

# Greater Milwaukee Synod, ELCA

## Report of the Synod Council for 2013

### OVERVIEW

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This report summarizes actions taken by the Synod Council and the Executive Committee of the Greater Milwaukee Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America since the Synod Assembly held from May 31<sup>st</sup> through June 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2012. Copies of the complete minutes of both the Synod Council and Executive Committee are available from the synod secretary ([brockmeier.gms@gmail.com](mailto:brockmeier.gms@gmail.com)) or the synod office ([mary.romskog@gmselca.org](mailto:mary.romskog@gmselca.org)), with summaries of Synod Council meetings available on the synod's website at <http://milwaukeeelca.org/who-we-are/synod-council-members/>.

Actions referred to in this report are preceded by two letters (SC for Synod Council) and sets of two-digit numbers separated by decimal points. The first two numbers identify the year and the next two numbers identify the month of the meeting in which the action was taken, while the final numbers identify the order of the action at that particular meeting. For example, SC12.09.10. refers to the tenth action taken by the Synod Council at its meeting in September 2012. Actions that are administrative in nature (e.g. approval of minutes) are not included in this report.

### SYNOD COUNCIL

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#### Meetings

The Synod Council met ten times since the 2012 Synod Assembly; with regular meetings on September 20, 2012, November 3, 2012, January 31, 2013, March 14, 2013 and May 9, 2013; and electronic meetings on August 2-6, 2012, October 30 & 31, 2012, October 31, 2012, February 4 & 5, 2013 and April 18-20, 2013. Actions of electronic meetings were ratified at the next regular meeting

#### Membership – May 2013

Name	Cluster/Position	Term Ends 8/31
The Rev. Eric Silberschmidt	Kenosha/West Racine	2013
The Rev. Steve Blyth	Lake Country	2015
Mr. Michael Herold	Milwaukee 1	2013
Vacant	Milwaukee 2	2013
The Rev. Carolyn Fredriksen	Milwaukee 3	2015
Mr. Al Van Lith	Milwaukee 4	2015
Ms. Esther Rusch	Northern Lakeshore	2013
Ms. Beth Dorsey	Northwest	2013
The Rev. Warren Williams	Racine	2013
The Rev. Sherrie Lorbeck	Waukesha	2015
The Rev. Gary Grindeland	At Large	2015
Ms. Debra Taylor	At Large	2015
Mr. John Gruber	At Large	2015
Ms. Susan Cyr	Vice President	2013 (2)
Mr. Matthew Brockmeier	Secretary	2015 (1)
Mr. Lee Johnston	Treasurer	2013 (1)
The Rev. Jeff Barrow	Bishop	2016 (1)
Vacant	Youth Representative	2013
Vacant	Young Adult Rep.	

# Greater Milwaukee Synod, ELCA

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### Vacancies

Mr. Gus Barnes resigned his seat as representative of Milwaukee Cluster 2 on the Synod Council on August 6, 2012 to enter seminary, with the seat remaining vacant. There were no other changes to the composition of the Synod Council during this period, although two additional resignations will take place following the regular May 2013 meeting, those of Mr. John Gruber and Rev. Gary Grindeland.

### Youth Representation

Youth and Family Ministry continued to work with the Synod Council to identify individuals willing and able to serve as member of the Council as Youth Representative and/or Young Adult Representative, positions that remained vacant through the reporting year.

### Chair

Ms. Susan Cyr, Vice President of the Greater Milwaukee Synod, serves as the chair of the Synod Council under provision S8.22. of the Synod Constitution.

## EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

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### Meetings

The Executive Committee met in a regular meeting on September 6, 2012, an electronic meeting on October 14 & 15, 2012, and teleconference meetings on January 17, 2013, March 7, 2013 and May 1, 2013. Minutes of Executive Committee meetings were approved at the next regular meeting of the Synod Council.

### Membership – May 2013

Name	Cluster/Position
The Rev. Eric Silberschmidt	Kenosha/West Racine
Ms. Debra Taylor	At Large
Ms. Beth Dorsey	Northwest
Ms. Susan Cyr	Vice President
Mr. Matthew Brockmeier	Secretary
Mr. Lee Johnston	Treasurer
The Rev. Jeff Barrow	Bishop

The Executive Committee includes the synod's officers (Bishop, Vice President, Secretary and Treasurer) and three other members of the Synod Council elected annually by the Council. The election of those three members took place at the Council's first regular meeting of its new year.

### Council Action

#### **SC 12.09.10. Election of Executive Committee Members**

The Council voted to elect Ms. Beth Dorsey, Rev. Eric Silberschmidt and Ms. Debra Taylor to one-year terms on the synod's Executive Committee.

## **COMMITTEES AND TASK FORCES**

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### **Membership**

The members of the Synod Council's committees and task forces will be listed in a new online Synod Directory, which is under development.

### **Reports**

The Council received regular reports from staff program directors and from affiliated organizations and committees, as well as detailed reports from Bishop Jeff Barrow.

Staff reports included those from the Director of Evangelical Mission, the Director of Discipleship, the Director of Rostered Leadership and the Coordinator of Youth and Family Ministry.

Other reports were made by Outreach for Hope, the Women of the ELCA, the Anti-Racism Team and Lutheran Campus Ministry.

## **FINANCE**

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Treasurer's Reports were reviewed by the Council at all regular Council meetings. Topics for discussion included below-budget receipts, the synod's ability to continue balancing its budget by spending below budgeted levels, and the long-term implications of reductions in support. Despite early concerns about the synod's income, receipts for the fiscal year ending January 31, 2013 were at budgeted levels.

The Council also discussed financial control policies, both for the synod and for recommendation to congregations, during the year.

### **Council Action**

#### **SC 13.01.12. Approval of Check Signing and Wire Transfer Policy**

The Council voted to approve a revised Greater Milwaukee Synod Check Signing and Wire Transfer Policy, with one signature by any authorized signer for checks or wire transfers up to \$5,000; one signature by an authorized signer, limited to the Bishop, Vice-President or Treasurer of the Synod, for checks or wire transfers from \$5,001 to \$35,000; two signatures by authorized signers, one of whom is the Bishop, Vice-President or Treasurer of the Synod for checks or wire transfers of \$35,001 or more; and the restriction that no signer will personally sign a check made payable to them.

Recommended congregational bylaws for financial controls were presented to the Council, as part of an effort to raise awareness of financial control issues and minimize the chances for malfeasance by congregational staff or volunteers, a problem already evident in congregations in the synod and elsewhere.

### **Council Action**

#### **SC 13.01.17. Approval of Support for Model Financial Control Bylaws**

The Council voted to support the content and use of the proposed Model Financial Control Bylaws as presented.

## **Proposed 2014-2015 Budget**

### **Council Action**

#### **SC 13.03.07. Recommendation of Draft 2014-2015 Budget**

The Council voted to recommend to the 2013 Synod Assembly the Draft 2014-2015 Budget, as presented.

## **Synod-Wide Fundraising Efforts**

Provision S15.21 of the synod's constitution requires that all fundraising appeals to ELCA congregations by congregations or organizations affiliated with the synod must be approved in advance by either the Synod Council or the Synod Assembly. The following fundraising appeals were approved by the Synod Council.

### **Council Action**

#### **SC 13.01.13. Approval of Campus Ministry Sunday**

The Council voted, pursuant to provision S15.21 of the synod's constitution, to approve a synod-wide fundraising effort in support of Campus Ministry Sunday on Sunday, April 21, 2013.

### **Council Action**

#### **SC 13.01.14. Approval of Meru Diocese Day of Prayer**

The Council voted, pursuant to provision S15.21 of the synod's constitution, to approve a synod-wide fundraising effort in support of the Meru Day of Prayer on Sunday, April 14, 2013.

### **Council Action**

#### **SC 13.01.15. Approval of Annual Bike Ride Fundraiser**

The Council voted, pursuant to provision S15.21 of the synod's constitution, to approve a synod-wide fundraising effort in support of Outreach for Hope on the first Saturday after Labor Day every year.

## **Grant Requests**

### **Council Action**

#### **SC 12.10.03 Approval of Grant Submission**

The Synod Council voted to approve submission of a grant request to the Siebert Lutheran Foundation for \$30,000 for the Greater Milwaukee Synod's Director of Discipleship position. All those voting voted in the affirmative.

## **SYNOD ASSEMBLY – 2013 ASSEMBLY PREPARATION**

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### **Constitutional Changes**

There were no proposed changes to the synod's constitution or bylaws (these are more likely in years following Churchwide Assemblies, when changes to required or recommended provisions of the synod constitution are made).

# Greater Milwaukee Synod, ELCA

## Report of the Synod Council for 2013

### **Nominations by Synod Council**

Nominations by the Synod Council for positions to be voted on at the 2013 Synod Assembly were pending at the time of this report.

### **Resolutions**

A total of five resolutions were submitted for consideration by the 2013 Synod Assembly, with review by the synod's Reference and Counsel Committee scheduled for May 14, 2013.

### **Recommendation of Synod Assembly Rules for Elections and Procedures**

#### **Council Action**

#### **SC 13.03.08. Recommendation of Synod Assembly Rules**

The Council voted to recommend the 2013 Assembly Rules for Elections and Procedures, as presented, to the 2013 Synod Assembly for the Assembly's approval.

### **Recommendation of Synod Assembly Agenda**

#### **Council Action**

#### **SC 13.03.09. Recommendation of Synod Assembly Agenda**

The Council voted to recommend the Agenda for the 2013 Synod Assembly, as presented, to the 2013 Synod Assembly for the Assembly's approval.

### **Youth Participation in Synod Assembly**

The 2012 Synod Assembly included youth or young adults as approximately eight percent of total voting members, just shy of the synod's goal of ten percent. The Youth and Family Network requested continuation of last year's special offer of participation for non-voting youth and young adult full-time visitors to encourage increased participation by the young in all aspects of the life of the church.

#### **Council Action**

#### **SC 13.03.10. Approval of Resolution on Youth Participation**

The Council voted to approve the Youth and Family Network's resolution inviting each congregation to send one youth or young adult as a full-time visitor to the 2013 Synod Assembly, with all such visitors having voice but not vote, and with a reduced fee of \$100 for these visitors.

#### **Council Action**

#### **SC 13.03.11. Approval of Resolution on Youth Scholarships**

The Council voted to approve providing and promoting limited scholarships for youth and young adult visitors whose participation in the 2013 Synod Assembly was approved in SC13.03.10.

### **Deadline for Synod Assembly Resolutions**

The deadlines for resolutions were included in the rules approved in SC 13.03.08., and were April 30, 2013 for resolutions or memorials submitted by congregations, committees or clusters; and May 16, 2013 for Synod Council initiated resolutions.

### **Purchase of Voting Machines for Synod Assembly**

Staff proposed the purchase of voting machines like those used on a trial (rental) basis at the 2012 Synod Assembly. The payback period, based on last year's rental rates, would be approximately five years, with the possibility of earning revenue by renting this system to other nearby synods for their assemblies. The machines were credited with decreasing delays in Assembly action in 2012.

#### **Council Action**

##### **SC 13.01.16. Approval of Purchase of Voting Machines**

The Council voted to approve the purchase of 500 voting machines and related items from Turning Technologies of Youngstown, Ohio, for a total purchase price of \$21,399.00 plus shipping and handling, with funds from accumulated surpluses from the Synod Assembly account.

### **Use of Synod Assembly Offerings**

#### **Council Action**

##### **SC 12.11.11. Approval of Offering Allocation**

The Council voted to use all offerings received during worship services at the 2013 Greater Milwaukee Synod Assembly to support the ELCA Malaria Campaign.

## **SYNOD ASSEMBLY – 2012 RESOLUTION FOLLOW-UP**

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### **Response to Resolution 6 (Collective Bargaining Resolution)**

The 2012 Synod Assembly acted to “forward the information and process” regarding what had been Resolution 6 to the congregations and to the state's political leaders. To accomplish this, two draft documents were presented to the Council, one of which provides the requested overview, the second providing some process information to address potential congregational concerns about the synod dealing with the collective bargaining issue. The Council concluded that the value of the process was the primary finding, and that the issue of collective bargaining became incidental to the process in the findings of the Task Force.

#### **Council Action**

##### **SC 12.09.09. Action to Approve Statements on Resolution 6**

The Council voted to approve the Resolution 6 Statement for general distribution and the Resolution 6 Preface for distribution with the Statement to congregations of the synod as presented.

## **INITIATIVES**

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### **ELCA Malaria Campaign**

#### **Council Action**

##### **SC 12.09.05. Approval of Malaria Campaign Fundraising Effort**

The Council voted to approve an effort to raise \$250,000 over three years in support of the ELCA's Malaria Campaign.

# Greater Milwaukee Synod, ELCA

## Report of the Synod Council for 2013

### **Council Action**

#### **SC 13.01.06. Approval of Malaria Campaign Seed Money**

The Council voted to approve the expenditure of \$25,000 to use as seed money to help promote Synod participation in the ELCA's Malaria Campaign, with funds allocated from the 2012-2013 fiscal year surplus, and to allocate any remaining 2012-2013 fiscal year surplus funds equally to additional support for the ELCA's general fund and to the synod's staffing reserve fund, with the additional provision that should the total 2012-2013 fiscal year surplus (including all funds already allocated in SC 13.01.05. and SC 13.01.06.) exceed \$80,000.00, all funds in excess of that amount will be equally distributed to support the Young Adult Ministry, the ELCA's Malaria Campaign, the ELCA's general fund, and the synod's staffing reserve fund.

### **Young Adult Ministry**

#### **Council Action**

#### **SC 13.01.05. Approval of Start-up Funding for Young Adult Ministry**

The Council voted to approve the expenditure of \$20,000 to initiate a young adult ministry program, with funds allocated from the 2012-2013 fiscal year surplus.

### **Disposition of Property and Use of Assets Received**

During the year, the Synod Council had several discussions, some with action, on the disposition of property acquired by the synod as the result of congregational closures and the use of the proceeds from the sales of these properties.

#### **Council Action**

#### **SC 12.08.01 Approval of Payment of Mortgage Balance**

It was voted to approve payment of \$99,839.55 in order to pay off the existing mortgage for Good Shepherd Lutheran Church's Waukesha facility, using funds generated by the sale of St. Andrew's Lutheran Church's Waukesha facility. All those voting voted in the affirmative.

#### **Council Action**

#### **SC 12.10.01 Authorization to Accept Purchase Bid**

The Synod Council voted to authorize Bishop Jeff Barrow and his designees to accept the outstanding bid by Montessori School of Waukesha, Inc. to purchase the facility formerly owned by Good Shepherd Lutheran Church of Waukesha for \$510,000.00. All those voting voted in the affirmative.

#### **Council Action**

#### **SC 13.05.05. Approval of Potential Funds for Spirit Alive!**

The Council voted to approve setting aside a sum of up to \$150,000.00, for Spirit Alive! to purchase available real estate, with funds to be taken from the old new mission start, and the balance from the proceeds of the sale of St. Andrew's, for use within one year of this date.

### **Marketing**

The Synod Council's November 2012 meeting incorporated a synod retreat, including leaders from synod committees and affiliated organizations. This meeting included an extended discussion on marketing efforts to support the work already being done by the synod.

### **Synod Logo**

The Synod Council, recognizing that the synod's existing logo had negative connotations, especially for people of color, approved a change of logo to conform to ELCA design guidelines.

#### **Council Action**

##### **SC 12.11.08. Approval of Change in Logo**

The Council voted to approve the use of a logo consistent with the ELCA's Graphic Standards Manual in place of the existing logo, effective immediately.

## **PERSONNEL**

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In addition to action on synod calls and other personnel matters, the Synod Council received regular updates on work to create a new personnel policy for synod employees and revisions to the MET process. This work was ongoing at the time of this report.

Bishop Barrow also provided frequent updates on his priority to encourage the development of healthy leaders and healthy congregations.

### **Approval of Synod Calls**

#### **Council Action**

##### **SC 12.09.06. Approval of Synod Call**

The Council voted to approve a call to Pastor Suellen Myers for synod interim ministry.

#### **Council Action**

##### **SC 13.01.07. Approval of Call to Interim Ministry**

The Council voted to approve a synod call to interim ministry for Rev. Paul Ihlenfeld.

#### **Council Action**

##### **SC 13.02.01 Approval of Call**

The Synod Council voted to approve a motion stating that "The Greater Milwaukee Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America calls Rev. Timothy L. McIntosh to serve as Chaplain, serving Seasons Hospice, effective December 9, 2009."

#### **Council Action**

##### **SC 13.05.06. Approval of Term Call**

The Council voted to approve a renewed one-year term call to Rev. Chuck Brummond in his role as Director of Rostered Leadership.

### **Approval of Appointments**

#### **Council Action**

##### **SC 12.09.07. Approval of Appointment**

The Council voted to approve the appointment of Pastor Noreen Smith to the board of Wartburg Seminary.



### **Approval of On Leave from Call Status**

**Council Action**

**SC 12.11.06. Approval of On Leave from Call Status**

The Council voted to approve on leave from call status for Rev. Chris Lear, with an effective date of July 1, 2011.

**Council Action**

**SC 13.01.09. Approval of On Leave from Call Status**

The Council voted to approve a one-year extension of On Leave from Call Status for Rev. Carol R. Baumgartner.

**Council Action**

**SC 13.03.04. Approval of On Leave from Call Status**

The Council voted to approve one-year continuations of On Leave from Call status for all those listed on the current On Leave from Call roster.

### **Salary Guidelines**

**Council Action**

**SC 12.11.10. Approval of 2013 Salary Guidelines**

The Council voted to approve an increase of 2% (two percent) in recommended salaries for rostered leaders working in congregations of the Greater Milwaukee Synod.

### **Approval of Position**

**Council Action**

**SC 13.01.03. Approval of Meru Partnership Committee Facilitator Position**

The Council voted to approve the position of Meru Partnership Committee Facilitator.

Signed,

Mr. Matthew Brockmeier  
Secretary  
Greater Milwaukee Synod, ELCA  
May 2013