

Greater Milwaukee Synod, ELCA
Summary of the Synod Council Meeting
March 20, 2014

St. Matthew's Evangelical Lutheran Church
1615 Wauwatosa Avenue, Wauwatosa, Wisconsin

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

Attendance

Name	Cluster/Position	Term Ends 8/31
Ms. Sue Schmidt-Decker	Kenosha/West Racine	2017
The Rev. Steve Blyth	Lake Country	2015
Ms. Ar Lee	Milwaukee 1	2017
The Rev. Lisa Bates-Froiland	Milwaukee 2	2017
The Rev. Carolyn Fredriksen	Milwaukee 3	2015
Mr. Al Van Lith	Milwaukee 4	2015
Mr. Tom Gauthier	Northern Lakeshore	2017
The Rev. David Schoob	Northwest	2017
Ms. Marge Puntarec	Racine	2017
The Rev. Sherrie Lorbeck	Waukesha	2015
The Rev. Jay McDivitt	At Large	6/2014
Ms. Debra Taylor	At Large	2015
Mr. Jerry Key	At Large	2015
Mr. Scott Manske	Vice President	2017 (1)
Mr. Matthew Brockmeier	Secretary	2015 (1)
Mr. Lee Johnston	Treasurer	2017 (2)
The Rev. Jeff Barrow	Bishop	2016 (1)
Vacant	Youth Representative	2015
Mr. Jonathan Barker	Young Adult Rep.	2017

Also present were Mr. Dave Groenewold, GMS Director of Finance; Ms. Stephanie Luedtke, GMS Director of Cross+Generational Ministry; Ms. MaryBeth Hoffman, Chair, GMS Reconciling in Christ Ministry Team; Ms. Betty Warber, President of the Synod Women's Organization; Mr. Dale Landgren, Board of Directors, Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago; Rev. Jim Holmberg, Church and Community Relations Advancement Coordinator, Lutheran Social Services and Refugee Resettlement Task Force; Ms. Mary Flynn, Lutheran Social Services and Refugee Resettlement Task Force; and Rev. John Eilertson, also representing the Refugee Resettlement Task Force.

Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago Presentation

Mr. Dale Landgren, the synod's representative on the Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago Board of Directors, addressed the Council.

Dale had a handout that outlined the current status of the seminar. Dale met with the Bishop and discussed key issues. There is strong evidence that things are turning around at the seminary. There are positive changes including the mode.

Student debt is an issue – scholarships are available but most come in with existing debt.

Only 10% of the budget comes through the ELCA and the synods. There is a turnover on the board but they are getting more active. Physical plant is suffering. They need a lot of money to bring up to a good condition.

Greater Milwaukee Synod Council March 20, 2014 Meeting Summary

Endowment is about \$30 million and had about 7.5% return last year. Goal is to grow the endowment by 5% each year and also use about 5% annually. Currently have about \$5 million in debt.

Fund for Leaders is strictly for scholarships.

Refugee Resettlement Task Force Presentation

Rev. Jim Holmberg represented the Refugee Resettlement Task Force. Task force was officially recognized by the synod last year. Mary Flynn and Jim Holmberg – Refugee Resettlement at LSS and James Eilertson in Menomonee Falls.

Pastor Jim handed out a power point presentation. Discussed about different refugees. People can stay many, many years in a refugee camp. When they are allowed in, they have a home for as long as they want to have. Fifty refugees in Madison area; 175 refugees in Milwaukee area.

Pastor Jim asked that we support them based on the resolution that was passed. Synod Council can help them by offering an avenue for them to talk to people.

Question was asked if there was an opportunity to provide co-sponsorship. LSS talked about just helping with small things with each family, like moving furniture in or helping with moves.

Bishop's Report

Council Action

The Council voted to approve a synod call to Ms. Stephanie Luedtke, AIM, to serve as Director of Cross Generational Ministry for the synod.

Discussion was had regarding whether putting all emphasis on the Cross Generational Ministry instead of the traditional youth ministry. There are places when the youth need to be alone, without adult involvement.

Council Action

The Council voted to approve Retired status Rev. Barb Rasmussen (effective 3/1/2013); Rev. Bob Scheuermann (effective 3/1/2013); Rev. Gail Brodersen-Heins (effective 7/1/2013); Rev. Steve Wohlfeil (effective 7/1/2013); Rev. Dennis Jacobson (effective 10/1/2013); Rev. Frank Janzow (effective 9/1/2013); Deaconess Jan Janzow (effective 9/1/2013); Rev. Jim Barsch (effective 1/1/2014); and Rev. David Shelstad (effective 1/1/2014); and to approve Retired status to all rostered leaders approved by action of the bishop prior to March 1, 2013.

Council Action

The Council voted to appoint Mr. Ron Jones to the Board of Directors of Wartburg Theological Seminary, Dubuque, Iowa.

The bishop reported on the Anti-Racism retreat in February. Goals were set and another meeting was had with the team. Suggested that if you had not taken the session in a while, you need to take it again.

Conference of Bishops – Bishop listed people who are part of our synod. How do we as a synod work better with the national church?

Always Being Made New – Churchwide Assembly overwhelmingly approved \$198 million fund drive, including world hunger and malaria.

Good Shepard sale has gone through.

Greater Milwaukee Synod Council

March 20, 2014 Meeting Summary

El Salvador committee did meet twice about the grant that was tabled until this meeting. Not everyone was happy with the outcome but it works. The grant will be acted on tonight.

Cluster reorganizational update – there have been four cottage meetings and they have been attended very sparsely. Had good discussions. We may not have a finished proposal before the next assembly.

Bishop will be going to Washington DC for Ready Benches – Justice is not Just Us, it is about inclusion. This is our advocacy time. Will also go to El Salvador after Easter and will be able to visit with the group obtaining the grant.

Over the last three years, we ended up with a surplus. This year we had a \$93,000 surplus. \$30,000 is going to Peace Lutheran. Bishop recommended the allocation of remaining funds, with the Council approving his recommendations.

Council Action

The Council voted to approve the use of surplus funds from the fiscal year ending January 31, 2014, with 1) \$20,000 to support Latino ministry in Racine, via the ELCA; 2) \$10,000 to the Bishop's discretionary fund; 3) \$10,000 (adjusted to meet actual surplus) into staffing reserve; 4) \$10,000 to Cross Generational Programming, and; 5) \$13,000 to the Fund for Leaders (Mark Hansen Fund) at the ELCA.

Treasurer's Report

Council Action

The Council voted to approve the financial statements for the previous fiscal year through the end of the fiscal year on January 31, 2014 and for the current fiscal year through February 2014 as presented.

Reports

- A. **Director of Evangelical Mission** – A written report was submitted.
- B. **Director of Discipleship** – A written report was submitted.
- C. **Director of Rostered Leadership** – No report submitted.
- D. **Cross Generational Ministry** – Ms. Stephanie Luedtke introduced herself to the Council and gave a report, including handing out her job description. This used to be the Youth and Family Ministry. She handed out a matrix of what the ministry is and is not and provided a list of principles. She said that we do not need to put youth and children into every event but we need to think about it and think about how they fit in. She handed out a part of a presentation which talks about why. The principles will change from congregation to congregation. She was asked what the Synod Council expects, and asked to have opportunities to talk about it in the congregation. She urged more funding, reporting that things have not been done due to funding shortfalls.
- E. **Lutheran Campus Ministry** – No report submitted.
- F. **Reconciling in Christ** – A written report was submitted.
- G. **Anti-Racism Team** – A written report was submitted.
- H. **Women of the ELCA** – A written report was submitted.
- I. **Outreach for Hope** – A copy of the latest OFH newsletter was provided to members, including the 2013 Annual Report.

Old Business

- A. **Funds Task Force**

Greater Milwaukee Synod Council March 20, 2014 Meeting Summary

Council Action

The Council voted to approve the dispersal of funds received from the sale of property belonging to Good Shepherd Lutheran Church in Waukesha in the form of a grant of \$75,000.00 to Our Savior's Lutheran Church, West Bend, for a Community Development project in El Salvador, with the stipulations that the recipient tithes 10% of the grant amount to a ministry approved by the synod; that annual reports be submitted to the synod on project activities and finances for the life of the grant as included in the proposals; and that all funds be returned to the synod if the recipient ministry closes or ceases to be affiliated with the ELCA within five years of the date of the award.

- B. **Funding Policy Task Force** – The bishop recommended members for the Funding Policy Task Force, to make recommendations on an ongoing policy for the dispersion of funds from possible future congregation closings.

Council Action

The Council voted to ratify the appointment by Bishop Jeff Barrow of Rev. Sandra Chrostowski, Mr. Scott Manske, Mr. Matthew Brockmeier, Ms. Cindy Dobberke, and Rev. Vikki Watkins to the Funding Policy Task Force.

- C. **Cluster Task Force** – An update on the status of the Cluster Task Force – Bishop included discussion in his talk. We do not think we will have a recommendation at the next assembly. There will be a report at the May meeting.

Council Action

The Council voted to request a report from the Cluster Task Force for the May 2014 Synod Council meeting on the status of their work and their proposed presentation to the Synod Assembly.

- D. **ELCA Capital Campaign** – There was discussion about the \$198 million. 70% will come from individuals or individual congregation over 5 years. They may be coming to the synod for some funding.
- E. **Synod Endowment Fund** – On Tuesday, Scott received a draft of the policy update. Scott and Matthew will look at the document before the next meeting. This will be a policy document to explain things.
- F. **2013 Synod Assembly Resolution 4** – Holy Land resolution. Pastor Jon Jacobs' church, Ascension in Milwaukee, will memorialize this issue. The bishop will talk with Pastor Jon.
- G. **Peace Lutheran Discussion** – The pastor has departed. The congregation received a grant (\$20K to \$30K) but it is not known if the goals of the grant were met. It was requested that we identify within the financials the funds repaid by Peace to the synod - \$500 repaid to date.

New Business

Mt. Meru Coffee Project Bylaw Revision and Approval of New Directors

Vice President Manske went through the changes to the Mt. Meru Coffee Projects' bylaws that were requested by the project. Action was taken on recommended bylaw changes.

Greater Milwaukee Synod Council March 20, 2014 Meeting Summary

Council Action

The Council voted to approve amendments to the Mt. Meru Coffee Project's bylaws as follows:

Article V Section 2 (b) Number and Term of Directors. The number of Directors of the Corporation shall be ~~eight~~ **twelve**, one of whom shall be the Corporate Member's bishop, who shall serve as a Director ex officio. Except as otherwise provided with respect to (i) the terms of the initial Directors, (ii) an interim appointment to fill a vacancy, and (iii) the Corporate Member's bishop, each Director shall hold office for a term of three years or until such Director's successor shall have been duly elected or until such Director's death, resignation, or removal. Directors need not be residents of the State of Wisconsin. **One of the twelve Director's positions shall be assigned by the Corporate Member's Bishop, who shall act as the Corporate Member's representative if the Corporate Member's Bishop is unable to attend meetings.**

Article V Section 2 (c) Term Limitation. Directors may be reelected, but no Director (except the Corporate Member's bishop, who shall serve as a Director ex officio) shall be eligible for reelection after being elected for and serving three successive three year terms (following a partial term if initially elected as a Director to fill a vacancy) ~~until at least one year shall have elapsed after the end of the third successive three-year term. unless a request is made to the Corporate Member Council to extend the term of a Director for up to five successive three-year terms. The term of any Director may be renewed if at least one year shall have elapsed, where the individual is not a Director of the Corporation, after the end of the third, fourth or fifth successive three year term.~~

Section 4. Removal. The Corporate Member may, with or without cause, remove one or more Directors or the entire Board of Directors. Further, upon the advance consent of the Corporate Member, a majority of the Board of Directors may remove one or more individual Directors (except the Corporate Member's bishop **or his/her assignee**, who shall serve as a Director ex officio), with or without cause, at any regular or special meeting of the Board of Directors.

Council Action

The Council voted to approve as Directors of the Mt. Meru Coffee Project Mr. Thomas Schaefer, member of Fox Point Evangelical Lutheran Church as a new director for a term ending in June 2016; Mr. Andrew Petersen, member of St. John's Lutheran Church, Brookfield, as a new director for a term ending in June 2017; Mr. Jerry Schmidt and Mr. David Hammer, both as continuing directors to serve a fourth term ending in June 2015; Mr. Ronald Bohrer, as a continuing director serving a fourth term ending in June 2017; and Mr. Fred Meyer and Mr. Walter Chosseck, both to serve as continuing directors to serve a fourth term ending in June 2016.

Anti-Racism Training Status – Discussion. Crossroads training is done once a year, but they are looking at twice a year. It was discussed that Chicago does this many times a year. Building up accountability for the synod. One suggestion was made that it should be redone every five years.

Recommendation of 2015-2016 Synod Budget to 2014 Synod Assembly

Council Action

The Council voted to recommend to the 2014 Synod Assembly the Draft 2015-2016 Budget, as presented.

**Recommendation of 2014 Synod Assembly Rules and;
Recommendation of 2014 Synod Assembly Agenda**

Greater Milwaukee Synod Council March 20, 2014 Meeting Summary

Council Action

The Council voted to recommend the 2014 Assembly Rules for Elections and Procedures and the Agenda for the 2014 Synod Assembly, as presented, to the 2014 Synod Assembly for the Assembly's approval.

Resolution on Youth Participation at 2014 Synod Assembly and; Resolution on Youth Scholarships for 2014 Synod Assembly

Council Action

The Council voted to approve Cross Generational Ministry's resolution inviting each congregation to send one youth or young adult as a full-time visitor to the 2014 Synod Assembly and future Synod Assemblies, with all such visitors having voice but not vote, and with a reduced fee of \$100 for these visitors, with limited scholarships available from the synod.

Offering from 2014 Synod Assembly to World Hunger

Council Action

The Council voted to send offerings from the first worship at the 2014 Synod Assembly to ELCA World Hunger and from the second worship at the 2014 Synod Assembly to Refugee Resettlement.

Next Meeting

Thursday, May 15, 2014 – 5:30 pm Dinner; 6:15 pm Synod Council Meeting

Martin Luther Lutheran Church, 9235 W Bluemound Road, Milwaukee, Wisconsin

Future Meetings

- Thursday, July 17, 2014 – Bishop Jeff Barrow's Home
- Thursday, September 18, 2014 – Trinity Lutheran Church, West Bend

Unless otherwise noted, all meetings are preceded by a dinner at 5:30 pm, with the meeting beginning at 6:15 pm.

Submitted,

Al Van Lith
In Lieu of Synod Secretary