

Greater Milwaukee Synod, ELCA
Summary of the Synod Council Meeting
May 9, 2013

Cross Lutheran Church
1821 North 16th Street, 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.	

Those gathered enjoyed the hospitality of Cross Lutheran Church and Ms. Debra Taylor in the form of a Cinco de Mayo meal.

Also present were Ms. Rhonda Hill, GMS Director of Discipleship; MaryBeth Hoffman of the Synod's Reconciling in Christ Ministry Team; Betty Warber, President of the Synod Women's Organization; and Ms. Mikka McCracken, Program Director, ELCA World Hunger Appeal-Constituent Engagement and Interpretation.

Bishop's Report

Bishop Jeff Barrow provided a written report, emphasizing key points including staff departures, the status of the use of proceeds from property sales, and the Synod Assembly. In remarks at the meeting he elaborated on these points, and went into detail about issues surrounding hunger, following his recent trip to the Mexican state of Chiapas as part of a mission trip studying the work of the Mexican Association for Rural and Urban Transformation ([AMEXTRA](#)), an ELCA partner ministry. Bishop Barrow spoke of the challenges in what is inherently a rich agricultural region, but where the use of inappropriate cash crops and genetically modified seed stock serves to create poverty and hunger.

Greater Milwaukee Synod Council

May 9, 2013 Meeting Summary

The bishop recommended that congregations consider going to Chiapas to see this work, but also made the point that the same issues surrounding food security exist in Milwaukee. He added that work to coordinate efforts, and to grow food locally, can provide an effective framework for dealing with hunger, both in Mexico and Milwaukee.

Bishop Barrow then introduced Ms. Mikka McCracken, who will serve as the representative of the ELCA to this year's Synod Assembly. Ms. McCracken spoke briefly about issues regarding constituent engagement and the capacity of the church to effect change on hunger and poverty, and answered questions about *God's Work, Our Hands Sunday* (September 8, 2013).

The bishop made a recommendation to the Council that \$150,000 be made available to Spirit Alive! to facilitate the purchase of real estate that is being made available at a better than market price, using funds from the St. Andrew's sale proceeds account and other mission start funds. This would not involve the use of funds from the sale of Good Shepherd's facility: a task force is still in formation to address those funds.

Council Action

The Council voted to approve setting aside a sum of up to \$150,000.00, for Spirit Alive! to purchase available real estate, with funds to be taken from the old new mission start, and the balance from the proceeds of the sale of St. Andrew's, for use within one year of this date.

In discussing personnel changes, Bishop Barrow reported that Rev. Chuck Brummond, the synod's Director of Rostered Leadership, has asked to return to interim ministry later this year. The bishop asked that a renewed one-year term call be issued to Rev. Brummond to cover the remainder of his service to the synod.

Council Action

The Council voted to approve a renewed one-year term call to Rev. Chuck Brummond in his role as Director of Rostered Leadership.

III. Treasurer's Report

A profit and loss statement for February and March 2013 was provided in advance of the meeting. Treasurer Mr. Lee Johnston explained that, thus far in the fiscal year, revenues are near expected levels and expenses are slightly under budget, with no large variances for any items.

Council Action

The Council voted to approve the Profit and Loss Statement for the period from February 1st through March 31st, 2013 as presented.

Mr. Johnston also reported that complete financial statements, including funds in restricted accounts, would be available at the Synod Assembly as part of the synod's effort to provide maximum financial transparency.

IV. Reports

- A. Director of Evangelical Mission – A written report was submitted.
- B. Director of Discipleship – A written report was provided. Director Ms. Rhonda Hill provided additional detail in remarks to the Council. Among topics covered were the Nation-

Greater Milwaukee Synod Council May 9, 2013 Meeting Summary

al Festival of Young Preachers, an annual gathering sponsored by the Academy of Preachers; the development of individuals to provide coaching to help those serving the church find ways to meet their goals; and the Women in Ministry retreat, scheduled for June 20th this year. Ms. Hill told the Council that this retreat was a key element of her work, and something that she hoped would be an ongoing part of the synod's discipleship efforts. She also shared draft copies of the "Guide to Congregational Partnerships," a document she hopes to finalize in coming months, inviting input from members of the Council through the month of May. Among other events in the near future, Ms. Hill highlighted Urban Experience, and urban immersion program for 7th through 12th graders.

- C. Director of Rostered Leadership – A written report was submitted.
- D. Youth and Family Network – A written report was submitted.
- E. Lutheran Campus Ministry – No report submitted.
- F. Anti-Racism Team – Ms. Esther Rusch provided a brief report, noting that this year there is a two-day Crossroads Anti-Racism Training event scheduled for September 19th through 21st, with the possibility of another session in January. There is also a two-part session this month and next. On May 18th the Anti-Racism Team will present another movie night, featuring "Life of Pi."
- G. WELCA – A written report was submitted.
- H. Outreach for Hope – A written report was submitted.

V. Old Business

- A. MET Revision Task Force – Work continues on process revisions.
- B. Sale Proceeds Task Force – Nearly ready; need only one more person to be appointed. Bishop Barrow said he wants people on this task force to have a "heart for the church, but no dog in the race."
- C. Synod Personnel Policy – Secretary Mr. Matthew Brockmeier reported that the draft policy, having been reviewed by staff, has been forwarded to the synod's attorney, Stephen Knowles, for review to assure consistency with applicable labor statutes. One outstanding issue, on the allocation of vacation time, remains under discussion.
- D. 2013 Synod Assembly (May 30 – June 1, 2013 at Country Springs, Pewaukee)
 - a. Reference and Counsel Committee – Secretary Brockmeier told the Council that the committee will meet on Tuesday evening, May 14th, to review the resolutions that have been submitted.
 - b. Resolutions – The Council briefly reviewed this year's resolutions, with an invitation to provide any additional commentary prior to the Reference and Council Committee meeting. It was requested that the name of the sponsoring entity appear clearly on the final version of the resolutions.
- E. Letterhead – Action was deferred pending additional detail on costs.

VI. New Business

- A. Churchwide Assembly (August 12 – 17, 2013) – Vice President Ms. Susan Cyr reported that there will be three dates for orientation sessions for voting members of the Churchwide Assembly. She also plans to offer orientation for new Synod Council members as part of the July 11th gathering at the bishop's home.

Vice President Cyr thanked those who are leaving the Council at the end of their terms, noting that this is her final formal Council meeting. Also thanked were two members leaving the

Greater Milwaukee Synod Council May 9, 2013 Meeting Summary

Council before the end of their terms; Mr. John Gruber and Rev. Gary Grindeland, who has accepted a new call in Bayonne, New Jersey.

Next Meeting

Thursday, July 11, 2013 – 5:30 pm Dinner; 6:15 pm Synod Council Meeting

Including all departing and new Council members

Bishop Jeff's Home, Racine

Submitted,

Matthew Brockmeier
Synod Secretary