



Dear Reader, These synod council minutes have been provisionally approved through review by synod council members and synod staff. They will be officially approved at our October 2021 meeting.

Synod Council Meeting Minutes

Via Zoom Video Conference
Saturday, August 14, 2021
9:00 am

Attendance

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

Synod Council members absent: Ms. Nancy Davis.

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.

Visitors: Synod Council members whose terms begin September 1, 2021: Ms. Heather Burgett; Rev. Mary Louise Frenchman; Rev. Christopher Heller; Mr. Mark Myers; Ms. Janet Santiago; Rev. William Timm; Ms. Taylor Welch. Other visitors: Ms. Myrna Wells-Ulland, president, Grand Canyon Synod Women of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

Getting Acquainted / Community Building

Prior to the meeting, there was a time to get to know one another and team building. Discussion was held in breakout rooms. Bishop Deborah Hutterer offered an opening prayer.

39 **Call to Order**

40 With a quorum present, Mr. Paul Gryniewicz called the meeting to order at
41 10:01 A.M.

43
44 **Adoption of Minutes**

45 Rev. David Brandfass moved
46 **MSP SC21.08.01 to adopt the May 15, 2021, minutes of the Grand**
47 **Canyon Synod Council.**

48
49 Ms. Hannah Manzanares moved
50 **MSP SC21.08.02 to adopt the 2021 minutes of the Grand Canyon**
51 **Synod Assembly.**

52
53
54 **Consent Agenda Items**

55 Mr. Glenn Austad moved
56 **MSP SC21.08.03 to accept the Consent Agenda Items: Bishop Report;**
57 **Director of Evangelical Mission / Bishop's Associate for**
58 **Congregational Vitality Report; Bishop's Associate for Candidacy**
59 **and Faith Formation Report; Director of Administration and Events**
60 **Report; Director of Communication Report; Lutheran Advocacy**
61 **Ministry Arizona (LAMA) Report; Grand Canyon Synod Women of**
62 **the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (WELCA) Report, and**
63 **the ELCA Foundation Regional Gift Planners Report as presented.**

64
65
66 **Treasurer's Report**

67 Mr. Erik Rehms led a review of the current financial statements. On the
68 income statement, more contributions were received from congregations and
69 from other sources. Expenses were well controlled. Significant cost savings
70 were in programming and travel. We were able to send more mission support
71 to the churchwide organization. Fund balances were also reviewed.

72
73 Mr. Roger Bailey moved
74 **MSP SC21.08.04 to accept the Treasurer's Report dated June 30, 2021,**
75 **with an increase in total assets of \$283,218.**

76
77 The Treasurer's Report is attached to these minutes as **Exhibit A.**

78
79

80

81 **Congregations in Transition**

82 Bishop Deborah Hutterer noted that we have nineteen congregations in
83 transition. We are now sharing a position with the Rocky Mountain Synod in
84 congregation transition. Two congregation coaches help with the transition
85 process in the GCS. Rev. Doris Nolan is stepping down as a congregation
86 coach and Deacon Janice Zimbelman will be under contract to fill that role.

87

88

89 **Strategic Discussion**

90 Executive Committee

91 Ms. Barbara Carl gave an overview of the work of the executive committee.
92 Currently the executive committee is meeting once a month. Since Ms.
93 Barbara Carl, executive committee at-large, will be assuming the vice-
94 president role on September 1, 2021, the executive committee requests Ms.
95 Laura Musfeldt be appointed to fill Ms. Barbara Carl's at-large position.

96

97 Ms. Janis Richert moved

98 **MSP SC21.08.05 to appoint Ms. Laura Musfeldt to the executive**
99 **committee.**

100

101 The executive committee is the personnel committee for the synod. Mr. Erik
102 Rehms reported that Mr. Clint Wasser, CPA, will be stepping down from his
103 position on synod staff at the end of the year. The synod will be seeking
104 someone to fill that position, and Mr. Wasser will assist in the transition.

105

106

107

Growing Generosity Update

108 Ms. Myrna Wells-Ulland has a new cell phone number, (218) 340-6735.
109 Please make a note of it so that you don't think it is spam when she calls you.

110

111 A financial update and report on the Growing Generosity appeal was
112 presented by Ms. Myrna Wells-Ulland. \$351,619 has been committed from
113 seventy-three donors through actual giving and pledges.

114

115 Synod council members were encouraged to approach individuals they know
116 for gifts in the \$1,000 to \$3,000 range, or more, if an individual has that
117 capacity.

118

119 Bishop Deborah Hutterer shared that our past bishops have been very
120 supportive of the appeal. In addition, Rally in the Valley, a ministry focused

121 on people in their third chapter of life, provided support from for the Growing
122 Generosity appeal.

123
124 The Ministerial Excellence Fund can be used to help rostered leaders with
125 education or medical debt. In the process, a rostered leader will also receive
126 help from an advocate. The Vital Right Shaped Ministries Fund is all about
127 congregational vitality. Moving examples of how the Ministerial Excellence
128 Fund and the Vital Right Shaped Ministries Fund have been a benefit were
129 shared with the synod council.

130
131
132 Update on the House of Prayer, Rock Point, AZ

133 While most congregations interview and elect their own pastoral leadership,
134 House of Prayer Lutheran Church at the Navajo Evangelical Lutheran
135 Mission (NELM) in Rock Point, AZ has typically had leadership imposed from
136 the outside. Deacon Kate Adelman, Bishop Deborah Hutterer, and Rev.
137 Jacqueline Pagel are working with the Navajo Community at NELM to raise
138 up local Navajo leaders to take over the spiritual ministry at House of Prayer
139 Lutheran Church. Guidelines are being developed to provide ministry
140 integrity and theological training with local Navajo input for this unique
141 ministry.

142
143
144 The Forge, East Mesa, AZ

145 After a period of leadership inactivity and thoughts of closing at The Forge,
146 East Mesa, AZ, the Rio Salado Conference decided the best way forward was
147 to return to its original focus on ministry to young adults rather than being a
148 congregation. Rev. Charles Newman will give leadership to this ministry as it
149 moves forward.

150
151
152 **Break**

153 Mr. Paul Gryniewicz declared the meeting to be in recess at 11:01 a.m.
154 Mr. Paul Gryniewicz called the meeting back to order at 11:10 a.m.

155
156
157 **Synod Assembly**

158 The synod council went into breakout rooms to discuss what went well with
159 the 2021 online assembly, what needed to be improved, and to consider the
160 timing for future online assemblies. The need for online assemblies will also

161 be dictated by public health emergencies as we act in our neighbor's best
162 interests.

163
164

165 **Grants**

166 Overview of the GCS Grant Process

167 Ms. Sue Jensen reported that we are approaching the season for awarding
168 synod grants. The grant committee is closely following the GCS strategic plan
169 to guide the process.

170
171

172 Adapting, Connecting, Transforming and Sustaining (ACTS) Grants

173 GCS ACTS grants are typically focused on lifting up Synod Authorized
174 Worshiping Communities (SAWCs) or other strategic ministries with a
175 maximum GCS grant level of \$20,000 for this year.

176
177

178 Project Support Grants (PSGs)

179 GCS PSGs typically support new and continuing programming for
180 congregations with a recent emphasis on helping congregations and affiliated
181 ministries (ex: Lutheran Social Services of the Southwest) with pandemic
182 imposed needs, such as support for an online presence.

183

184 There will be an online webinar to educate the GCS on both ACTS and PSGs.
185 Awardees are required to report back on the impact of the project grants. The
186 grant committee is hoping for improvement in the reporting back aspect.

187
188

189 Open Doors Grants

190 ELCA open doors grants were received by several GCS congregations to
191 assist them in becoming focal points of gathering and to reach out to new
192 people in their communities.

193
194

195 Hunger Grants

196 Grace Lutheran Church, Phoenix, AZ has applied for an ELCA domestic
197 hunger grant to support their pancake breakfast and respite program. It is
198 hoped they will receive this grant.

199

200

201 **Information**

202 The GCS currently has a pastor who was vaccinated who is now ill with
203 COVID-19. This follows a GCS pastor who died from a COVID-19 infection in
204 January 2021. Bishop Deborah Hutterer is trusting our synod leaders to
205 make informed and prudent decisions about gatherings and general ministry.

206
207 The ELCA conference of bishops has decided to hold their upcoming meeting
208 online. Some synods have issued travel restrictions to their synod staff.

209
210 Celebration Lutheran Church, Peoria, AZ is in an emergency situation due to
211 significant debt and the inability to meet financial obligations.

212
213 The Lakes Lutheran Church, Las Vegas, NV is struggling at the present
214 time. Pastor Ron Poe has taken a call in the state of Illinois.

215
216

217 **Congregation Votes**

218 Synod council members may be called upon to be present at significant
219 moments in a congregation's life to be an available, affirming, and authentic
220 witness of our being church together. Mr. Paul Gryniewicz suggested such
221 times may include congregation votes. At such votes, the synod
222 representative role is to report back that all was done in good order, and that
223 there are not more votes cast than registered voting members.

224

225

226 **Gloria Dei / Palo Christi Resolution**

227 Whereas, bylaw 9.53.06. in the *Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing*
228 *Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America* (ELCA) specifies:
229 "A congregation considering relocation shall confer with the bishop of the
230 synod in which it is territorially located...before any steps are taken leading
231 to such action. The approval of the Synod Council shall be received before any
232 such action is effected"; and

233 Whereas, ELCA constitutional provision 9.81. provides the following:
234 "A synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America may authorize a
235 particular congregation...related to the synod to form a federated
236 congregation...with a congregation...with which a relationship of full
237 communion has been established...;" and

238 Whereas, Gloria Dei Lutheran Church and Palo Christi Presbyterian
239 Church, both of Paradise Valley, Arizona, have agreed to merge into a new
240 congregation to be known as Gloria Christi Federated Church;

241

242

243 Ms. Barbara Carl moved that
244 **MSP SC21.08.06 be it resolved that the Synod Council of the Grand**
245 **Canyon Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America**
246 **approves the “Plan of Agreement” of Gloria Dei Lutheran Church**
247 **(#04993) with Palo Christi Presbyterian Church, both of Paradise**
248 **Valley, Arizona, to merge into a new corporation to be known as**
249 **Gloria Christi Federated Church, Paradise Valley, Arizona, as a**
250 **congregation of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and**
251 **the Presbyterian Church (USA) (aka: PCUSA); and be it further**
252 **resolved,**
253 **that the filing of Articles of Incorporation for Gloria Christi**
254 **Federated Church is endorsed by the Grand Canyon Synod of the**
255 **ELCA with the assurance that endorsement also will be forthcoming**
256 **from the Presbytery of the Grand Canyon of the PCUSA.**

257 **Roster Changes**

259 Ms. Glenn Austad moved
260 **MSP SC21.08.07 to issue synod calls to Rev. Melinda S. Gapen for**
261 **specialized ministry as chaplain with Avian Hospice, Globe, AZ,**
262 **effective May 10, 2021; to Rev. Patsy Perkins Koeneke to serve as**
263 **interim pastor at Grace Lutheran Church, Kingman, AZ, effective**
264 **August 1, 2021; to Rev. Doris M. Nolan to serve as interim pastor at**
265 **Our Saviors Lutheran Church, Mesa and Gold Canyon, AZ, effective**
266 **September 1, 2021.**

267 **Godspeed and Farewell**

270 A litany of Godspeed and Farewell was held for Mr. Paul Gryniewicz for
271 whom this was his last meeting. Thank you, Paul, for your time and
272 dedication to the Grand Canyon Synod.

273 **Feed Back & Evaluation**

276 It was requested to give feedback on the quality of this meeting. You will
277 receive an email to which you are encouraged to respond.

278 **Adjournment and Closing Prayer**

281 Bishop Deborah Hutterer led a closing prayer and the meeting adjourned at
282 12:00 p.m.

285 **Next Meeting**

286 Saturday, October 9, 2021, 9:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. with a social time on
287 Friday, October 8, 2021, at 6:00 p.m. via Zoom.

288

289

290 Respectfully submitted,
291 Rev. David Brandfass, secretary

Draft



Grand Canyon Synod

Communicating • Connecting • Creating

Synod Council Special Meeting Minutes

Via Zoom Video Conference

Friday, August 27, 2021

6:00 pm

Attendance

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

Synod Council members absent: Ms. Nancy Davis; Rev. Tina Mills.

Call to Order

With a quorum present, Mr. Paul Gryniwicz called the meeting to order at 6:00 P.M.

Special Issue: Celebration Lutheran Church, Peoria, Arizona

Ms. Sue Jensen moved

MSP¹ SC21.08.08² that Celebration Lutheran Church, Peoria, AZ be put under synod administration effective August 29, 2021, under provision †S13.24 of the synod constitution.

Secretary David Brandfass shared a timeline based on synod council minutes, staff reports to the synod council, and other sources, in relation to the situation at Celebration Lutheran Church, Peoria, AZ (CLCP). Bishop Deborah Hutterer shared information on the financial difficulties at CLCP.

¹ MSP=Moved, seconded, passed.

² SC=synod council; 21=2021; 08=the month of August; 08= The eighth sequential action passed by the synod council during the month of August, 2021.

38 Discussion was held on the most faithful way to move forward in this difficult
39 situation.

40
41 Ms. Barbara Carl moved

42 **MSP SC21.08.09 to ratify Bishop Deborah Hutterer's**
43 **recommendation that Mr. Dean Lewellen, Mr. Alden Awerkamp, Ms.**
44 **Lori Jensen, Ms. Dottie Anderson, Rev. Miguel Gomez-Acosta, and**
45 **either Ms. Joanne Holt or Mr. Randy Baasgaard, serve as trustees of**
46 **Celebration Lutheran Church, Peoria, Arizona under ¶S13.24 of the**
47 **synod constitution; and that Ms. Twila Burdick be appointed to serve**
48 **as a trustee to the same under the same provision.**

49
50 Ms. Barbara Carl moved

51 **MSP SC21.08.10 to authorize Bishop Deborah Hutterer to appoint**
52 **additional persons to serve as trustees of Celebration Lutheran**
53 **Church, Peoria, Arizona, as needed under provision ¶13.24 of the**
54 **synod constitution.**

55 56 **Adjournment and Closing Prayer**

57 Bishop Deborah Hutterer led a closing prayer and the meeting adjourned at
58 6:43 p.m.

59 60 61 **Next Meeting**

62 Saturday, October 9, 2021, 9:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. with a social time on
63 Friday, October 8, 2021, at 6:00 p.m. via Zoom.

64
65
66 Respectfully submitted,
67 Rev. David Brandfass, secretary



Grand Canyon Synod

Communicating • Connecting • Creating

Synod Council Special Meeting Minutes

Via Zoom Video Conference

Friday, September 17, 2021

6:00 pm

Attendance

Synod Council members present: Rev. Deborah Hutterer, synod bishop; Ms. Barbara Carl, vice-president; Rev. David Brandfass, secretary; Mr. Erik Rehms, treasurer; Mr. Glenn Austad; Mr. Roger Bailey; Ms. Twila Burdick; Ms. Heather Burgett; Rev. Mary Louise Frenchman; Rev. Christopher Heller; Ms. Sue Jensen; Mr. Mark Myers; Ms. Lisa Parrish; Ms. Janis Richert; Rev. William Timm.

Synod Council members absent: Ms. Hannah Manzanares; Rev. Tina Mills; Ms. Laura Musfeldt; Ms. Janet Santiago; Rev. Daniel Valasakos; Ms. Taylor Welch.

Call to Order

With a quorum present, Ms. Barbara Carl called the meeting to order at 6:02 P.M.

Devotion

The meeting began with a reading and reflection on Psalm 121 and an opening prayer both led by Bishop Deborah Hutterer.

Special Issue: Celebration Lutheran Church, Peoria, Arizona

The synod appointed trustees to administer Celebration Lutheran Church, Peoria, Arizona are Ms. Twila Burdick, chair; Ms. Dottie Anderson; Mr. Alden Awerkamp; Ms. Randy Badsgard; Rev. Miguel Gomez-Acosta; Ms. Lori Jensen; Mr. Dean Lewellen.

40 Closing Celebration Lutheran Church, Peoria, Arizona

41 The trustees administering Celebration Lutheran Church, Peoria, Arizona on
42 behalf of the Grand Canyon Synod recommend the synod council adopt the
43 following:

44
45 Ms. Twila Burdick moved,

46 **MSP¹ SC21.09.02² be it resolved that Celebration Lutheran Church,
47 Peoria, AZ be closed following a worship service of Holy Closure on
48 October 3, 2021.**

49
50 Rev. William Timm moved

51 **MSP³ SC21.09.01 the previous question⁴ (SC21.09.02).**

52
53
54 Sale of Property

55 The trustees administering Celebration Lutheran Church, Peoria, Arizona on
56 behalf of the Grand Canyon Synod recommend the synod council adopt the
57 following:

58
59 Ms. Twila Burdick moved

60 **MSP SC21.09.03 be it resolved that the Celebration Lutheran Church,
61 Peoria, AZ property be sold to pay current congregation debts, and
62 fund future synod mission and ministry.**

63
64
65 Synod Financial Support

66 The trustees administering Celebration Lutheran Church, Peoria, Arizona on
67 behalf of the Grand Canyon Synod recommend the synod council adopt the
68 following:

69
70 Ms. Twila Burdick moved

71 **MSP SC21.09.04 be it resolved that the Grand Canyon Synod provide
72 financial support for the Celebration Lutheran Church, Peoria,
73 Arizona expenses as it moves through closure and sale of its
74 property.**

75

¹ MSP=Moved, seconded, passed.

² SC=synod council; 21=2021; 09=the month of September; 01= The eighth sequential action passed by the synod council during the month of September 2021.

³ A two-thirds vote is required for ordering the *Previous Question*. (Roberts 16:5.7)

⁴ "A motion such as "I call for [or 'call'] the question," ... is simply a motion for the *Previous Question* made in nonstandard form and is subject to all the rules in this section..." (Roberts 16:6)

76 The property is thought to be worth over one-million dollars, which may be
77 lower than the value of similar commercial properties because the
78 Celebration Lutheran Church, Peoria, AZ (CLCP) is zoned for either a church
79 or residential uses.
80

81 CLCP is current in their mortgage payments and the mortgage payoff
82 amount is about \$175,000. CLCP has unique encumbrances because
83 designated funds were comingled and used for non-designated purposes. A
84 tenant congregation which made a designated donation to CLCP has
85 requested that their \$11,000 be returned by the end of September 2021.
86 CLCP currently has a cash balance of approximately \$14,000. CLCP has
87 enough cash on hand to pay expenses through the time of the October synod
88 council meeting.
89

90 Other property expenses may be forthcoming as deferred maintenance issues
91 may need to be addressed to sell the property. Additionally, the trustees are
92 still uncovering other obligations such as a contract with Cox
93 Communications with significant cancellation fees.
94

95 A thorough examination of the CLCP finances is underway, with bookkeeping
96 to be transferred to the Synod Office as CLCP closes. The synod council will
97 be responsible for designating how CLCP surplus funds will be used.
98
99

100 **Thank You**

101 Ms. Twila Burdick and the Trustees were heartily thanked for her work on
102 this project.
103
104

105 **Adjournment and Closing Prayer**

106 Mr. Glenn Austad moved
107 **MSP SC21.09.05 to adjourn.**

108
109 Bishop Deborah Hutterer led a closing prayer and the meeting adjourned at
110 6:30 p.m.
111
112

113 **Next Meeting**

114 Saturday, October 9, 2021, 9:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. with a social time on
115 Friday, October 8, 2021, at 6:00 p.m. via Zoom.
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117

118 Respectfully submitted,
119 Rev. David Brandfass, secretary

Draft