

Greater Milwaukee Synod, ELCA
Summary of the Synod Council Meeting
March 14, 2013

Capitol Drive Lutheran Church
5229 West Capitol Drive, Milwaukee, Wisconsin

Ignited by God's love, Burning for Justice, We embrace the world

Attendance

Name	Cluster/Position	Term Ends 8/31
The Rev. Eric Silberschmidt	Kenosha/West Racine	2013
The Rev. Steve Blyth	Lake Country	2015
Mr. Michael Herold	Milwaukee 1	2013
Vacant	Milwaukee 2	2013
The Rev. Carolyn Fredriksen	Milwaukee 3	2015
Mr. Al Van Lith	Milwaukee 4	2015
Ms. Esther Rusch	Northern Lakeshore	2013
Ms. Beth Dorsey	Northwest	2013
The Rev. Warren Williams	Racine	2013
The Rev. Sherrie Lorbeck	Waukesha	2015
The Rev. Gary Grindeland	At Large	2015
Ms. Debra Taylor	At Large	2015
Mr. John Gruber	At Large	2015
Ms. Susan Cyr	Vice President	2013 (2)
Mr. Matthew Brockmeier	Secretary	2015 (1)
Mr. Lee Johnston	Treasurer	2013 (1)
The Rev. Jeff Barrow	Bishop	2016 (1)
Vacant	Youth Representative	2013
Vacant	Young Adult Rep.	

Rev. Alexis Twito, the recently installed pastor of the host church, Capitol Drive Lutheran, joined the Council for a catered chicken dinner, complete with great biscuits, before the start of the meeting.

Also present were Rev. Sandy Chrostowski, Director of Evangelical Mission from synod staff and MaryBeth Hoffman from Reconciling in Christ.

Opening devotions were shared by Rev. Eric Silberschmidt, who focused on the importance of understanding the role played by the Prodigal Son's brother. Mr. Michael Herold will share devotions at the May meeting.

I. Bishop's Report

Bishop Jeff Barrow provided a written outline of his report, elaborating on key points during the meeting.

Discussion included the need for the Council to provide a new member for the Lutheran Campus Ministry Board to take the place of Mr. Lee Johnston, who is leaving the LCM board. Since this slot must be taken by a member of the Synod Council, the pool of those eligible to serve this three-year term includes only those Council members whose terms extend

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beyond this year. It was noted that the current success of the campus ministry program is due in part to the involvement by and support from the synod. Members of the Council were asked to consider this service (which includes monthly meetings on an active board), with action deferred until someone steps forward.

The bishop read the current On Leave from Call roster, asking for a one-year continuation of On Leave from Call status for all those listed.

Council Action

The Council voted to approve one-year continuations of On Leave from Call status for all those listed on the current On Leave from Call roster.

Continuing his report, Bishop Barrow focused on hunger projects, one of the key initiatives of the ELCA in which he is wholeheartedly participating; the April 16th service at Our Savior's Lutheran Church in Milwaukee based on the 50th anniversary of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.'s Letter from Birmingham Jail; and on the importance of efforts to keep leaders healthy.

Ms. Rusch opined that the great turn-out at today's Advocacy Day in Madison was due in part to the bishop's strong support for and promotion of the 11x15 initiative. The bishop spoke at the outdoor rally on the capitol steps.

III. Treasurer's Report

Treasurer Lee Johnston reported that revenue from congregational support exceeded the budgeted amount for the fiscal year ending in January by roughly \$5,000; representing a strong finish for the year. This figure resulted in a \$1,700 surplus after all final commitments made by the Council at its January meeting were met.

Council Action

The Council voted to approve the Profit and Loss Statement for the fiscal year ending January 31, 2013 as presented.

Treasurer Johnston went on to present the proposed 2014-2015 budget, which is to be considered by the 2013 Synod Assembly. Congregational support was returned to the 2012-2013 budgeted level of \$2,150,000 based on meeting that target in the just-ended fiscal year. This represents a \$50,000 increase from the approved level for the 2013-2014 budget. The general structure of the budget is similar to the current budget, with the full amount shown for health insurance premiums, not including potential savings from participation in the health assessment program. The only other significant difference is the removal of \$10,000 in support for the Youth & Family Director because of the likely end of a nine-year series of grants from the Siebert Foundation.

It was noted that a wider range of financial detail will be provided to the Assembly this year than in past years, based in part on requests for this information following last year's Assembly. This will include balances for all special funds, satisfying a request for inclusion of financial information for the synod's Reconciling in Christ ministry to solidify the public perception of synodical support for RIC.

Council Action

The Council voted to recommend to the 2013 Synod Assembly the Draft 2014-2015 Budget, as presented.

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IV. Reports

- A. Director of Evangelical Mission – A written report was submitted, with additional comments by Rev. Sandy Chrostowski, who emphasized the April 13th Stewardship Fair at St. Luke's Lutheran Church in Greendale. Of special interest are the presentations by Rev. Steve McKinley on planning and implementing a stewardship campaign and by Rev. Earnest and Mrs. Dorothy Tate on stewardship practices in other cultures and faith traditions.
- B. Director of Discipleship – No report submitted.
- C. Director of Rostered Leadership – No report submitted.
- D. Youth and Family Network – A written report was submitted.
- E. Lutheran Campus Ministry – No report submitted.
- F. Deans – No report submitted.
- G. Anti-Racism Team – A written report was submitted.
- H. WELCA – A written report was submitted.
- I. Outreach for Hope – A written report was submitted.

V. Old Business

- A. MET Revision Task Force – It was reported that work on these revisions is ongoing.
- B. Sale Proceeds Task Force – As noted in the bishop's report, this task force is in formation.
- C. Synod Personnel Policy – The next step in developing this policy is staff review and suggestions, with legal review to follow. The goal is, if possible, to have the policy ready for Council action in May.
- D. 2013 Synod Assembly (May 30 – June 1, 2013)
 - a. Assembly Rules

Council Action

The Council voted to recommend the 2013 Assembly Rules for Elections and Procedures, as presented, to the 2013 Synod Assembly for the Assembly's approval.

- b. Assembly Agenda

Council Action

The Council voted to recommend the Agenda for the 2013 Synod Assembly, as presented, to the 2013 Synod Assembly for the Assembly's approval.

- c. Youth Participation – Secretary Matthew Brockmeier reported that last year's Synod Assembly included youth or young adults as approximately eight percent of total voting members, just shy of the synod's goal of ten percent. The Youth and Family Network is asking for a continuation of last year's special offer of participation for non-voting youth and young adult full-time visitors to encourage increased participation by the young in all aspects of the life of the church.

Council Action

The Council voted to approve the Youth and Family Network's resolution inviting each congregation to send one youth or young adult as a full-time visitor to the 2013 Synod Assembly, with all such visitors having voice but not vote, and with a reduced fee of \$100 for these visitors.

Council Action

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The Council voted to approve providing and promoting limited scholarships for youth and young adult visitors whose participation in the 2013 Synod Assembly was approved in SC13.03.10.

- d. Nominating Committee Report – No report is available yet, as the nominating process continues.
 - i. Synod Council Nominations – Secretary Brockmeier recapped the positions for which the Council has responsibility for nominations, including synod treasurer, some nominating committee openings, and, with input from the Youth and Family Network, youth and young adult members of the Council. He noted that the open positions on the nominating committee are at-large positions, and do not need to be filled by Council members.
- e. Deadline for Resolutions – These deadlines were included in the rules approved in SC 13.03.08., and are April 30, 2013 for resolutions or memorials submitted by congregations, committees or clusters; and May 16, 2013 for Synod Council initiated resolutions.
- E. Financial Controls Policy – Secretary Brockmeier reported that, following distribution of information on the recommended financial control bylaws approved by the Council in January, 40 congregations (30% of all congregations in the synod) had contacted him for detailed information. The recommended policies will be highlighted at the Congregational Leaders Event on Saturday, March 16th.

VI. New Business

- A. Churchwide Assembly (August 12 – 17, 2013)
 - a. Milwaukee Cluster 4 Replacement Voting Member (Lay Male) – There was discussion on the need to fill a vacancy created by the resignation of the elected lay male voting member from Cluster 4. To date the cluster dean, Rev. Ari Mattson, has been unable to recruit a replacement. It was agreed that the search for a replacement lay male from Cluster 4 would continue at present, with the possibility of the Council selecting someone not fitting this profile if the search for a successor is unsuccessful: possibly the new vice president-elect.
- B. New Letterhead – There was discussion on replacing existing synod letterhead and envelopes, of which a large amount remains, with letterhead and envelopes bearing the newly approved synod logo. While there was concern about waste, Ms. Rusch reminded the Council that the reason for the change in logo was the offensive nature of the old image, and stated that continuing its use continued the fundamental problem. It was agreed that refinement of the quote received, to reduce cost by reducing quantities and printing complexity, would be pursued.

Next Meeting

Thursday, May 9, 2013 – 5:30 pm Dinner; 6:15 pm Synod Council Meeting

Cross Lutheran Church, 1861 North 16th Street, Milwaukee

Submitted,

Matthew Brockmeier
Synod Secretary