



Grand Canyon Synod

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Synod Council Meeting Minutes

Via Zoom Video Conference

Saturday, November 21, 2020

9:00 am

Attendance

Synod Council members present: Bishop Deborah Hutterer; Vice President Mr. Paul Gryniewicz; Treasurer Mr. Erik Rehms; Secretary Rev. David Brandfass; Mr. Glenn Austad; Mr. Roger Bailey; Ms. Twila Burdick; Ms. Barbara Carl; Ms. Nancy Davis; Ms. Sue Jensen; Ms. Hannah Manzanares; Ms. Laura Musfeldt; Rev. Doris Nolan; Ms. Lisa Parrish; Ms. Janis Richert;

Synod Council members Absent: Ms. Beatrice Lopez; Rev. Tina Mills; Rev. Daniel Valasakos.

Synod Council Resignation: Mr. Jan Loomis; At-Large Representative, has resigned from the Synod Council after moving to Colorado.

Synod Staff present: Mr. Brian Flatgard, Director of Communications; The Rev. Miguel Gomez-Acosta, Director for Evangelical Mission and Bishop's Associate for Congregational Vitality; The Rev. Jacqueline Pagel, Associate to the Bishop for Candidacy and Faith Formation; Ms. Theresa Thornburgh, Director for Administration and Events.

Visitors: Ms. Victoria Flood, Director for Mission Support, Evangelical Lutheran Church in America; Ms. Myrna Wells-Ulland, President, Grand Canyon Synod Women of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, and the Rev. Karn Carroll, ELCA Church Council member.

Call to Order

With a quorum present Mr. Paul Gryniewicz called the meeting to order at 9:01 A.M.

Devotions

Ms. Victoria Flood led a time of Dwelling in the Word based on Matthew 5:42-48 and provided prayer.

Adoption of the Agenda

Mr. Paul Gryniewicz moved

MSP SC20.11.01 to adopt the agenda as presented.

Adoption of Minutes

Mr. Paul Gryniewicz moved

MSP SC20.11.02 to adopt the September 19, 2020 minutes of the Grand Canyon Synod Council.

Consent Agenda Items

Ms. Sue Jensen moved

MSP SC20.11.03 to accept the Consent Agenda Items: Bishop Report; Director of Evangelical Mission / Bishop's Associate for Congregational Vitality Report; Bishop's Associate for Candidacy and Faith Formation Report; Bishop's Associate for Mobility and Leadership Report; Report of the Vice President; Director of Administration and Events Report; Director of Communication Report; Lutheran Advocacy Ministry Arizona Report; 3E (Educate, Equip, Enact) Lilly Report; Grand Canyon Synod Women of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (WELCA) Report, as presented.

Roster Changes

Rev. David Brandfass moved

MSP SC20.11.04 to extend the on-leave-from-call status of the Rev. Carol R. Breimeier and the Rev. Fred J. Nelson both effective November 1, 2020.

Congregations in Transition

The report on Congregations in Transition was reviewed with ten congregations served by a full-time interim pastor, and seven congregations served by part-time interim pastors.

Strategic Discussion and Action

Mission Spending Plan

Two synod wide online meetings were held to present and discuss the Mission Spending Plan for 2021-2022 which will be acted on at the upcoming Synod Assembly. Much of the discussion was around “Other Mission Support” which is a line item that financially supports ministries such as campus ministry, and social services. The meetings turned out to be time well spent, and it was a good opportunity to allow the input and discussion prior to the assembly where the passing of the Mission Spending Plan can feel rushed.

Grand Canyon & Rocky Mountain Synod Transition Possibility

Bishop Deborah Hutterer shared that the Rev. Mark Holman, Bishop’s Associate for Mobility and Leadership, will be leaving at the end of December. Since we are growing partnerships within the synods in Region 2 it is proposed that the mission of the Grand Canyon and Rocky Mountain Synods may be enhanced by sharing of a position in the areas of congregation transition, mobility, and interim ministries. This is a good example of being church together.

Treasurer’s Report

Mr. Erik Rehms reviewed the Treasurer’s Report as presented in the Synod Council Agenda Packet.

Mr. Paul Gryniewicz moved

MSP SC20.11.06 to approve the Treasurer’s Report as of September 30, 2020 with a decrease in total assets of \$94,714 and a net income with a loss of \$101,323 which is \$63,715 better than budgeted.

Recess

Mr. Paul Gryniewicz declared the meeting to be in recess at 10:15 a.m.

Mr. Paul Gryniewicz called the meeting back to order at 10:25 a.m.

Information

Churchwide Mission Support

Ms. Victoria Flood, Director for Mission Support, Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, recognized Region 2 synods for their commitment to working together. The Grand Canyon Synod (GCS) was affirmed for the synod’s stewardship section on our GCS website. The churchwide ministry is grateful for the mission support received from the GCS synod and congregations which is rooted in our relationships and faith. A good place to be inspired about mission support is <https://elca.org/sofia> .

Future Church

The Rev. Karn Carroll, ELCA Church Council, member and pastor at Our Saviour's Lutheran Church, Phoenix, Arizona, provided the Synod Council with an update on the churchwide organization's "Future Church" initiative. A Future Design Team has been convened by the Presiding Bishop which has narrowed their focus to three priorities for the ELCA:

1. **A welcoming church:** Engaging new, young, and diverse people.
2. **A thriving church:** Rooted in tradition *and* radically relevant.
3. **A connected sustainable church:** Raising the bar together.

From discussion around these three priorities a vision arose for "a world experiencing the difference God's grace and love in Christ makes for all people and creation" with the purpose of activating "each of us so more people know the way of Jesus and discover community, justice, and love."

Three churchwide teams will be formed to lead the priorities, vision, and purpose. Those teams are (1) the Innovation Team, (2) the Christian Community and Leadership Team, and (3) the Service and Justice Team. The focus moving forward will be collaboration at all levels and expressions of the ELCA.

Voting Members to the 2022 Churchwide Assembly

Bishop Deborah Hutterer shared that we have been allocated eleven voting members to the 2022 Churchwide Assembly. We will be gathering nominations during the early months of 2021.

Synod Update

Bishop Deborah Hutterer shared that our synod goals for 2021 will include continuing to develop our ministries around our strategic plan; focusing on engaging in the Future Church initiatives; the GCS Campaign fund; looking at our collaborative ministries to be church together and better together for the sake of the world; improving our inclusion, diversity, and equity at all levels of our training and ministries; and finally, growing young.

The Rev. Jacqueline Pagel shared more on the growing young initiative and how we can change the dynamics of our ministry communities to grow young despite the age demographics of any ministry.

Bishop Deborah Hutterer shared that it is the policy of the GCS that when a worship leader for a ministry site doing in-person worship tests positive for

COVID-19, that ministry site needs to step back from in-person worship for a minimum of two weeks.

Prayers were encouraged for Desert Streams Lutheran Church, Waddell, AZ which is a mission church congregation that will be closing.

Resignations

Mr. Paul Grynowicz reported that Mr. Jan Loomis had moved to Colorado and therefore resigned from the Grand Canyon Synod Council. Mr. Wesley Hewitt has resigned from the Committee on Discipline.

Nominating Committee

The following were appointed to serve as the Nominating Committee: Mr. Roger Bailey (chair), Mr. Glenn Austad, and the Rev. Tina Mills.

Breakout Groups

The Synod Council, Synod Staff, and visitors participated in small break out groups to discuss what excites us about what we have heard today, what questions do you have, and what is one concrete step the synod council can take to support the work of the GCS in 2021.

The action steps that were shared included:

- Bolstering our pastors because of all the new things they are being asked to do.
- Support our lay people as they experience church differently than it has always been.
- Provide ways to help people feel that they are not alone.
- Encourage more ways for collaboration between all expressions of the church.
- Have a working session on Future Church.

New Business

Housing Allowances

The Rev. David Brandfass moved

MSP SC20.11.08 that the Grand Canyon Synod Council approve the clergy housing allowance for the Rev. Deborah Hutterer at \$30,000 and the Rev. Jacqueline Pagel at \$40,000 for calendar year 2021.

GCS Gift Policy and Endowment Structure

Ms. Barbara Carl gave an update on the gift acceptance and endowment policies. The final policies are being drafted and will be up for approval at our January 2021 synod council meeting.

Synod Assembly Online

Discussion was held on having our June assembly online due to the continuing pandemic.

Mr. Paul Gryniewicz moved

MSP SC20.11.09 to hold the 2021 Grand Canyon Synod Assembly in an online format.

Adjournment and Closing Prayer

Bishop Deborah Hutterer led the closing prayer and the meeting adjourned at 12:01 p.m.

Next Meeting

Saturday, January 16, 2021, 9:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. via Zoom.

Respectfully submitted,
Rev. David Brandfass, Secretary