

**God's Vision:** A world that embodies the fullness of life: justice, peace, equity, hope and love for everyone, including all races, genders, identities, abilities, and social status.

**Our Mission:** We follow Jesus, form communities, love all.

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The Greater Milwaukee Synod Council met via Zoom Technologies on Thursday, November 19, 2020. These are highlights of that meeting: Detailed summaries of the Council's meetings will be available on the synod's website at <https://milwaukeesynod.org/who-we-are/synod-council/>. These highlights are not official minutes of the proceedings.

### **Actions**

- Approved the minutes from the Synod Council meeting on 17 September 2020;
- Approved On Leave from Call Status for **The Rev. Logan Vang** and **The Rev. Sheila Rawn**;
- Approved Retired Status for **The Rev. Carolyn Fredriksen**;
- Approved a Synod Call to **The Rev. Larry Harpster**, serving in interim ministry at **St. Luke, Slinger**;
- Approved a Synod Call to **The Rev. James Holmberg** serving in interim ministry at **St. Matthew's, Wauwatosa**;
- Amended the Equipping the Saints Mission Appeal prospectus to expand the categories of individuals able to receive financial support through candidacy, seminary, and first call.
- Approved 2021 Housing Allowances for Synod Staff
- Authorized Bishop Paul Erickson to call a Special Virtual Synod Assembly at 9 a.m. on Saturday, January 23<sup>rd</sup> 2021, for the purposes of a) recognizing and receiving Lakeside Lutheran Church as a congregation of the Greater Milwaukee Synod; b) amending selected bylaws related to the structure of the Synod's clusters and conferences as presented and approved by the Synod Council in November 2019; and c) receiving brief updates on the status of the Synod's ministries during the pandemic.
- Amended the 2021 Compensation Guidelines for Rostered Ministers to clarify the recommendations for Sick Leave.

### **Reports and Discussion**

- **Bishop Paul Erickson's** report noted the Synod providing worship videos for the weeks following Christmas to support congregational leaders. He updated the Council on his 2021 Summer Sabbatical and discussed the process for covering the Bishop's work during a sabbatical. He also noted the Anti-Racism Advisory Group has begun meeting.

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- **Vice President Joyce Caldwell** noted that due to health issues, **Tom Gauthier** indicated he is currently unable to fulfill the duties of Synod Treasurer. Per S8.55. of the Synod Constitution, the Executive Committee gave consent to the Bishop's appointing **Bob Reinders** to serve as Acting Synod Treasurer through April 2021.
- The Council heard updates in a presentation from **The Rev. Chris Manke** about the work of Outreach for Hope. **Manke** began as Executive Director in August 2020. 2020 marked the 12<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Bike Ride Fundraiser and the 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the organization. At present, Outreach for Hope supports 17 ministry partners, including food pantries, meal programs, youth outreach, family programs, gardening and beekeeping, medical clinics, clothing closers, and community services agencies, among other programs.
- **Sonja Wolfe** of the ELCA Church Council offered brief updates on the Fall 2020 Virtual Meeting of the ELCA Church Council. She noted the Council passed a new structural reorganization through which about 5% of Churchwide staff will be laid off. She also noted the ELCA now recognizes Juneteenth as a paid holiday and lifted up the work of the Church Council in studying the impacts of race on economic justice, reparations, and engagement with racial justice work.
- **Equipping the Saints Appeal Campaign Manager Joyce Caldwell** presented updates on the initial round of offering intentions from Synod Council members and presented a few updates made to the prospectus document.
- The Council discussed the format, agenda, and plan for adapting changes to clusters at the approved Special Synod Assembly; they also received an update on the 2021 Synod Assembly from the bishop.
- Other reports included: the Director for Evangelical Mission, a detailed estimate of open calls and current staffing from Synod congregations; Lutheran Campus Ministry; Anti-Racism; Outreach for Hope, and the Women of the ELCA.

## Finances

- **Acting Treasurer Bob Reinders** noted the proceeds from the PPP funding have now been received as income, creating a favorable position relative to the budget. The PPP forgiveness application process is still ongoing. General Mission Support through October 2020 was \$1.2 million, comparatively 2019 was only \$20,000 greater. He noted the extraordinary financial support to the Synod given the uncertainties of the year.
- The Council approved the financial reports as presented.

## Upcoming Synod Council meetings for 2019-2020

Thursday, January 21<sup>st</sup>

Thursday, March 18<sup>th</sup>

Friday-Saturday, April 30<sup>th</sup>—May 1<sup>st</sup>: Synod Assembly

# Greater Milwaukee Synod Council Meeting Highlights

November 2020

Virtual Meetings via Zoom Technologies

Thursday, May 20<sup>th</sup>

Thursday, July 15<sup>th</sup>

Thursday, September 16<sup>th</sup>

Unless otherwise published in advance, all meetings begin on Zoom at 6:15 pm. Links to the meeting can be provided by the Synod Office, specifically Mary Romskog.

Submitted,

The Rev. Matthew Schlake-Kruse, Synod Secretary