

Greater Milwaukee Synod, ELCA
Summary of the Synod Council Meeting
January 17, 2019

Faith Lutheran Church
N35 W6621 Wilson Street, Cedarburg

This Summary does not constitute official minutes of this meeting.
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		X	
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. Matthew Short, Assistant to the Bishop for Evangelical Mission; Ms. Suzanne Seidemann, Women of the ELCA; Rev. Fred Thomas-Breitfeld, Anti-Racism Team; Rev. Bill Beyer, Reconciling in Christ Representative.

Devotions

Ms. Aliliywa Mbise shared devotions, sharing her reflection from the book “Living your Life”.

I. Consent Agenda

Items on the consent agenda included adoption of the agenda for this meeting, approval of minutes from the regular Synod Council meeting on November 15, 2018 and the electronic meeting of December 14-17, 2018; and approval of on leave from call status for Rev. Patrick Keen, effective February 1, 2019, for the standard three-year leave period.

Council Action

SC 19.01.01. Approval of Consent Agenda

The Council voted to approve all items from the consent agenda as presented, including adoption of the agenda for this meeting, approval of minutes from the regular Synod Council meeting on November 15, 2018 and the electronic meeting of December 14-17, 2018; and approval of on leave from call status for Rev. Patrick Keen, effective February 1, 2019, for the standard three-year leave period.

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II. Approval of Synod Calls

Council Action

SC 19.01.02. Approval of Synod Call

The Council voted to approve a synod call to Rev. Michael Mueller to Interim Ministry at Mt. Hope Lutheran Church, West Allis, effective January 8, 2019.

III. Vice President's Report

Vice President Caldwell presented a written report. Her comments on that report noted the positive responses to the evaluation review for Bishop Erickson. One of the few areas noted for improvement was increased interaction with cluster deans, which Bishop Erickson has already begun to address. She also noted summary comments from Michael Binder on the Synod Council retreat in November. Work on the synod vision, mission, and values will be continuing with further discussions, along with workshops at February's Together in Mission event.

IV. Bishop's Report

Bishop Paul Erickson opening comment revolved around 2018 and having several trips and some time away from the office, and things jumping back into high gear in recent days, and a lot of things are gearing up. Bishop Erickson is looking forward to a number of major events in the coming months, and also looking forward to a little less travel in 2019.

He has asked council member to be sure to sign up for the "Together in Mission" event on February 16, 2019 at St. John's Lutheran Church in Brookfield.

Bishop Erickson was pleased with the participation at the Synod vision/mission/values/practices retreat in November, and as a result of that work, he will be offering two workshops at the upcoming Together in Mission event on February 16. Bishop Erickson will be consulting with Joyce Caldwell on this in the hope that these workshops will provide an opportunity for synodical leaders to participate in this work. We will also have a chance to invite input/feedback in the opening plenary and during the cluster lunches that day.

Bishop Erickson discussed the two surveys that were sent out in December. The first was sent to all of the congregations with which the synod staff has had significant engagement in the past 12 months. 143 people at 63 congregations received the survey, which asked them to comment on their engagement with the Bishop Erickson and assistants. We received approximately 50 responses to this survey, and he was able to use the feedback in the year-end review conversations with the staff. There were many affirmations of our work, and several helpful suggestions for ways we could improve. One example would be clarifying expectations at the beginning of the call process so that congregations and candidates have a more realistic understanding of how things might unfold. The second survey focused solely on my performance, and Joyce Caldwell addressed that in her report.

He then discussed the upcoming staff retreat Staff Retreat. The retreat will be on January 28-30 and the main topic will be "The purpose of our work, why we do it, and how we do it. The emphasis is to be sure that we are all working smartly.

V. Treasurer's Report

Treasurer Tom Gauthier reported that giving is behind expectations by \$150,000.00. This number was thru December 2018. He noted that our fiscal year ends January 31st, 2019, and we are still expecting giving from several congregations.

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He also noted that the true impact of the shortfall is approximately 40% of the shortfall, as approximately 60% of our expenses (mission support to the ELCA and other ministries) are tied to income received.

Tom has and will be making calls to congregations to discuss their giving.

Council Action

SC 19.01.03. Receipt of Financial Statements

The Council voted to receive the financial reports for December 2018 as presented.

VI. Old Business

A. Report from Churchwide Assembly Local Arrangements Committee

A written report was submitted.

Sue Cyr and Rev, Lindsay Jordan are co-chairs of the committee. There will be an opportunity for congregations to make gift bags for the assembly participants. There is also discussion of mission site visits on Saturday August 10th after the assembly.

B. Coordination of Synod Council member attendance at Crossroads Training April 25-27, LSTC

Synod Council members who are unable to attend the regularly scheduled October Crossroads training, may attend a training at LSTC on April 25-27. Registration costs will be covered by the synod, with early bird registration running through March 28. Housing is available by contacting LSTC directly; carpooling is encouraged. The link to register for the April training is <http://events.r20.constantcontact.com/register/event?llr-sysrdbqab&oeidk=a07efny34hk08770de6>. Indicate you are paying by check and notify Mary Romskog, so the synod can pay the registration.

C. Next Steps in Discussion of Synod Mission, Vision, Values

- i. Bishop Erickson overview and Workshops at Together in Mission event
- ii. Discussion in cluster groups at Together in Mission event
- iii. Engagement with Synod Ministries and Committees

D. Executive Committee Recommendation re. Staff Pay Adjustments for 2019 budget

Treasurer Tom Gauthier presented the recommendation of the Executive Committee to provide a 2.5% increase for synod staff for pay adjustments for 2019.

Council Action

SC 19.01.04. Staff pay Adjusted to increase 2.5%

The council voted to approve a Staff raise for calendar year 2019 for an increase of 2.5% for all staff.

E. Synod Council Open Position: Kenosha/W. Racine

A vacancy remains for a Synod Open Position for Kenosha/West Racine Cluster.

VII. New Business

A. Campaign/Appeal for Mission Proposals

Treasurer Tom Gauthier discussed the meeting with 3 different mission appeal companies and that the executive committee had narrowed the selection down to GSB (Gronlund, Sayther, and Brunkow). Bishop Erickson shared that we have worked with GSB on other synodical stewardship initiatives.

Bishop Erickson noted that the first thing that GSB would do is the feasibility study, this study will in the end decide if the people that would support this campaign are excited about the campaign. The result of the study may be that we will go in an entirely different direction.

There was discussion of the cost of the study being \$30,000.00.

Council Action

SC 19.01.05. Approve contract to GSB of \$30,000.00

The GMS Council approved the signing of a contract with Michael Ward of Gronlund, Sayther, and Brunkow to conduct a feasibility study to explore a synodical mission appeal, and that \$30,000.00 from the synod reserve funds be used to pay the costs of the study.

B. Open Position for Representative for Churchwide Assembly for At-large, Youth/Young Adult/Person of Color or Language other than English (no gender specification).

Vice President Caldwell noted that Aliliywa Mbise will no longer be able to serve as a Churchwide Assembly Representative in the at-large, Youth/Young Adult/Person of Color or Language Other than English position. This was also originally noted as a Female position. Secretary Matthew Brockmeier has posted this open position to seek nominations, with no gender specification. The Bishop authorized an electronic vote on the nominations received.

C. Summary of Nominations for Churchwide positions to be elected at Churchwide Assembly

A written report was submitted.

D. Deadlines for Nominations and Resolutions for 2019 Synod Assembly and Memorials for Churchwide Assembly

Council Action

SC 19.01.06. Approval of Deadline for Nominations, Resolutions, and Memorials

The council voted to set March 31, 2019 as the deadline for nominations for election to Synod Assembly, and for the submission of Resolutions and Memorials by congregations, clusters and committees for consideration at the Synod Assembly; and a deadline of May 16, 2019 for submission of Resolutions by the Synod Council.

VIII. Reports

A. Evangelical Mission – A written report was submitted.

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

Bishop Erickson shared that we had 22 calls completed this year.

C. Missional Leadership – A written report was submitted.

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Rev. Jennifer Arnold and Bishop Paul Erickson will be hosting a lunch for retired rostered ministers on January 22 at St. Matthew's and a lunch for Chaplains and those in Specialized Ministry calls on February 19 at the synod office.

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

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

Rev Bill Beyer reported that 4 new congregations are discerning RIC. There are plans for a wide presence at the Milwaukee Pride event in June.

F. Anti-Racism Team – No report submitted.

G. Women of the ELCA – A written report was submitted.

Ms. Suzanne Seidemann reported that the Women of the ELCA will have their next convention on Oct 12, 2019 at Holy Cross Lutheran Church in Menomonee Falls.

H. Outreach for Hope – No report was presented.

The Outreach for Hope board has passed a resolution supporting Campaign/Appeal for mission.

Next Council Meeting

Thursday, March 21, 2019

St. John's Lutheran Church, 20275 Davidson Road, Brookfield

Future Meetings and Events

- Saturday, February 16, 2019 – Together in Mission – St. John's Lutheran Church, 20275 Davidson Road, Brookfield
- Thursday, May 16, 2019 – Synod Council Meeting - 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 – Synod Council Meeting – Bishop Erickson's house 3072 S. 47th Street, Milwaukee

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,

Mark Christiaansen
Acting Synod Secretary