

Greater Milwaukee Synod, ELCA  
Summary of the Synod Council Meeting  
**November 15, 2018**

Faith/Santa Fe Lutheran Church  
1000 South Layton Boulevard, Milwaukee

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

**Attendance**

Name	Cluster/Position	Term Ends 8/31	Present	Absent	Anti-Racism
Mr. Bob Reinders	Belle City	2021	X		10/2015
Vacant – Lay Male	Kenosha/West Racine	2021			
Mr. George Monis	Lake Country	2019		X	Pending
Rev. Tim Tahtinen	Milwaukee 1	2021	X		10/2016
Ms. Janet Wunrow	Milwaukee 2	2021	X		Pending
Ms. Claire Zautke	Milwaukee 3	2019		X	Pending
Rev. Pamela Lange	Milwaukee 4	2019		X	11/2018
Rev. Elizabeth Jaeger	Northern Lakeshore	2021		X	Pending
Mr. Mark Christiaansen	Northwest	2021		X	Pending
Rev. Kevin Kretzmann Farrar	Waukesha	2019	X		Pending
Rev. Lindsay Jordan	At Large	2019	X		2/2016
Mr. Jerry Key	At Large	2019	X		11/2018
Ms. Amber Davis	At Large	2019		X	Pending
Ms. Joyce Caldwell	Vice President	2021 (1)	X		11/2018
Mr. Matthew Brockmeier	Secretary	2019 (2)	X		10/2017
Mr. Tom Gauthier	Treasurer	2021 (1)	X		10/2017
Rev. Paul Erickson	Bishop	2022 (1)	X		10/2017
Ms. Anja Logan	Youth Representative	2019		X	Pending
Ms. Aliliywa Mbise	Young Adult Rep.	2021		X	10/2017

Also present were Rev. Jennifer Arnold, Assistant to the Bishop for Missional Leadership; Mr. Tim Larson, Executive Director, Outreach for Hope; and Rev. Fred Thomas-Breitfeld, Anti-Racism Team.

**Devotions**

Ms. Janet Wunrow shared devotions based on the Book of Daniel, addressing chaos, violence and evil.

**Appointment of Rev. Kevin Kretzmann Farrar to Synod Council**

Rev. Kevin Kretzmann Farrar was presented to the Council as the nominee from the Waukesha Cluster to fill the vacancy resulting from Rev. Angela Khabeb's resignation when she accepted a call outside the synod. He has served as Associate Pastor at Atonement Lutheran Church in Muskego since June, with a focus on youth ministry, confirmation and small group ministries.

**Council Action**

**SC 18.11.01. Appointment to Council**

The Council voted to appoint Rev. Kevin Kretzmann Farrar to the Synod Council to fill a vacancy for a member of the clergy representing the Waukesha Cluster through August 31, 2019.

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### **Council Action**

#### **SC 18.11.03. Approval of Consent Agenda**

The Council voted to approve all items from the consent agenda as presented, including approval of minutes from the regular Synod Council meeting on July 19, 2018 and the electronic meeting of October 10, 2018; approval of on leave from call status for Rev. Kelli Weiss and for Rev. Betty Baires, both effective October 1, 2018, and both for the standard three-year leave period; and approval of retired status for Rev. John Holm, effective December 1, 2018.

### **Vice President's Report**

Vice President Caldwell said that it was wonderful to participate in the Anti-Racism Training, noting that she always learns something new that is valuable. Being able to share observations with other participants from the synod is helpful. (Jerry Key encouraged participation in Anti-Racism Training offered in Chicago, and suggested that it may be possible to arrange for a group to go there.) Since her retirement she has also participated in a synod vice presidents' gathering in Chicago, which she said was really helpful. The three foci of the gathering were policy governance, staff administration, and mission.

Included was a legal one-on-one with ELCA Secretary Rev. Chris Boerger, with information on how the office of the secretary relates to the synods. Among other take-aways are that the source of funding and staffing must be identified in memorials to the Churchwide Assembly; discussion and a video

([https://www.youtube.com/watch?feature=youtu.be&v=bTcaAkG86QQ&fbclid=IwAR0PhCVTCX-Ez8XWUOlcmBipwX9C6W\\_2lK0Ye1rsKR\\_dBzYhAQi9K3BMask&app=desktop#menu](https://www.youtube.com/watch?feature=youtu.be&v=bTcaAkG86QQ&fbclid=IwAR0PhCVTCX-Ez8XWUOlcmBipwX9C6W_2lK0Ye1rsKR_dBzYhAQi9K3BMask&app=desktop#menu)) on women in ministry, and the AAMPARO initiative as it relates to accompanying the migrant caravan in Mexico. "Where can we serve, being God's people?"

She has also continued having one-on-one conversations with members of the Synod Council in advance of Saturday's Council retreat. The retreat facilitator is Rev. Michael Binder, Innovation Leadership Team Consultant at Luther Seminary in St. Paul, Minnesota and Pastor of Mill City Church in Minneapolis. Expected facets of the discussion are input from the Fed for the Journey sessions and a study of mission, vision and values. There will be "more interaction than we usually can have. I'm looking forward to it."

### **Bishop's Report**

Bishop Paul Erickson referred members to his written report. Recent highlights include his Sacramental letter and compensation guidelines modification, which will be addressed later in the agenda. Fed for the Journey had "good energy." The bishop solicited thoughts and comments.

There was general agreement to form a task force for a possible synod fundraising campaign and appeal. He has contacted three companies to solicit proposals. He is suggesting a possible 2020 kick-off. Of concern will be an attempt to avoid a sense of competing with local congregation fundraising. Jerry Key expressed concern about accumulating funds that are not immediately going out to ministry, and to be conscious of the line between using and holding resources. The bishop noted that the approach can be fine-tuned.

### **Treasurer's Report**

Treasurer Tom Gauthier, reporting that he has faith in the year-end outcome, said that the synod is currently about \$250,000 behind in giving compared to pledges. There are between 20 and 25 congregations behind: there will be exploration with those congregations. The big unknown in giving

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generally this year is the possible impact of the tax cut. The hope is that people give to the cause, not to the deduction. Nonetheless, the amount may be impacted. “We’re not in trouble, but we’re concerned.” Mr. Bob Reinders noted that expenses are also below plan.

### Old Business

#### Working Group on Structure of Clusters and Representational Principles

The working group, formed after the May Council meeting, presented the status of the two questions it is considering; the structure and function of the clusters, and changes needed prior to the next round of Synod Council elections. Working group chair Matthew Brockmeier reported that the immediate elections question was addressed with proposed modifications to Appendix 2 to the synod’s governing documents, which details which constituencies provide which nominees for consideration by the Synod Assembly.

The question of the functions and structure of clusters was discussed, but was seen as something requiring careful consideration over a longer time. A target was set of having final recommendations for the November 2019 Synod Council meeting, in time to modify the constitution at the 2020 Synod Assembly and to then allow these changes to be in place for the following Council elections, at the 2021 Synod Assembly. Essential to this process is looking at opportunities for collaboration and relationship for congregations, creating a “relational web of support” by separating representational principles from strategic ministry considerations.

#### Synod Council Open Positions

Efforts continue to fill the remaining Council vacancy for a lay male from the Kenosha/West Racine Cluster.

#### Update on Synod Council Retreat for Saturday, November 17, 2018

The Council’s November 17<sup>th</sup> retreat will be at Christ Church in Mequon, from approximately 9:00 am to 4:00 pm. What do we need to bring? Mind, body and heart. Reflect on where the synod goes. Not content, but interaction.

#### Revision to Compensation Guidelines

In reviewing congregational practices, Bishop Erickson found that there are some situations involving lay preaching where the full indicated compensation for supply does not make sense, when the rostered leader is only presiding at communion. To provide better guidance to congregations, he proposed changes to Part IV. H. of the 2019 Compensation Guidelines for Clergy.

#### Council Action

##### SC 18.11.05. Modification of Compensation Guidelines

The Council voted to approve a modification of the 2019 Compensation Guidelines for Clergy as follows:

Part IV. H. 2019 Compensation for Altar/Pulpit Supply clergy

\$175.00 - Preaching and leading one worship service, plus mileage (this applies when a supply pastor is both preaching and presiding, as well as when a layperson is preaching but not presiding)

\$50.00 - Each additional service on the same day or at another time (Saturday evening or weekday), when the preparation involved is already completed for the related Sunday.

\$50.00-Presiding at Communion only, plus mileage (this applies when a layperson is preaching and a pastor is needed only to preside at Communion)

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## Revision to Continuing Resolutions on Synod Assembly Voting Members

Wording in the changes to Continuing Resolutions S7.21.A18. and S7.21.B18. made in September created an unintended problem for congregations with more than 750 baptized members. Changes proposed at this meeting revert S7.21.A18. to its original language, and replace the language for S7.21.B18.

### Council Action

#### SC 18.11.06. Revision of Continuing Resolution

The Council voted to revise Continuing Resolutions S7.21.A18. and S7.21.B18. as follows:

S7.21.A18 All congregations may elect at least ~~three~~ two lay voting members of the Synod Assembly. Congregations having 750 to 1,249 baptized members may elect a ~~fourth~~ third lay voting member. Thereafter an additional lay voting member may be added for each additional 500 baptized members of the congregation (e.g. at 1,250 members, 1,750 members, etc.).

S7.21.B18. ~~If more than two lay voting members of the Synod Assembly are elected under provision S7.21.A18. above, at least one shall be a youth or young adult. All congregations may add one voting member to the number allotted in S7.21.A18. if that additional member is a youth or young adult.~~

## New Business

### Churchwide Assembly Local Arrangements Co-Chairs

Ms. Sue Cyr and Rev. Lindsay Jordan have been appointed by the bishop to serve as Local Arrangements Co-Chairs for the Churchwide Assembly, based on previous Council discussion. After Thanksgiving they will travel to Chicago with Joyce Caldwell and Mary Romskog for a meeting with ELCA staff. Along the way sub-chairs will be appointed for various functional areas. There will be an effort to begin registering volunteers at the Together in Mission event in February. The bishop added that there may be opportunities for ministry site visits after the closing of the Assembly.

### Outreach for Hope

Attorney Steve Knowles was planning to attend this meeting, but was called away for a family concern. In his absence Tim Larson and Bob Reinders gave an overview of proposed changes to Outreach for Hope's Articles of Incorporation and Bylaws; modifications reflecting changes made by synod, in tax law and in ELCA rules that are meant to simplify and update to make these documents more intelligible. The Council had received a memo from Steve Knowles, plus the two revised documents in advance of the meeting.

When Outreach for Hope was formed, these documents were structured to allow it to evolve. The recommendation is to make changes to reflect the current attributes and needs of the organization. This includes eliminating the category of affiliate members, of which there were none, and the corporate member, which was the synod. With the revised structure the synod will still need to approve members of the Outreach for Hope board of directors.

In answer to a question about how board members will be recruited, Mr. Larson said the board is reviewing a matrix of needs. He also provided information on following up if anyone is interested in serving. The bishop noted that another provision is that a majority of board members must be from the ELCA.

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## **Council Action**

### **SC 18.11.07. Approval of Restated Articles of Incorporation and Bylaws for Outreach for Hope**

The Council voted to approve the restated Articles of Incorporation and restated Bylaws for Outreach for Hope as presented.

## **Mt. Meru Coffee Project Board Approvals**

Members of the Board of Directors of the Mt. Meru Coffee Project must be approved by the Synod Council, something last done in 2016. The Council reviewed the current board roster, and acted to approve those whose current or new terms have not been acted upon.

## **Council Action**

### **SC 18.11.08. Approval of Directors – Mt. Meru Coffee Project**

The Council voted to approve as Directors of the Mt. Meru Coffee Project for continuing terms: Mr. Ronald Bohrer, All Saints Lutheran Church, serving a fifth term ending June 30, 2020; Mr. Andrew Petersen, St. John's Lutheran Church, Brookfield, serving a second term ending June 30, 2020; and Ms. Sue Johnson, Vernon Lutheran Church, serving a second term ending June 30, 2021, and for new terms: Ms. Marilyn Heyde, Holy Cross Lutheran Church, Menomonee Falls; and Mr. Rick Fowein, Ascension Lutheran Church, Waukesha; both for new terms ending June 30, 2021.

## **Investment of Reserve Funds**

Treasurer Tom Gauthier reported that the finance committee has recommended a new investment strategy for reserve funds, focusing on “laddered,” or staggered maturity, certificates of deposit. Using this approach, a portion of the CDs would be available each year, either for reinvestment or use. An advantage to this strategy would be a higher rate of return than current accounts offer, resulting in an anticipated increase in investment income of from \$8,000-\$10,000 per year.

## **Council Action**

### **SC 18.11.09. Approval of Investment Strategy**

The Council voted to approve removing \$450,000 of General Fund money from a Mission Investment Fund account, and to reinvest \$150,000 in a three-year adjustable rate certificate of deposit with a current interest rate of 2.92%, and \$300,000 in two one-year \$150,000 adjustable rate certificates of deposit with a current interest rate of 2.57%.

## **Breaking the Chains Congregation Constitution**

No action. The congregation is reviewing the draft constitution, which will be approved by action of the bishop once approved by Breaking the Chains.

## **Appendix 2 Revision – Nominations for Synod Council**

The key principles guiding modifications to Appendix 2 are to assure that every person in the synod's membership would have at least one seat in the next election cycle for which they could be considered, and that all existing ELCA representational principals (e.g. representation for people of color, or by gender) were followed. This approach is modeled on the table that has been used for nominating Voting Members of the Churchwide Assembly at the 2015 and 2018 Synod Assemblies.

Discussion ensued about how the specification of gender in the proposed Appendix 2 fit with the synod's identity as a Reconciling in Christ synod, with Secretary Brockmeier saying that the specification of gender was in keeping with current ELCA policies on maintaining a balance of female and male lay representatives on church bodies, though both the youth and young adult seats no longer

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have a gender specification. The bishop offered a recommendation to assure that gender identity is not a barrier.

### **Council Action**

#### **SC 18.11.10. Motion to Amend**

The Council voted to amend the proposed revision to Continuing Resolution S10.01.A11., Appendix 2, to include the words “those who identify as gender non-binary can be nominated for any of the above positions” in the table.

### **Council Action**

#### **SC 18.11.11. Approval of Revision to Continuing Resolution**

The Council voted to approve a revision of Continuing Resolution S10.01.A11, Appendix 2., Nominations for Synod Council, as amended by SC18.11.10.

### **Host Congregations for Synod Council Meetings**

It was agreed that the January 2019 Council meeting would be held at Faith Lutheran Church, Cedarburg, with the May 2019 Council meeting at Grace Evangelical Lutheran Church, Thiensville. Pending a final answer for the March meeting, Pastor Farrar offered to check on the availability of Atonement Lutheran Church, Muskego.

### **Synod Office Lease**

Bishop Erickson reported that conversations have begun with the synod’s landlord, Ascension Lutheran Church, Milwaukee, on a new lease rate and some modifications to the agreement. Included will be a proposal to switch the lease year to match the synod’s fiscal year, beginning February 1<sup>st</sup>. A revised agreement will be presented for action at the January 2019 Council meeting.

### **Campaign – Appeal for Mission**

In his report, Bishop Erickson included background information on consultants who could be asked for proposals to conduct a feasibility study on a potential capital campaign for synod ministries. The Council briefly discussed this process, and the creation of a task force to interview consultants before the January Council meeting.

### **Council Action**

#### **SC 18.11.12. Approval of Task Force**

The Council voted to approve creation of a task force to interview potential fundraising consultants for a capital campaign, chaired by Treasurer Tom Gauthier, and including Vice President Joyce Caldwell, Bishop Paul Erickson, Outreach for Hope Executive Director Tim Larson, and Outreach for Hope Board Chair Cynthia Halverson.

### **Consultation Committee Vacancy**

Byron Johnson, a lay male member of the Consultation Committee serving a term expiring in August 2021, has resigned because he is no longer a member of a congregation in the synod. The bishop provided background on the committee, and the fact that it is more active now than in past years. Elaborating on their work, he said that an emerging approach is to use family systems theory, a process of stating what was heard in discussion and suggesting questions to pursue, in place of the clear recommendations for action traditionally used and called for in the constitution. The traditional process, he added, “has not always been helpful.” There was no action by the Council.

### **Reports**

**Evangelical Mission** – A written report was submitted.

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**Congregations in Mission** – A written report was submitted.

**Missional Leadership** – A written report was submitted, with elaboration on Wellness Grants, which will be made directly to leaders, and may also be requested by congregations. These grants are for \$100 each. Rev. Jennifer Arnold urged congregations to take time to affirm their pastors. These grants will be publicized through a letter, and quarterly congregational and rostered leader newsletters. Rev. Arnold noted that October is Clergy Appreciation Month, something not promoted by the ELCA, but which clergy sometimes notice not being promoted.

**Lutheran Campus Ministry** – A written report was submitted.

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

**Anti-Racism Team** – A verbal report was presented by Rev. Fred Thomas-Breitfeld, who thanked those who attended this month's Anti-Racism Training. He said he thought this one stood out for participation and engagement, and more than any other session generated some people who were interested in joining the team. There were 28 registrants, including a MOSES group from Madison. Also included were about 18 synodical folks, which was lower than past years, but significant in engagement. "Thanks for support."

**Women of the ELCA** – No report submitted.

**Outreach for Hope** – A written report was presented. Executive Director Tim Larson expressed thanks for this year's bike ride, which raised a total of \$113,000 for Outreach for Hope's grants for ministries. Total grants just announced were \$326,000 to more than 18 congregations and ministries. Everyone who applied got something, Mr. Larson said. The "board and grant committee were very engaged." The grant process for 2019 will be streamlined, with a simplified grant application, including one-on-one time, designed to create more of a partnership.

## **Next Council Meeting**

**Thursday, Thursday, January 17, 2019**

Faith Lutheran Church, N35 W6621 Wilson Street, Cedarburg

## **Future Meetings and Events**

- Saturday, November 17, 2018 – Synod Council Retreat – Christ Church, 13460 North Port Washington Road, Mequon
- Saturday, February 16, 2019 – Together in Mission – St. John's Lutheran Church, 20275 Davidson Road, Brookfield
- Thursday, March 21, 2019 – St. John's Lutheran Church, 20275 Davidson Road, Brookfield
- Thursday, May 16, 2019 – Grace Evangelical Lutheran Church, 303 Green Bay Road, Thiensville
- Friday, May 31 – Saturday, June 1, 2019 – Synod Assembly – Italian Community Center, 631 East Chicago Street, Milwaukee
- Thursday, July 18, 2019 – Location TBD

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

Submitted,

Matthew Brockmeier  
Synod Secretary