



# Grand Canyon Synod

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## Synod Council Meeting Minutes

Via Zoom Video Conference

Saturday, March 20, 2021

9:00 am

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### Attendance

**Synod Council members present:** Rev. Deborah Hutterer, synod bishop; Mr. Paul Gryniewicz, vice president; Mr. Erik Rehms, treasurer; Rev. David Brandfass, secretary; Mr. Glenn Austad; Mr. Roger Bailey; Ms. Twila Burdick; Ms. Nancy Davis; Ms. Sue Jensen; Ms. Laura Musfeldt; Ms. Lisa Parrish; Ms. Janis Richert; Rev. Daniel Valasakos.

**Synod Council members Absent:** Ms. Barbara Carl; Ms. Beatrice Lopez; Ms. Hannah Manzanares; Rev. Tina Mills.

**Synod Staff present:** Mr. Brian Flatgard, director of communications; Rev Miguel Gomez-Acosta, director for evangelical mission and bishop's associate for congregational vitality; Rev. Jacqueline Pagel, associate to the bishop for candidacy and faith formation; Ms. Theresa Thornburgh, director for administration and events; Rev. Doris Nolan, minister to congregations in transition.

**Visitors:** Ms. Mikka McCracken, executive director of innovation, Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA); Ms. Myrna Wells-Ulland, president, Grand Canyon Synod Women of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

### Dwelling in the Word & Future Church

Ms. Mikka McCracken, executive director of innovation, ELCA led the Dwelling in the Word on John 3:14-20 and the opening prayer. We think of ourselves as the Swiffer's of the world, but we are really the dust, and to dust we shall return, and God loves the dust.

Ms. McCracken led a conversation on Future Church that was much appreciated by the Synod Council.

## Call to Order

With a quorum present Mr. Paul Grynowicz called the meeting to order at 10:00 A.M.

## Adoption of the Agenda

Ms. Laura Musfeldt moved

**MSP SC21.03.01 to adopt the agenda as presented.**

## Adoption of Minutes

Mr. Glenn Austad moved

**MSP SC21.03.02 to adopt the January 16, 2020 minutes of the Grand Canyon Synod Council.**

## Consent Agenda Items

Rev. David Brandfass moved

**MSP SC21.03.03 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; Report of the Vice President; Director of Administration and Events Report; Director of Communication Report; Lutheran Advocacy Ministry Arizona (LAMA) Report; 3E (Educate, Equip, Enact) Lilly Report; Grand Canyon Synod Women of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (WELCA) Report, and the Support Activities for Congregations Report as presented.**

## Treasurer's Report

Year End Financial Reports

Mr. Erik Rehms reviewed the financial statements with the Synod Council. The balance sheet results were very positive. The effect of specific campaigns upon synod finances was discussed. The campaign for the GCS will be taken into account when developing the upcoming mission and spending plan.

Ms. Sue Jensen moved

**MSP SC21.03.04 to accept the Treasurer's Report dated January 31, 2021 with an increase in net assets of \$282,239.**

## 2022-2023 Mission Plan

Mr. Erik Rehms presented the 2022-2023 Mission Plan which covers the period of February 1, 2022 through January 31, 2023. Operating income is forecast to be \$2,095,000 with operating estimated expenses of \$2,243,000. After other income and expenses, a loss of \$33,000 is expected, which is a significant improvement compared to previous budget cycles. It is a very positive development that we are getting closer to a balanced budget.

Rev. David Brandfass moved

**MSP SC21.03.05 to recommend the Synod Assembly adopt the 2022-2023 Mission Spending Plan with a net income loss of \$33,000.**

## Synod Calls

Rev. David Brandfass moved

**MSP SC21.03.06 to issue a Synod Call to Rev. Doris M. Nolan to serve on the synod staff as Minister to Congregations in Transition effective February 15, 2021.**

Rev. David Brandfass moved

**MSP SC21.03.07 to issue a synod call to Rev. Ronald T. Glusenkamp to serve as interim pastor at Desert Hills Lutheran Church, Green Valley, Arizona (AZ), effective June 1, 2021.**

## Congregations in Transition

The report on Congregations in Transition was referenced. This is the most congregations that we have had in transition since Bishop Deborah Hutterer has been in office.

## Strategic Discussion

Appeal Update

Ms. Myrna Wells-Ulland shared that “Growing Generosity – Planting Seeds for a New Generation” is the theme for the GCS appeal.

The three areas of focus for the appeal will be:

- 1) Raising \$150,000 to support Growing Financial Viability for congregations and leaders.
- 2) Raising \$250,000 to support Growing Future Ministries – Planting Seeds for campus and emerging ministries.

- 3) Raising \$100,000 in support of Growing Fervent Voices which would support LAMA and Lutheran Engagement and Advocacy Nevada (LEAN) with 70% designated to LAMA and 30% designated to LEAN.

## Information

Gloria Dei (ELCA) and Palo Christi (PC-USA) merger update

Gloria Dei Lutheran Church, Paradise Valley, AZ has sold their property and will be closing on it soon. They will be merging with Palo Christi Presbyterian Church (Presbyterian Church – USA).

Dry Run for Synod Assembly

Synod Council members are invited to participate in a dry-run test for the upcoming online Synod Assembly which will be held on April 13, 2021 at 5:00 pm.

Nomination Committee Update

Mr. Roger Bailey provided the Synod Council with an update on the nomination process. Bishop Deborah Hutterer requested that Synod Council members invite those they know to run for Synod Council or for Churchwide Assembly (CWA) voting members.

Update GCS staff handbook

Ms. Laura Musfeldt and Ms. Barbara Carl will provide an update on the GCS staff handbook at a future meeting.

Update on Synod Council handbook

Ms. Hannah Manzanares, Ms. Laura Musfeldt and Lisa Parrish have received an example of a synod handbook and will make modifications to it for use in the GCS and will have it available at a future meeting.

Mission Support thank-you

Members of the Synod Council were encouraged by letters of thanksgiving for the support provided to various ministries and ELCA synods in Texas.

Synod office lease renewal

Mr. Jerry Zaddack and Ms. Laura Musfeldt are working on renewing the lease for the office space that the GCS currently occupies. It is felt that we have an excellent location and space arrangement. The leasing company is suggesting a five-year commitment, but Mr. Zaddack will be proposing a three-year lease agreement with the lease guarantor to be moved from the bishop to the GCS.

### **Recess**

Mr. Paul Gryniewicz declared the meeting to be in recess at 11:02 a.m.

Mr. Paul Gryniewicz called the meeting back to order at 11:10 a.m.

### **Break Out Groups**

The Synod Council went into Zoom break out rooms to discuss the following questions: What does “the way of Jesus” mean to you? To your congregation? What Scripture passages would support an understanding of “the way of Jesus”? • What attitudes and actions would have to change for you and your congregation to live “the way of Jesus”? • Do you think those changes would help revitalize your faith and your congregation’s life? After the breakout group time ended each group shared their observations.

### **New Business**

Constitution Approvals

Rev. David Brandfass moved

**MSP SC21.03.08 to approve the constitutions of Our Saviour’s Lutheran Church, Phoenix, AZ; Living Water Lutheran Church, Scottsdale, AZ; Esperanza Lutheran Church, Phoenix, AZ; Mount Olive Lutheran Church, Lake Havasu, AZ as reviewed by Mr. Bryan Daum.**

Housing Allowance

Mr. Glenn Austad moved

**MSP SC21.03.09 that the Grand Canyon Synod Council approve the clergy housing allowance for Rev. Doris M. Nolan at \$1,500 per month for the remainder of 2021.**

### Feed Back & Evaluation

What was appreciated	Needs improvement	Future Topics
Presentation by Ms. Mikka McCracken (7x)	More time on financials	Faith growth among leaders
Financial Reports		Growing Young (3x)
Campaign Update		How LGBTQ and persons of color feel in the candidacy process.
Thankful for Mr. Brian Daum's continued service in reviewing church constitutions		Updates on GCS supported services and mission
		Training the trainers
		Catching up with other churches
		Evangelism in the digital age.
		Presentation of Navajo culture at Fall Gathering.
		Climate Change
		Leadership Burnout
		Bringing the light of the synod to congregations.

### Adjournment and Closing Prayer

Bishop Deborah Hutterer led a closing prayer of thanksgiving and the meeting adjourned at 12:03 p.m.

### Next Meeting

Saturday, May 15, 2021, 9:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. via Zoom.

Respectfully submitted,

Secretary David Brandfass