

Greater Milwaukee Synod, ELCA
Summary of the Synod Council Meeting
July 18, 2019

Bishop Erickson's Home
3072 South 47th Street, Milwaukee

This Summary does not constitute official minutes of this meeting.

We follow Jesus, form communities, love all

Attendance

Name	Cluster/Position	Term Ends 8/31	Present	Absent	Anti-Racism
Mr. Bob Reinders	Belle City	2021		X	10/2015
Mr. Joshua Kuehn	Kenosha/West Racine	2021	X		Pending
Mr. George Monis	Lake Country	2019	X		Pending
Vacant	Milwaukee 1	2021			
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		4/2019
Mr. Mark Christiaansen	Northwest	2021	X		Pending
Rev. Kevin Kretzmann Farrar	Waukesha	2019		X	4/2019
Rev. Lindsay Jordan	At Large	2019		X	2/2016
Mr. Jerry Key	At Large	2019		X	11/2018
Ms. Amber Davis	At Large	2023 (2)	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
Newly-Elected Members, with Voice But Not Vote					
Ms. Vickie Stretz	Lake Country	2023	X		
Rev. Denise Mbise	Milwaukee 3	2023	X		
Ms. Amber Anderson	Milwaukee 4	2023	X		
Mr. Edwin Aparicio	Waukesha	2023	X		
Mr. José Andrés Guerrero	At Large	2023		X	
Rev. Matthew Schlake-Kruse	Secretary	2023 (1)		X	
Ms. Sara Booher	Youth Representative	2021		X	

Also present were Mary Romskog, Executive Assistant for Administration and Candidacy; Laurie Meyer, Attorney, Davis/Kuelthau Law Firm; Walter Chosseck, President Mt. Meru Coffee Project; Sue Seidelmann, President of Women of the ELCA; Rev. Matthew Short, Assistant to the Bishop; Rev. Jennifer Arnold, Assistant to the Bishop; Rev. Fred Thomas-Breitfeld, Anti-Racism Team.

Devotions

Bishop Erickson shared a reading from 2nd Timothy, with reference to where we received our faith in God. Bishop Erickson shared a story comparing his raspberry plants that originated with his grandfather and thinking of who in our past might have led us in our faith journey.

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Council Action

Approval of Consent Agenda

The Council voted to approve all items from the consent agenda as presented, including approval of voice for visitors; adoption of the agenda for this meeting; approval of minutes from the regular Synod Council meeting on May 16, 2019, of the minutes from the special electronic Synod Council meetings of May 27-28, 2019 and June 27-28, 2019 and of the minutes of the Synod Assembly held on May 31 and June 1, 2019.

Report on 2019 Synod Assembly

Executive Assistant for Administration and Candidacy Mary Romskog presented a Synod Assembly overview. A written report was submitted. Highlights of several areas:

Evaluations: Received 89 responses (24% of voting members), we received high marks in many areas including the facility, food, registration process, and worship. The majority of responses had the pace of the assembly as “just about right”.

Technology: There were a few AV issues, we have a projector stop working and audio noise. This was the last event for Select Sound. We will have AV Milwaukee for next year’s assembly.

Lay/Clergy Balance: There were 63% lay voting members. There were 42 youth and young adults at the assembly.

Financial: Initial calculations have us at a \$5000.00 deficit for the assembly cost. (this will be verified when final counts are available). We may have to investigate raising the cost of registration next year as the early registration of \$85.00 to \$100.00 barely cover the cost of food.

Improvements: The synod staff is attending Guidebook training at the Churchwide assembly to get some tips on how to better format/use the guidebook.

Vice President’s Report

Vice President Joyce Caldwell had us split up into groups of 3 people, with at least one new, one leaving, and one continuing member of the council. Joyce suggested three questions for us to discuss in these small groups, 1. Share something you liked about council, 2. Something you wish you knew ahead of joining the council, 3. Why you said yes to joining the council. There was very good discussion in these small groups.

Bishop’s Report

Bishop Erickson submitted a written report. Bishop Erickson also submitted a document outlining Sabbatical Leave for Full-Time Exempt Employees. The following Full-Time Exempt Employees are eligible for a three-month sabbatical in the following years. The Rev. Kristen Nielsen – 2020, Bishop Paul Erikson – 2021, Rev. Jennifer Arnold – 2022, and Rev. Matthew Short – 2023.

Treasurer’s Report

Treasurer Tom Gauthier submitted a written treasurer’s report. Tom pointed out that we do have a deficit, however we are tracking as expected. The Audit reports are not yet completed but will be completed for the September council meeting.

Council Action

Acceptance of Financial Statements

The Council voted to accept the financial reports for June 2019 as presented.

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Old Business

Report from Churchwide Assembly Local Arrangements Committee

The Council received an update Mary Romskog, who shared the need for more volunteers for the Churchwide assembly in August. The CWA is in specific need o volunteers for Technology and for Airport greeters. We are able to part cars at the GMS office and car pool to the CWA.

Update on Mission Appeal

Bishop Erickson has had several conversations with Mike Ward from GSB (Gronlund, Sayther, and Brunkow) and with the Outreach for Hope executive committee, and they are moving ahead with plans to refine the case statement by the November council meeting.

Working Group on Structure of Clusters and Representational Principles

The working group will discuss our cluster system and determine if it works or if there is a need for a different system. Also there will be discussion of the matrix used for eligibility requirements for council members. The working group's next meeting is August 13, 2019.

New Business

Mt. Meru Coffee Project

The Council received a report on the current status and goals of the project. The council also received a copy of the Restated Articles of Incorporation and Bylaws of the Mt. Meru Coffee Project.

The council, heard from Walt Chossek, President of the Mt. Meru Coffee Project who highlighted some of the work of the project, the coffee from Mt. Meru is bought at a premium price, allowing the project to send farmers to school, giving farmers more income to allow them the opportunity for education, healthcare and celebrations. The project is celebrating 20 years of imports.

Council Action

Approval of Governing Documents

The Council voted to approve the Restated Articles of Incorporation and Bylaws of the Mt. Meru Coffee Project as presented.

Introduction of Laurie Meyer

Bishop Erickson introduced Attorney Laurie Meyer, whom he intends to appoint as the new synod attorney, following the retirement of Attorney Stephen Knowles.

Review and Action on Synod Assembly Resolutions and Memorials

The Council reviewed the Actions needed on the Synod Assembly Resolutions and Memorials.

- i. Resolutions 1 - (Gun Violence), 3 - (Portico), and 6 -b (Deportation) forwarded as memorials for CWA action.
- ii. Resolution 2 - Opioid Crisis: Synod task force in process, first organizational meeting July 25th.
- iii. Resolution 4 – parental Leave Policies: The synod attorney and Rev. Jennifer Arnold are working on the policy to serve as a model for congregations.
- iv. Resolution 5 – East Jerusalem Hospitals: Support advocacy efforts.

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Every-Congregation Visits

Bishop Erickson presented the “Every Congregation Visit” to the council. This program will have every congregation’s church council visited by a member of the synod staff, or a synod council member (past or present), or another synod leader. There will be 60 individuals trained for these visits. Each trained individual will visit two congregations. The training is scheduled for September 3rd and 4th. The training will also be recorded if you are unable to attend in person. The meetings are intended to be mostly listening and a thank you from the GMS. The meetings should be completed in September, October, and November 2019.

Appointment to Consultation Committee

The Council was presented with two nominees for a vacancy for a full term of service on the Consultation Committee by a lay male, Alan Gresch and Joshua Kuehn.

Council Action

Appointment to Consultation Committee

The Council voted to appoint Mr. Joshua Kuehn to serve as a member of the Consultation Committee for a term beginning September 1, 2019 and ending August 31, 2025.

Presentations by Synod Ministries

Vice President Caldwell presented a plan for a regular schedule of presentations by synod ministries.

Synod Council Meeting Scheduled

The Council confirmed that regular synod council meeting will be the 3rd Thursday or odd months.

Reports

- A. Evangelical Mission** – A written report was submitted.
- B. Congregations in Mission** – No report was presented.
- C. Missional Leadership** – A written report was submitted.
- D. Lutheran Campus Ministry** – A written report was submitted.
- E. Reconciling in Christ** – A written report was submitted.
- F. Anti-Racism Team** – No report was presented. The next Anti-racism training will be October 24, 25, and 26th at St. Mary’s in Kenosha.
- G. Women of the ELCA** – No written report was presented.
- H. Outreach for Hope** – No written report was presented.
- I. Sonja Wolfe, Church Council Representative** – No report was presented

Next Council Meeting

Thursday, September 19, 2019

ELCA Churchwide Office, 8765 West Higgins Road, Chicago, Illinois (all-day, time TBD)

Future Meetings and Events

- Thursday, November 21, 2019 – Synod Council Meeting

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

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Prepared by:

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and

Matthew Brockmeier
Synod Secretary