

Greater Milwaukee Synod, ELCA  
Summary of the Synod Council Meeting  
May 12, 2016

St. Paul's Evangelical Lutheran Church  
705 Grand Avenue, Random Lake

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

**Attendance**

Name	Cluster/Position	Term Ends 8/31	Present	Absent	Anti- Racism
Ms. Sue Schmidt-Decker	Kenosha/West Racine	2017	X		10/2015
Vacant	Lake Country	2019			-
Vacant	Milwaukee 1	2017			-
The Rev. Lisa Bates-Froiland	Milwaukee 2	2017	X		1/2011
Ms. Claire Zautke	Milwaukee 3	2019		X	Pending
The Rev. Bill Knapp	Milwaukee 4	2019	X		Pending
Mr. Tom Gauthier	Northern Lakeshore	2017	X		9/2013
The Rev. David Schoob	Northwest	2017		X	9/2013
Ms. Lynn Hooper	Racine	2017		X	Pending
The Rev. Angela Khabeab	Waukesha	2019	X		10/2015
The Rev. Lindsay Jordan	At Large	2019	X		Pending
Mr. Steven Hruska	At Large	2019		X	Pending
Ms. Betty Warber	At Large	6/2016		X	Pending
Mr. Scott Manske	Vice President	2017 (1)	X		10/2015
Mr. Matthew Brockmeier	Secretary	2019 (2)	X		1/2012
Mr. Lee Johnston	Treasurer	2017 (2)		X	Pending
The Rev. Jeff Barrow	Bishop	2016 (1)	X		1/2008
Ms. Sarah Muller	Youth Representative	2017		X	Pending
Mr. Jonathan Barker	Young Adult Rep.	2017	X		9/2013

Also present were Rev. Sandy Chrostowski, Director of Evangelical Mission; and Ms. MaryBeth Hoffman, Chair, GMS Reconciling in Christ Ministry Team.

**Vice President's Remarks**

Mr. Manske provided an update on registration for the Synod Assembly, with discussion on getting information on whether registrations have been missed because of systems problems. Additional discussion on how to assure that at least 60% of Synod Assembly Voting Members are lay to meet ELCA requirements. The Council's consensus was for the executive committee to address this question if needed before the Assembly. Additional discussion on plans for some support activities by Council members at the Assembly. Mr. Manske plans to have a final phone conference with ELCA staff on procedural issues for the bishop's election.

**Bishop's Report**

**Council Action**

**Approval of On Leave from Call Status**

The Council voted to approve On Leave from Call Status for Rev. Mark D. Thompson, Rev. Jennifer J. Kuhnert and Rev. Thomas M. Pietz.

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## **Council Action**

### **Approval of Synod Calls**

The Council voted to approve a synod call to interim ministry for Rev. Kimberly A. Jordan, and a synod call to serve in a Presbyterian congregation to Rev. Matthew A. Lee.

## **Council Action**

### **Approval of Retired Status**

The Council voted to approve a retired status for Ms. Ruth Schmidt, AIM, effective June 1, 2016.

Beginning with the question of resolutions presented for the Synod Assembly's consideration, Bishop Jeff Barrow asked people to be respectful of those items submitted, unlike last year. He wants things to be discussed fairly and civilly.

Following the Assembly there will be a staff retreat. Other work over the summer will focus on the transition, with Bishop Barrow wanting to assist the bishop-elect in preparing to take office. One thing the new bishop will do is participate in the Bishops' Formation conference in Chicago.

At the end of his term, Bishop Barrow will travel to the Meru Diocese in Tanzania for the election of a new bishop there. He will be accompanied by Mr. Walter Chosseck of the Meru Committee. Rev. Chuck Ruehle was also planning to go, but his health will not allow the trip.

The bishop briefly addressed other aspects of the transition, especially staff concerns about the uncertainty related to their positions. He noted that while transitions like this can be scary, they are also a time of hope and anticipation. The new bishop, he said, will have a full schedule for the fall, and not face an immediate budget crunch because of reserve funds that can be used during the transition.

## **Treasurer's Report**

Mister Manske reported in Lee's absence. There was an adjustment for proper routing of synod assembly funds, noted on the revised FY2016 statement. Pushing the synod's need for support was fruitful last year. This year, so far, the synod continues a positive trend, with relatively strong income, and costs in check. Transition costs may be covered in part by a staff salary reserve fund.

## **Action Items – Old Business**

**Disbursement of Funds from Good Shepherd Closing** – No additional information at this time.

**Review of Standard Rate for Supply Pastors in the Synod** – Following the Council's previous discussion, Vice President Manske consulted with other synod vice presidents on their policies for payment to supply pastors. Working with one of the other vice presidents a table, showing compensation policies throughout the synod, was developed and provided as a support document for this meeting. Brief discussion noting especially policies of other synods in this region.

## **Council Action**

### **Approval of Recommended Standard Rate for Supply Pastors**

The Council voted to approve a recommendation that congregations pay \$150 for supply pastors, with \$50 for an additional service.

**Rogers Street Property Disposition** – No additional information at this time. Rental payments are continuing month-to-month.

**Transition Plan for Synod Staff** – Mr. Manske reported that the proposed policy does not apply to Jim Bickel, but does apply to all other staff. He met with staff yesterday, and is sharing suggested

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changes to the draft policy. These include removing “budget restraints, change of position functions,” from provision 1.20 B, and adding “within one year of their taking office” to the end of the same sentence. Discussion on one-year timeframe, with concerns that it provided too wide a window of liability for the synod. The original motion was to accept the recommendation as presented.

## **Council Action**

### **Approval of Transition Policy for Synod Staff for 2016**

The Council voted to approve the Transition Policy for Synod Staff for 2016 as amended.

## **Action Items – New Business**

**Resolution Honoring Bishop** – This proposed resolution was reviewed by the synod’s Reference & Counsel Committee last night; they recommended adoption by the Assembly if submitted by the Council.

## **Council Action**

### **Submission of Resolution to Synod Assembly**

The Council voted to submit a Resolution to Honor Bishop Jeff Barrow to the 2016 Synod Assembly, as follows:

Whereas, the Rev. Jeff Barrow is completing his first term and sixth year as Bishop of the Greater Milwaukee Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America; and

Whereas, Bishop Barrow has faithfully served the Church and this synod, the region and Churchwide through his ministry with the congregations of the synod, the Synod Council, and synod partners, including the Regional Council, the ELCA Conference of Bishops, and the ELCA Church Council; and

Whereas, Bishop Barrow has faithfully represented this synod and the ELCA in his participation on the Seminary Board of Directors, Outreach for Hope and the, and

Whereas, Bishop Barrow has promoted cross-synodical relationships with our companion synods in El Salvador and Tanzania; and

Whereas, Bishop Barrow has provided pastoral care and leadership for the Greater Milwaukee Synod candidates for rostered ministry, our ordained and other rostered ministers, and lifted up the need to support all church leaders in a holistic manner, and

Whereas, Bishop Barrow has officiated at ordinations, commissionings, consecrations, and installations as rostered leadership joined the faithful communities in the wide variety of ministries within the synod, ministry in and with camps, campuses, care centers, congregations and counseling offices, homes, hospitals; and

Whereas, Bishop Barrow was faithful to his call to interpret and advocate the mission and theology of the whole church, fostering support for the wide variety of expressions of our synod's evangelical outreach vision in emerging ministries including The Table, Breaking the Chains Church, Living Faith in Racine, Unity in Brookfield, and Emaús, ELCA; and

Whereas, Bishop Barrow has been a voice and a presence both within the church and to the wider community, including the political arena, witnessing to our call to be a public church striving for justice, peace, and the care of creation, now therefore be it

**Resolved**, that we, as members of this annual assembly of the Greater Milwaukee Synod, offer our appreciation and gratitude in honor of the six years of leadership and service by Jeff Barrow as Synod Bishop; and be it further

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**Resolved**, that we, by this action, also offer thanksgiving to God for Bishop Barrow's vision, service, and faithful discipleship; and be it finally

**Resolved**, that we bestow upon Bishop Barrow and all with whom he continues to share life and ministry, the boundless blessings of Almighty God—Father, Son and Holy Spirit—and give thanks for the ongoing service Bishop Barrow will bring to the one, holy, catholic, and apostolic church and to the Lord of that church in whom we have life and salvation, now and forever.

**Resolution for AMMPARO** – This proposal was originally discussed by the El Salvador Committee, but was not prepared in time for action before the deadline for submission by entities other than the Council. It was also reviewed by Reference & Counsel, with a recommendation for the Assembly to approve if it is submitted by the Council.

### **Council Action**

#### **Submission of Resolution to Synod Assembly**

The Council voted to submit a Resolution in support of Accompanying Migrant Minors with Protection, Advocacy, Representation and Opportunities to the 2016 Synod Assembly, as follows:

Whereas, there are over 90 verses in the Bible that call on people of faith to welcome the stranger and foreigner; and

Whereas the ELCA has issued many statements since its inception on Central America and refugees, calling on this Church to be a welcoming place for those seeking refuge and asylum; and

Whereas children and families from Central America have been coming to the United States seeking refuge from violence, poverty and lack of opportunities, for many years with a spike in the number coming in Federal Fiscal Years 2012-2014, along with an increase in number this fiscal year; and

Whereas companion churches, ecumenical partners, social ministry organizations and other partners are in ministry with the children and families in Central America and in the United States of America; and

Whereas it is the commitment of the ELCA as a church in the world, to accompany vulnerable children and families from Central America today and in the future using the AMMPARO (Accompanying Migrant Minors with Protection, Advocacy, Representation and Opportunities)\* strategy as a guide; therefore, be it

**Resolved**, the Greater Milwaukee Synod in Assembly affirm the AMMPARO (Accompanying Migrant Minors with Protection, Advocacy, Representation and Opportunities) strategy recently presented to the ELCA Church Council and memorialize the Churchwide Assembly to adopt it; and be it further

**Resolved**, that the Greater Milwaukee Synod Assembly affirm the ministry that is being done in this synod with children and families from Central America; and be it further

**Resolved**, that the Greater Milwaukee Synod Assembly consider ways that it can accompany, foster awareness building and advocate for the children and families in Central America in their country, in the countries in transit and in the United States of America; and be it further

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**Resolved**, that the Greater Milwaukee Synod use the AMMPARO strategy as a guide for accompanying children and families from Central America through the Welcoming Congregations and/or Guardian Angel programs, and for advocating policies that are more just and humane and that uphold and defend the human rights of migrant children and their families.

**Appointment of At-Large Members of Nominating Committee** – No nominees. Secretary Matthew Brockmeier urged Council members to seek individuals willing to serve.

**Appointment of Cluster Nominees to Nominating Committee** – Nametags at the Synod Assembly will include clusters, to try to re-awaken awareness. Bishop Barrow urged the synod to consider cluster seating in the future at the Assembly, something he believes helped develop bonds within the clusters and awareness of their role.

**Siebert Grant Application for Lutheran Campus Ministry** – Action was requested by the Lutheran Campus Ministry board to allow submission of a grant proposal for the 2016-2017 academic year.

### **Council Action**

#### **Approval of Grant Submission**

The Council voted to approve submission of a grant request by Lutheran Campus Ministry to the Siebert Foundation for funds totaling \$18,500, including \$13,400 in Peer Ministry Stipends, \$3,600 in support of the Fall Training event, and \$1,500 in support of the Winter Retreat.

**Summary of Resolutions to be Presented to the Synod Assembly** – A brief summary was given of the four resolutions previously submitted. It was noted that the Reference & Counsel Committee recommended approval of all resolutions.

### **Reports**

**Director of Evangelical Mission** – A written report on Mission activities was presented, along with a report entitled Comprehensive Mission Support Strategy 2016-2018. Rev. Sandy Chrostowski spoke about the Mission Support Strategy, which is a new three-year emphasis of the ELCA. It calls for more accountability for Directors of Evangelical Mission across the church. She reported that much has already been done in our synod, but not in all synods. Synods are required to write a two-year plan for this work, which she will prepare prior to the July Council meeting. A key goal is for synods to maintain or increase their mission support. Consultations with the ELCA will now be every year for each synod, rather than every several years. Rev. Chrostowski reported to the Council that she will be leaving her position with the synod to take a new position, Director, DEM Relationships, ELCA. The bishop spoke about what a “wonderful gift” Rev. Chrostowski has been to the synod, calling her “my rock.” He noted that so much information will need to be translated and transferred to a successor. The bishop is recommending an interim DEM to work through the transition, with the new bishop seeking a permanent replacement for Rev. Chrostowski. Rev. Chrostowski noted that she will be responsible for filling both the interim and permanent positions. Her announcement will go out on the synod listserv tonight, with an announcement planned for tomorrow by the ELCA.

**Director of Discipleship** – No report submitted.

**Director of Rostered Leadership** – A written report was presented.

**Cross+Generational Ministry** – No report submitted.

**Lutheran Campus Ministry** – No report submitted.

**Reconciling in Christ** – A written report was presented.

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**Anti-Racism Team** – A written report was presented.

**Women of the ELCA** – A written report was presented.

**Outreach for Hope** – A written report was submitted.

### **Old Business**

**ELCA Capital Campaign** – No discussion.

**2014 Synod Assembly Resolution 2** – No further action until after Synod Assembly, though an interim report will be provided.

**Cluster Task Force** – No discussion.

### **Next Meeting**

**Thursday, July 21, 2016 – 5:30 Dinner; 6:15 Meeting**

Bishop Barrow's Home, Racine

### **Future Meetings**

- Thursday, September 15, 2016 – Fox Point Evangelical Lutheran Church, 7510 N Santa Monica Blvd, Fox Point

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

Submitted,

Mr. Matthew Brockmeier  
Synod Secretary