
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.

The Greater Milwaukee Synod Council met on Thursday, September 19, 2019 at the ELCA Churchwide offices at The Lutheran Center in Chicago, Illinois. 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 On-Leave-From-Call Status for Deacon Douglas Krekling, effective 1 September 2019.
- Approved On-Leave-From-Call Status for The Rev. Adam Moreno, effective 30 September 2019.
- Approved On-Leave-From-Call Status for Deacon Jeanne Solik, effective 1 September 2019.
- Approved On-Leave From-Call Status for The Rev. Dean Willich, effective 1 October 2019.
- Approved a Synod Call to The Reverend Jake Werkheiser, serving as Chaplain at Zilber Hospice Residence.
- Appointed Ms. Laurie Meyer as Synod Attorney.
- Elected Mark Christiaansen, Vickie Stretz, and Amber Anderson to serve as at-large members of the Synod Council Executive Committee for a one-year term.
- Approved the Synod's Addiction and Substance Abuse Guide for Rostered Ministers
- Approved the 2020 Compensation Guidelines for Ministers of Word and Sacrament (2% COLA Increase) and Ministers of Word and Service (4% COLA Increase).
- Approved authorization of the Wayfarer's Faith Collective as a Synodically-Authorized Worshipping Community.

- Approved distribution of Urban Internship Grant funding to Cross Lutheran Church, Milwaukee, and Redeemer Lutheran Church, Milwaukee.

Reports and Discussion

- **Vice President Joyce Caldwell** shared her vision of the work of the Greater Milwaukee Synod as “Connecting People and Building Community.” She asked the council how we might deepen our relationships with each other for the sake of the work we do—and led discussion of where our passions and God’s call might intersect in the work of the Synod Council.
- **Bishop Paul Erickson’s** report included thanks for the great synodical support during the Churchwide Assembly; updates on responses to the Churchwide Assembly’s decision to name the ELCA a “Sanctuary Denomination,” and the mission support appeal. He updated the Council on the formation of an Opioid Task Force, responding to the resolution at last spring’s Synod Assembly, and on congregational visits this fall.
- The Bishop has authorized Synod Authorized Minister Status for the following individuals: **Pastor Germán Novelli**, Ascension, Milwaukee; **Mr. Edwin Aparicio**, Ascension, Waukesha; **Mr. Duane Swenson**, Christ, Jackson; and **Ms. Venice Williams**, The Table, Milwaukee.
- The Council discussed possible changes to the structure of clusters and electoral divisions to better fill slates for Synod Council and Churchwide Assembly and possible bylaw changes, which will be attended to at the Synod Council’s November meeting. The Council shared feedback on proposals, which will also be put forth to deans and other stakeholders.
 - Staff reports included information on the Synod’s Authorized Worshipping Communities—The Table, Breaking the Chains, and Wayfarer’s Faith Collective—and updates on the Synod’s Mission Table, Latino Consultation Table, and Faithful Innovation cohorts from **the Rev. Matt Short**; reports on the number of new calls and mobility from **the Rev. Kristin Nielsen**. It was noted that over the previous 5 years, all **but** 39 congregations in our synod have been in transition; and information on the Navigating Boundaries Workshop, LGBTQIA+ Education and Conversation events with Austen Hartke, Anti-Racism Training, and the Fall Leadership Conference from **the Rev. Jennifer Arnold**. Her report noted the beginnings of a working group to develop a model policy for Parental Leave, as called upon by the 2019 Synod Assembly.
- As of 17 September 2019, the Outreach for Hope Bike Ride had raised approximately \$94,000 out of a goal of \$110,000. There will still be some fundraising to conclude the month’s activities. Over 480 participants were a part of three sites at this year’s ride.
- Bishop Erickson noted the Outreach for Hope Executive Director position is still in transition.

Finances

- **Treasurer Tom Gauthier** gave a brief overview of the roles of the Synod Treasurer and informed the Council that financial numbers through August 2019 are tracking at expected levels.
- Through August, 52% of committed mission support funds have been received; this level is on track for this point in the Synod's fiscal year.
- 10 fewer congregations are behind intended giving amounts in 2019 than 2018.
- The Synod's expenses YTD are below budget, lessening the budget deficit.
- With increased usage and higher fee rates impacting legal, financial, and payroll systems, next year's Synod Budget will be adjusted to address a significant variance from budget in "Purchased Services" categories of the current financial reports.

Meeting and Event Schedule

Next Meeting: November 21, 2019, St. Matthew's Lutheran Church, 1615 N. Wauwatosa Avenue, Wauwatosa

Upcoming Synod Council meetings for 2019-2020

- November 21, 2019: St. Matthew's, Wauwatosa
- January 16, 2020: Lord of Life, Kenosha
- March 19, 2020: Trinity, South Milwaukee
- May 21, 2020: St. Olaf, Rubicon
- July 16, 2020: Bishop Erickson's Home
- September 17, 2020: TBD

Unless otherwise published in advance, all meetings begin with dinner at 5:30 pm followed by the meeting beginning at 6:15 pm.

Submitted,

The Rev. Matthew Schlake-Kruse, Synod Secretary

To contact the Synod Secretary, please use the e-mail secretary@gmselca.org