



Grand Canyon Synod

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Synod Council Meeting Minutes

Via Zoom Video Conference

Saturday, October 9, 2021

9:00 am

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. Heather Burgett; Rev. Christopher Heller; Ms. Sue Jensen; Ms. Hannah Manzanares; Rev. Tina Mills; Ms. Laura Musfeldt; Mr. Mark Myers; Ms. Lisa Parrish; Ms. Janis Richert; Ms. Janet Santiago; Rev. William Timm; Rev. Daniel Valasakos; Ms. Taylor Welch.

Synod Council members absent: Ms. Twila Burdick; Rev. Mary Louise Frenchman.

Synod Staff present: Mr. Brian Flatgard, director of communications; Rev Miguel Gomez-Acosta, director for evangelical mission and bishop's associate for congregational vitality; Ms. Solveig Muus, Director, Lutheran Advocacy Ministry Arizona (LAMA); Rev. Jacqui Pagel, Associate to the Bishop for Candidacy and Faith Formation; Rev. Patricia Reed, Congregation Coach; Ms. Theresa Thornburgh, director for administration and events.

Guests: Rev. Brian Cain, Pastor, Spirit of Joy Lutheran Church, Gilbert, Arizona (AZ); Mr. Darrell Duty, President, Spirit of Joy Lutheran Church, Gilbert, AZ; Mr. Luis Ochoa, Seminarian Intern at Holy Trinity Lutheran Church, Chandler, AZ; Ms. Myrna Wells-Ulland, president, Grand Canyon Synod Women of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (WELCA).

Welcome

Bishop Deborah Hutterer welcomed new members to the council and visitors to the October 9, 2021, regular synod council meeting.

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Current Seminarian

The Rev. Jacqui Pagel introduced Mr. Luis Ochoa, who is currently a seminary intern at Holy Trinity Lutheran Church, Chandler, AZ.

Devotion

Intern Luis Ochoa led a devotion on James 1:19-27.

The synod council members were invited to breakout rooms for discussion on the following questions provided by Intern Ochoa: “Is it hard to listen to God with all the commotion happening in our daily lives? Why is it important for us not to forget why our ministry/our call matters? How can you inspire others to listen & take action in sharing the Good News?”

Call to Order

With a quorum present, Ms. Barbara Carl called the meeting to order at 10:03 A.M.

Adoption of Agenda

Mr. Glenn Austad moved
MSP¹ SC21.10.01² to adopt the agenda as presented with the addition of a relocation request received just prior to this meeting from Living Christ Lutheran Church, Flagstaff, Arizona.

Approval of Minutes

Mr. Glenn Austad moved
MSP SC21.10.02 to adopt minutes of the August 14, 2021; August 27, 2021; and, September 17, 2021, meetings of the Grand Canyon Synod Council.

¹ MSP=Moved, seconded, passed.
² SC=synod council; 21=2021; 10=the month of October; 01= The first sequential action passed by the synod council during the month of October 2021.

76 **Consent Agenda**

77 Mr. Mark Myers moved
78 **MSP SC21.10.03 to accept the Consent Agenda Items: Bishop Report;**
79 **Director of Evangelical Mission / Bishop’s Associate for**
80 **Congregational Vitality Report; Bishop’s Associate for Candidacy**
81 **and Faith Formation Report; Director of Administration and Events**
82 **Report; Director of Communication Report; Lutheran Advocacy**
83 **Ministry Arizona (LAMA) Report; Grand Canyon Synod Women of**
84 **the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (WELCA) Report, and**
85 **the ELCA Foundation Regional Gift Planners Report as presented.**
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88 **Treasurer’s Report**

89 Mr. Erik Rehms led a review of the current financial statements showing
90 very good results for the first seven months of the fiscal year.
91

92 Mr. Glenn Austad moved
93 **MSP SC21.10.04 to accept the Treasurer’s Report dated August 31,**
94 **2021, with an increase in total assets of \$336,324.**
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97 **Congregations in Transition**

98 Six congregations have extended letters of call to new pastors, two
99 congregations are scheduled to vote on preferred candidates, and twelve
100 congregations are in transition as they seek new rostered leaders.
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102 Rev. Sarah Moening will be stepping down from her role as Director of
103 Congregation Transitions for the Rocky Mountain and Grand Canyon Synods
104 at the end of January, 2022.
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107 **Strategic Discussion and Updates**

108 Shepherd of the Valley Lutheran Church

109 The following resolution is in accordance with provision 9.62 of the
110 Constitution, Bylaws and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical
111 Lutheran Church in America.
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113 Rev. David Brandfass moved
114 **MSP SC21.10.05 to approve the termination of the relationship**
115 **between Shepherd of the Valley Lutheran Church, Phoenix, Arizona**
116 **and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.**
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118 The roster status of Rev. David M. Marz in relationship to SC21.10.05 was
119 robustly discussed by the synod council.
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122 Synod Administration of Celebration Lutheran Church, Peoria, AZ

123 A service of holy closure was held at Celebration Lutheran Church, Peoria
124 (CLCP), AZ on October 3, 2021, which had the feeling of a celebration of life
125 and was hopeful to the members who participated in the worship service. Ms.
126 Twila Burdick was thanked for hers and the trustees' efforts in assisting
127 CLCP through this process.
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130 **Break**

131 Ms. Barbara Carl declared the meeting to be in recess at 10:44 a.m.
132 Ms. Barbara Carl called the meeting back into session at 10:54 a.m.
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135 **Strategic Discussion and Updates** (continued)

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Spirit of Joy Lutheran Church, Gilbert (SOJG)

138 “†S13.20. A congregation considering a relocation shall confer with the bishop
139 of the synod in which it is territorially located and the appropriate unit of the
140 churchwide organization before any steps are taken leading to such action.
141 The approval of the Synod Council shall be received before any such action is
142 effected.”
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144 Mr. Darrell Duty, President, and Rev. Brian Cain, Pastor, of SOJG presented
145 the synod council with information on the process leading up to the decision
146 of SOJG to request relocation within the campus of Desert Cross Lutheran
147 Church, Gilbert, AZ.
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The executive committee moved and seconded

150 **MSP SC21.10.06 to approve the relocation of Spirit of Joy Lutheran**
151 **Church, 1159 N Greenfield Rd, Gilbert, Arizona to the campus of**
152 **Desert Cross Lutheran Church, 3225 S Lindsay Rd, Gilbert, Arizona**
153 **to refocus Spirit of Joy's ministry with the intent of engaging other**
154 **congregations in conversations about adapting ministry to the 21st**
155 **century.**

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157 It was noted that to differentiate the two congregations, each will use
158 uniquely different forms of worship. A report from SOJG to the Synod
159 Council is attached to these minutes as **Exhibit 1**.
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Living Christ Lutheran Church, Flagstaff

Living Christ Lutheran Church, Flagstaff, AZ is working on selling their property and is looking to move to a more central location near the Northern Arizona University campus.

Ms. Hannah Manzanares moved

MSP SC21.10.07 to approve the relocation of Living Christ Lutheran Church, Flagstaff, Arizona to an area closer to the Northern Arizona University campus and to be in conversation with Shepherd of the Hills Lutheran Church, Flagstaff, Arizona about this relocation.

Growing Generosity Campaign

Ms. Myrna Wells-Ulland, chairperson of the Growing Generosity campaign, reported that the Growing Generosity campaign was seventy-five percent towards its goal. To reach this goal, formal “asks” are underway and the synod council was encouraged to share any names of those who may be willing to contribute to the campaign with Ms. Wells-Ulland.

An opportunity for a ministry supported by the Growing Generosity campaign is beginning a ministry in southern Utah to people of the Mormon faith starved for a word of grace.

New Business

Prayer Partners

The synod council was divided up into pairs as prayer partners for the coming year.

Roster Changes

Further discussion was offered on the roster status of Rev. David Marz.

The executive committee moved

MSP SC21.10.08 to deny the request for the ELCA roster status change for Rev. David M. Marz from Active to On Leave from Call status effective August 29, 2021.

200 Rev. Christopher Heller moved
201 **MSP SC21.10.09 to approve the following ELCA roster status**
202 **changes:**

- 203 • Rev. David M. Sivecz from Active to On Leave from Call status
204 effective August 31, 2021;
- 205 • Rev. John D. Geske from Active to On Leave from Call status
206 effective May 31, 2020;
- 207 • Rev. Martin N. Overson from Active to Retired status effective
208 July 1, 2021;
- 209 • Rev. Allen L. Cassel from Active to On Leave from Call status
210 effective August 29, 2021;
- 211 • Rev. Martha Neff Stum from Active to On Leave from Call
212 status effective October 31, 2021;
- 213 • to extend On Leave from Call status of Rev. Carol R. Breimeier
214 which began November 1, 2019, through October 31, 2022; and
- 215 • to extend On Leave from Call status of Rev. Fred J. Nelson
216 which began November 1, 2019, through October 31, 2022.

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218 **Recognition**

219 Ms. Myrna Wells-Ulland, president, GCS WELCA was recognized by many
220 voices for her dedicated and long service to WELCA and as a participating
221 visitor to the synod council. Her presence will be missed as another woman
222 will be elected as president of our synod's WELCA organization.

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224 Bishop Deborah Hutterer led a service of Godspeed and Farewell for Ms.
225 Myrna Wells-Ulland.

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228 **Adjournment and Closing Prayer**

229 Ms. Hannah Manzanares moved
230 **MSP SC21.10.10 to adjourn.**

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232 Bishop Deborah Hutterer led a closing prayer and the meeting adjourned at
233 12:00 p.m.

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236 **Next Meeting**

237 Saturday, December 11, 2021, 9:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. via Zoom.

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240 Respectfully submitted,
241 Rev. David Brandfass, secretary