal votes on the previous ballot.

**S9.04.01** Other election matters, such as the timing of speeches and question-and-answer sessions, shall be specified in the “Process for nominating and electing the Bishop in the South Dakota Synod ELCA” as approved by Synod Council nine (9) months prior to an assembly at which a bishop is to be elected.

**S9.04.10** The process of the nomination and election of the Synod Bishop shall be supervised by the Bishop Elections Committee, which shall consist of three persons appointed by the Synod Council. The Bishop Elections Committee shall have final authority for all matters pertaining to the election.

**S9.04.11.** The Synod Council shall arrange for a synod study to be completed six months prior to the beginning of the bishop election process. The synod study shall focus upon the ministry of the synod, the role and responsibilities of the office of the bishop, and the needs and opportunities facing the synod. The study results shall be distributed to synod leadership and congregations as candidates for the position of bishop are considered and nominated.

**S9.04.12.** Each congregation of this synod, no later than 120 days prior to the Synod Assembly, through its congregation council, may submit to the Conference Secretary the names of not more than three members of the ELCA clergy roster as congregational nominees to be included on the conference nominating ballot. Only names submitted by congregations may appear on the conference nominating ballot.

**S9.04.13.** The Conference Council, as constituted by each conference, meeting no sooner than 115 days nor later than 100 days prior to the Assembly, by majority, shall elect no more than seven persons from the conference nominating ballot and forward their names to the Synod Secretary. In the event that a Conference Council receives fewer than seven congregational nominees, all names shall be forwarded to the Synod Secretary.

**S9.04.14.** The Synod Secretary shall:

- a.—Ascertain the willingness of all persons named by the conference councils to serve in the office of Synod Bishop if nominated and elected, obtain biographical information from such persons and prepare the synod nominating ballot including all the names of those who respond affirmatively; and
- b.—distribute the synod nominating ballot and biographical information of the nominees to all pastors, congregational presidents, Conference Chairs and Conference Secretaries.

**S9.04.15.**

- a.—All conferences of this synod shall meet in assembly on the same day, not later than 65 days prior to the Synod Assembly, and each shall elect five persons, by majority vote, from the synod nominating ballot. These names shall be forwarded to the Synod Secretary.
- b.—The Conference Executive Committee shall devise a process to insure the biographical information on all candidates is available to all delegates at the Conference Assembly.
- c.—All names, except those receiving a majority, shall remain on the ballot for all votes until a full slate is elected.

**S9.04.16.** The five persons named by the greatest number of conferences shall be the nominees for Synod Bishop. If there are persons tied for the fifth position on the ballot, all shall appear if the resulting ballot has no more than seven names, or the Synod Nominating Committee shall break the tie to arrive at a ballot containing seven names.

**S9.04.17.** The Synod Secretary and the Synod Nominating Committee shall release the identity and number of conferences nominating any person nominated.

**S9.04.18.** The names of the nominees and biographical information about the candidates shall be distributed immediately to all pastors and congregational presidents, and shall be placed on the Synod Assembly ballot. There shall be no further nominations.

**S9.04.19.** Area open meetings shall be held in this synod at least 20 days prior to the Assembly where members of the synod congregations may meet the candidates. Expenses of the candidates shall be paid by this synod.

**S9.04.20.** No later than the first day of the Assembly the Synod Secretary shall provide biographical material on each candidate. The Assembly Agenda shall provide time for the candidates to address the assembly and answer questions prior to the first ballot.

**S9.04.21.** If no one receives a majority of the votes cast on the first ballot, the slate of candidates shall be reduced to the three (plus ties) who received the highest number of votes.

**S9.04.22.** If no one receives a majority of the votes cast on the second ballot, the slate of candidates on the third ballot shall be reduced to the two (plus ties) who received the highest number of votes. The candidates shall address the Synod Assembly before the third ballot vote is taken.

**S9.04.23.** A simple majority shall elect on the subsequent ballots.

Date: March 8, 2012

To: South Dakota Conferences

From: Bishop Elections Committee

Subject: *The following observations* from the Bishop Elections Committee in regard to the ‘resolution to amend the South Dakota Synod Bylaws for the Election of a Bishop’ are respectfully shared: to be used by the South Dakota Synod Conferences, for discussion in regard to the presentation of the following resolution which will be presented and voted on at the Synod Assembly this June, 2012.

## **Resolution to amend the South Dakota Synod Bylaws for the Election of a Bishop**

### **Discussion/Talking Sheet**

#### **Bishop Elections Committee Rationale for Bylaw Amendment:**

Observation: The church believes the election of a bishop is a call process; just as a congregation carefully considers the call of a pastor, so does a synod in calling its pastor/bishop. The proposed amendment to elect a bishop by ‘ecclesiastical ballot’ with the ‘Process for nominating and electing the Bishop’, in the estimation of the Bishop Elections Committee views the proposed process of election of a bishop to be more in keeping with a call process.

Observation: One of the strengths of our present election process in the South Dakota Synod is the nominating process of identifying potential bishop candidates by congregations and conferences and nominating them before the election at the Assembly. This process affords interested members of the Synod to become familiar with the persons nominated for the position of bishop through Conference gatherings where a limited number of bishop nominees speak and enter into question and answer time. In reflection, this process seems to focus more on candidacy and less on call. The present process seems to focus more on campaigning and less on interview and dialogue.

Observation: The recommendation to move to an ‘ecclesiastical ballot’ with the accompanying ‘Process for nominating and electing the Bishop’, in the estimation of the Bishop Elections Committee, is more in keeping with the call process based on interview and dialogue, along with a space for any clergy name to be written in at the Assembly when a bishop is elected.

Observation: Our present process for the election of a bishop does not take into consideration elections when an incumbent bishop is willing to serve a second term. Therefore, when we have an incumbent bishop willing to serve, in our present process it seems to be even more of an election process, rather than a call process. In reflection, the Bishop Elections Committee believes that in the case of a sitting bishop, the Conference Nominating Process should not be employed so that we may consider affirming a continuing call to this pastoral office of bishop.

Observation: Unlike secular politics with a wide-open election every time, a consideration of affirmation of call allows for review and renewal of a call that has already been embraced. Other ministries such as campus ministry, global missionaries and parish pastors employ review and affirmation as the focus for the continuance of call. Again, the proposed amendment to elect a bishop by ‘ecclesiastical ballot’ with the ‘Process for nominating and electing the Bishop’ in the estimation of the Bishop Elections Committee views the proposed process of election of a bishop to be more in keeping with a call process. The Bishop Elections Committee respectfully and with great respect and careful thought believes the proposed amendment and process is in keeping with the church’s belief in a call process.

Observation: The Conference Nominating Process, in our present and proposed amendment, allows for conversations about the vision for mission and ministry of the synod. The proposed amendment allows for this process to happen 6 months prior to the election of a bishop and continues throughout the Assembly when a bishop is elected. The Bishop Elections Committee does not believe we compromise any of the strengths of our present election process in moving to the 'ecclesiastical ballot' with the 'Process for nominating and electing the Bishop'.

Observation: The Bishop Elections Committee respectfully proposes the Resolution to amend the South Dakota Synod Bylaws for the Election of a Bishop to afford us an informed alternative to the present process of election, in which we believe does not compromise any of the strengths in our present process. We believe the amendment only enhances the process of electing a bishop and is faithful when an incumbent bishop is willing to serve a second term.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Bishop Elections Committee (Pastor Dwight Stensgaard, Pastor Heidi Binstock, John Rasmussen)

### **Congregational Life Minutes**

Those Present: Suzanne Hanson, Duane Abata, Carla Borchardt, Michael Miller and Verdelle Anderson.

**Synod Assembly** – Suzanne reported that last year there were about 20 youth attending and were voting members from their congregations. The youth attended an orientation and there were other activities for them to attend. This year we need to encourage all churches to consider sending a youth who is confirmed, to be an additional voting member from their church. The youth this year will stay with members from their congregation. Great way for these youth to learn the operations of their church.

**Peer Ministry** – Suzanne has been working on this. This is youth leader's training which involves use of journal and binder, cost of \$65 to those attending. Encourage pastors to form groups of 10 or more adults to attend training for full Friday and Saturday. Suzanne will instruct this group with cost of mileage only.

**Facebook** – Youth Ministry Network. Youth group leaders meet monthly on youth group network. Much planning is being completed for the coming Youth Gathering in New Orleans. South Dakota will again have the largest group of youth attending. Bishop Dave Zellmer will be leading the opening worship service on Thursday.

Verdelle Anderson, Chairman

### **Mission Board for Leadership Minutes**

A meeting was held with NALC (North American Lutheran Church) and it did not go well. They would like to join Lutheran World Federation. In order to join, they have to be in Full Communion with the members. They do not want anything to do with the ELCA. They swiped parts of the ELCA Constitution when they prepared their constitution. NALC and LCMC are actively recruiting in Ohio, Southwestern MN, Eastern ND, and in South Dakota.

There may be changes in health benefits with Portico. It is up in the air. These changes could affect congregations and pastors. They may include pastors paying for the health insurance and the congregations reimburse. The pastors could then possibly pay tax on it.

There will be Sexual Boundaries workshops in which roistered leaders must attend. Tom mentioned talking with Southwestern Minnesota to find out how they do it. How many should we have? They should be offered every year. It was mentioned to assign this to Susan Monrone. The workshops will be at the Fall conference pastors meetings. The Bishop would like to go and offer office boundaries for retired pastors. Attendance will be taken.

Linda O. Norman, Churchwide treasurer, will be at Synod Assembly as the Churchwide representative. It was mentioned that the Bishop and Gary step back and let Linda run the Assembly when it is time to discuss the Bishop election process and bylaw changes.

Jim Schade reported that there is nearly \$200,000 in seminary scholarship funds. We need to review how we do scholarships.

Holly Paulson, Recorder