

**South Dakota Synod, ELCA
Synod Council
Minutes
Augustana College, Sioux Falls, SD
10/12/12**

I. Call to order: Gary Steuck called the meeting to order.

II. Roll Call:

Members present: Bishop Dave Zellmer, Gary Steuck, Erik Gilbertson, Pr. Siri Sorenson, Gwen Bobbie, Lowell Moeller, Verdelle Anderson, Peggy Namanny, Lorne Tilberg, Holly Paulson, Pr. Carlene Rhody, Michael Miller, Pr. Kevin Jensen, Pr. Jan FitzGibbon, Steve Koenig, Pr. Tom Opoien, Pr. Holly Slater, LuAnn Denke, Pr. Deb Grismer, Alex Jensen, Lindsay Boehmer

Members absent: Carla Borchardt, Christy Kimball, Teri Gayer, Scott Lien, Duane Abata, Travis Gerlach, Kayla Koterwski

Staff present: Bill Tesch, Lois Borchardt, Cathy Larson, Suzanne Hanson

III. Approve Agenda

MSC to approve the agenda.

SC.12.10.01

IV. Secretary's Report

MSC to approve the minutes of the July 10, 2012 and August 17, 2012 meetings.

SC.12.10.02

V. Reports

- a. Treasurer's Report Erik Gilbertson presented the Treasurer's Report.
- i. Letters from Erik Gilbertson and Pastor Bill Tesch were sent to congregations with the quarterly giving statements to update them on where the Synod was financially.
 - ii. YTD giving is down about \$17,000 - \$18,000.
 - iii. Spending has been scaled back in proportion to income.

MSC to receive the Treasurer's Report.

SC.12.10.03

b. Ministry Partner Reports

- i. Lutheran Social Services report presented by Betty Oldenkamp (see handouts)
- ii. Augustana College report presented by Rob Oliver
- iii. Lutherans Outdoors report presented by Gene Olson (see handout)
- iv. Flandreau Indian School report presented by Pastor Bill Britton (see handout)
- v. Heartland Ephphatha report presented by Jason Andera
- vi. Lutheran Campus Ministry report presented by Pastor Randy Koeller
- vii. Pine Ridge Retreat Center report presented by Intern Meredith Harber
- viii. Luther House of Study report presented by Dr. Chris Croghan and Sarah Stenson

- ix. Woyatan report presented by Pastor David Piper
- x. Luther Seminary report presented by Pastor Rich Omland (see handout)

All thanked the Synod Council for the support of the Synod. Each also provided highlights of their ministry in the last year including challenges confronting them. Each also provided future hopes, plans, or ministry strategies.

- c. Associate to the Bishop Pastor Bill Tesch presented his report.
 - i. Gave an update on the 5 new faith communities in Development and noted that the Synod has 22 congregations in an intentional renewal process.
 - ii. Noted that it is a challenge to encourage Mission support with the trends being toward more localized and designated giving.
 - iii. Asked Council members to make visits to designated congregations and will provide training for those that need that.
 - iv. Picking up some of Susan Marone's work while she is on sabbatical and looking forward to his hiatus next year.

VI. Lunch The council broke for lunch

VII. Committee Meetings

- a. Each committee reviewed the first draft of the Strategic Plan
- b. Each committee also discussed other business.

VIII. Congregational Matters

- a. Members of St. James, Leola arrive and the agenda was adjusted to accommodate their item of business.
 - i. St James president, Troy Grabowska, and council members Donny Hoffman and Kay Lapka requested that the Synod Council release them with their property from the ELCA roster of congregation to become an independent congregation with a vote scheduled to do this on October 14, 2012. They plan to be independent for 15 months at which time (January 2014) they will decide whether to be ELCA or join another Lutheran denomination. They are asking to do this to alleviate on-going conflict in the congregation.
 - ii. They intend to file paperwork with the SD Secretary of State to obtain their own 501(c)3 status.
 - iii. The delegation answered questions from the Synod Council and the Bishop explained the property and IRS issues involved in this request.
 - iv. The following motion was made:

MS The SD Synod Council authorizes the SD Synod Bishop to release St. James Lutheran Church of Leola, SD from the ELCA roster of congregations with their property on the day before filing independent 501c3 application with the Secretary of State of the State of SD and upon presentation of a copy of said application with the SD Synod Bishop and the IRS.

MSC to amend the motion by adding: provided all the necessary paperwork is completed by March 12, 2013.

SC.12.10.04

MSC the following amended motion:

The SD Synod Council authorizes the SD Synod Bishop to release St. James Lutheran Church of Leola, SD from the ELCA roster of congregations with their property on the day before filing independent 501c3 application with the Secretary of State of the State of SD and upon presentation of a copy of said application with the SD Synod Bishop and the IRS provided all the necessary paperwork is completed by March 12, 2013.

SC.12.10.05

- v. The members of St. James thanked the Bishop and the Synod Council.
- IX. The Council returned to committee matters and received responses to the Strategic Plan draft
- a. Congregational Life reported that the Synod should seek to build networks for the sharing of ideas, resources, etc. Time could be spent at conference gatherings or Synod Assembly to gather networks of people together.
 - b. Leadership reported : instead of saying *churches* use *mission partner* or *faith community* Change family farm from “disappearing” to “changing” Define “In vs. out.” Move the paragraph on age so that it follows the paragraph on rural. Change “Indian” to “Native American”
 - c. Outreach reported: A possible addition to the action plan is committing to identifying and entering into relationships with the physically hungry in our communities. Under enabling assets the plan could include engagement with youth, sources of tradition, using models that lots of congregations already have. There are some great models but we need to know about them -- develop networking. Our new call pastors have a lot of diversity – with that could be greater reflection in the leadership of the synod. Build endowment.
- X. The council returned to congregational matters
- a. Rejoice, Sioux Falls. With it not continuing the MIF will hold 5 acres and sell 15.
 - b. Our Savior’s, Henry has closed. The property reverted to the Synod. The church building is being insured for liability by the Synod. A family is interested in purchasing it.
- XI. Bishop’s report
- a. The Bishop reported on the Conference of Bishops meeting. He noted the following items:
 - i. There are four new bishops. In 2013 26 synods will hold bishop elections. 10 of these will for sure result in the election of new bishops.
 - ii. The Churchwide organization was going to propose a centralizing finances and authority but Bishops and Vice Presidents rejected this proposal which would have eliminated percentage giving by Synods to Churchwide. It will not go to the Churchwide Church Council in November.
 - iii. Churchwide is planning to have a 50 million dollar capital campaign in conjunction with the 25th Anniversary of the ELCA. Synod staff and development people would help implement the campaign.
 - iv. The Social Statement Task Force on which Bishop Zellmer serves has two recommendations that will move forward. At the start of the social statement process, a small task force would determine how the church ought to respond to the issue at hand – social statement, social message, or message from the Office of the Presiding Bishop. The second recommendation is that with the

- Churchwide Assembly being held every three years, there is time for draft and response. 40% of those responding would have to be in favor of a social statement process continuing for it to move forward.
- v. Seminary education is changing. The tradition path will continue, but the church and seminaries are exploring additional ways for students to receive their education including partnering with the colleges of the church.
 - vi. Candidacy is also undergoing a review with a suggestion that it be centralized. This idea was not well received by the Bishops.
 - vii. The wellness health plan of the ELCA is working. Pastors have gone from being some of the sickest people in the United States to some of the most healthy. This is reflected in that health insurance costs are only going up 2% rather than 8% in 2013.
 - viii. Mark Hanson will stand for re-election as Churchwide Bishop; David Swartling will not stand for re-election as Churchwide Secretary.
- b. The Bishop also reported on Synod matters.
- i. He thanked the staff for their excellent work. He was glad that Erik Gilbertson moved back to Sioux Falls.
 - ii. SD is leading the Church in new mission starts and redevelopments/renewals.
 - iii. There have been 54 ordinations since he became Bishop. 16 pastors have come from outside the Synod and there will be 12 ordinations this year.
 - iv. There have been more retirements as the economy has improved.
 - v. The bishop is working on leadership development and retention by working to keep young people in the Synod by having adequate 2nd and 3rd calls for young people. The Synod gave 5 grants to pastors serving in small congregations for sabbaticals. The Bishop is continuing debt reduction for seminarians. The Synod gave away \$38,000 for debt reduction this year. The Bishop would like that to be \$100,000 per year. They have expectancies of 1.1 million. The Bishop is also working on developing a Senior pastor school in conversation with the North Dakota Synods and several Minnesota Synods along with businesses.
 - vi. The Bishop continues to gather executive staff from LSS, LO, the Synod, and Augustana College to talk about how our culture and world are changing and how we need to adapt to these changes.
- c. The Bishop reported on personal matters.
- i. The Bishop's new grandchild is doing well. His father is doing better physically, but is diminishing mentally.
 - ii. The Bishop will be going to Leipzig, Germany to St. Thomas Church for the 800th Anniversary. It's also a trip to discover the feasibility of taking a group of pastors to Germany for the 500th Luther Anniversary in 2014.
 - iii. Bishop Zellmer will go to Washington, D.C. in December to work on the Farm Bill.
 - iv. He will provide the invocation for T. Denny Sanford's birthday party at the new Field House in Sioux Falls.
 - v. The Bishop has written an article for *Word and World*, a publication of Luther Seminary, for the Winter issue. It will be about rural families and is entitled, *80,000 Seeds*.

XII. Roster Matters

- a. **MSC to grant Art Weitschat retired roster status as of 12/1/2012.**
SC.12.10.06
- b. Kathleen Soldwisch Information item: She has moved to NW Minnesota Synod

- c. Vicki Saude-Worthington Information item: She has moved to SW Minnesota Synod
- d. **MSC to grant Mary Hendricks Wilkens on-leave from call roster status.**
SC.12.10.07
- e. **MSC to grant Dennis Hanson retired roster status.**
SC.12.10.08
- f. **MSC to grant Karen Soli retired roster status.**
SC.12.10.09
- g. Anna Madsen is the Director of OMG: Center for Theological Conversation. OMG is a ministry connected to the South Dakota Synod which provides theological, spiritual, and pastoral discernment for synod and ecumenical leaders and institutions, including the South Dakota Ministerium. Since 2010, OMG has offered theological education to clergy and laity and to individuals, congregations, and groups, by way of in-person and Skyped conversations. Anna's theological training, service as a pastor, time as a professor of religion, and personal encounter with tragedy and the tumult that ensues, extends a breadth of professional gifts to those who have religious questions born out of their own curiosity and experience. Still invited to preach and preside at worship services, Anna's ordination continues to serve the Church both as a pastor and as a theologian.
MSC to issue a non-stipendiary synodical letter of call to Rev. Dr. Anna Madsen to serve as Director for OMG: Center for Theological Conversation.
SC.12.10.10
- h. **MSC to extend an Ecumenical Call to Daryl Schubert to serve as interim pastor in charge of Episcopal Rosebud Mission.**
SC.12.10.11
The Episcopal Diocese will extend a contract. This call is given under the Constitution and By-laws 8.72.11.c regarding a full communion relationship call.

XIII. New Business

- a. Bishop Zellmer and Pastor Bill Tesch asked for a reconsideration of the designation for the 2013 Synod Assembly Offering. It had been intended to ask the Council at its prior meeting to designate Pueblo de Dios as a recipient for that offering.
- b. **MSC that the first \$8,000 of the 2013 Synod Assembly offering go to Pueblo de Dios and that the remainder of the offering be divided equally between The Cameroon Roof Project and Feeding South Dakota.**
SC.12.10.12

XIV. Other Business

- a. Church Council Nominees (2 lay men) for possible election by the 2013 Churchwide Assembly. The Bishop followed up with those suggested by the Council at its prior meeting. The following people would be willing to serve:
 - i. Alex Jensen – member of 1st Lutheran in Sioux Falls, a youth leader, attending Luther House of Study, banker
 - ii. Reid Christopherson – Lt. Col with air guard, chair of St. Dymas outside council,
 - iii. Bob Scott – retired from ethanol business, partners against hunger, chair of Lutherans Outdoors Board of Director.
- b. Gary Steuck asked each council member to write the names of the two he/she would like to send forward for nomination on piece of paper and turn in to him. Only one of those nominated will be elected to serve on the Churchwide Church Council. After receiving

the ballots from the Synod Council members the chair announced the Reid Christopherson and Bob Scott were nominated for the Churchwide ballot.
MSC to nominate Reid Christopherson and Bob Scott for the ELCA Church Council.
SC.12.10.13

- XV. Upcoming Meetings and Events
- a. The Council was reminded of upcoming meetings.
 - b. There will be five *Chili with the Bishop* events. The Bishop noted that these events will likely include workshops for various types of church leaders. They will be held in public venues and public leaders will speak about what they see going on in the various communities.
- XVI. Holly Paulson shared a closing devotion based on Hebrews 11.
- XVII. Adjournment Vice-President Gary Steuck adjourned the meeting.

Respectfully submitted,
Siri Beckmen Sorenson
Secretary pro-tem

Leadership Minutes

We discussed the Synod Strategy. Here are some suggested changes: Replace congregations with faith communities. Make the second paragraphs into two paragraphs. Instead of saying “the typical family farm is disappearing” say, “The family farm is changing.” What is meant by “in vs out mentality”? Are we fostering that mentality? Move the age paragraph to between the paragraph starting with the rural communities and the paragraph starting with increasing diversity. In the fifth paragraph replace American Indian with Native American. We need to work with ecumenical partners. Under feel all whose bodies lack nourishment, add physically hungry.

Holly Paulson, Recorder