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Greater Milwaukee Synod, ELCA

Report of the Synod Council for 2019

OVERVIEW

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 31st through June 2nd, 2018. Copies of the complete minutes of both the Synod Council and Executive Committee are available from the synod secretary (brockmeier.gms@gmail.com) or the synod office (mary.romskog@gmselca.org), with summaries of Synod Council meetings available on the synod's website at <https://milwaukeesynod.org/who-we-are/synod-council/>

Actions referred to in this report are preceded by two or four letters (SC for Synod Council and ECSC for Executive Committee) and a series of two-digit numbers separated by decimal points. The first two numbers identify the year, the next two 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, SC18.09.11. refers to the eleventh action taken by the Synod Council at its meeting in September 2018. Actions that are purely administrative in nature (e.g. approval of minutes or acceptance of reports) are not included in this report.

SYNOD COUNCIL

Meetings

The Synod Council met nine times since the 2018 Synod Assembly; with regular meetings on July 19, 2018, September 20, 2018, November 15, 2018, January 17, 2019, March 21, 2019 and May 16, 2019; and electronic meetings on October 12-14, 2018, December 14-17, 2018 and March 31-April 1, 2019. Regular meetings are either hosted by the home congregations of Council members or held at the synod office.

Membership – May 2019

Name	Cluster/Position	Term Ends 8/31
Mr. Bob Reinders	Belle City	2021
Mr. Joshua Kuehn	Kenosha/West Racine	2021
Mr. George Monis	Lake Country	2019
Rev. Tim Tahtinen	Milwaukee 1	2021
Ms. Janet Wunrow	Milwaukee 2	2021
Ms. Claire Zautke	Milwaukee 3	2019
Rev. Pamela Lange	Milwaukee 4	2019
Rev. Elizabeth Jaeger	Northern Lakeshore	2021
Mr. Mark Christiaansen	Northwest	2021
Rev. Kevin Kretzmann Farrar	Waukesha	2019
The Rev. Lindsay Jordan	At Large	2019
Mr. Jerry Key	At Large	2019
Ms. Amber Davis	At Large	2019
Ms. Joyce Caldwell	Vice President	2021 (1)
Mr. Matthew Brockmeier	Secretary	2019 (2)
Mr. Tom Gauthier	Treasurer	2021 (1)
Rev. Paul Erickson	Bishop	2022 (1)
Ms. Anja Logan	Youth Representative	2019
Ms. Aliliywa Mbise	Young Adult Rep.	2021

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Meetings

The Executive Committee met seven times since the 2018 Synod Assembly; with regular meetings on July 12, 2018, September 4, 2018, October 31, 2018, January 15, 2019, March 12, 2019 and May 7, 2019; and a teleconference meeting from December 8-13, 2018. Minutes of Executive Committee meetings were made available to members of the Council prior to the next regular Council meeting.

Membership – May 2019

Name	Cluster/Position
Mr. Mark Christiaansen	At Large
Ms. Amber Davis	At Large
Ms. Anja Logan	At Large
Ms. Joyce Caldwell	Vice President
Mr. Matthew Brockmeier	Secretary
Mr. Tom Gauthier	Treasurer
The Rev. Paul Erickson	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 18.09.11. Election of Executive Committee Members

The Council voted to elect Ms. Amber Davis, Mr. Mark Christiaansen, and Ms. Anja Logan to serve on the Executive Committee through August 2019.

COMMITTEES AND TASK FORCES

Membership

The leaders of the Synod Council's committees and task forces are listed on the synod's website at <http://milwaukeesynod.org/who-we-are/committees/>.

Reports

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

Staff reports normally include those from the assistants to the bishop for evangelical mission, congregations in mission, and missional leadership.

Other reports are typically made by Outreach for Hope, Reconciling in Christ, the Women of the ELCA, the Anti-Racism Team and Lutheran Campus Ministry.

FINANCE

Treasurer's Reports were reviewed by the Council at all regular meetings.

Council Action

SC 18.11.09. Approval of Investment Strategy

The Council voted to approve removing \$450,000 of General Fund money from a Mission Investment Fund account, and to reinvest \$150,000 in a three-year adjustable rate certificate of

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deposit with a current interest rate of 2.92%, and \$300,000 in two one-year \$150,000 adjustable rate certificates of deposit with a current interest rate of 2.57%.

Council Action

SC 19.03.09. Amendment of Budget

The Council voted to amend the budget for the current (2019-2020) fiscal year, as recommended, decreasing anticipated income by \$100,000 (to \$1,900,000), with decreases in ELCA Mission Support and support for other ministries whose allocations are determined by percentage of synodical mission support received.

ACTIONS REGARDING CONGREGATIONS

Council Action

SC 18.09.10. Approval of SAWC Constitution

The Council voted to approve the constitution of The Table, a Synodically Authorized Worshipping Community, as presented, with an effective date of September 20, 2018.

ACTIONS REGARDING MINISTRIES

GMS Endowment Fund

Council Action

SC 18.09.06. Approval of Endowment Fund Allocation

The Council voted to approve the recommendation of the GMS Endowment Committee to fund a seminary internship at Cross Lutheran Church, Milwaukee, in the amount of \$8,500.00.

Council Action

SC 18.09.07. Approval of Development of a Structure for a Seminary Fund

The Council voted to approve the development of a structure for a synod-based seminary fund to provide scholarships as a combined effort of the Endowment and Candidacy committees.

Outreach for Hope

Council Action

SC 18.07.06. Approval of Urban Internship Fund Proposal

The Council voted to approve the grant timeline, eligibility criteria and anticipated outcomes for the Urban Internship Fund as presented by Outreach for Hope.

Council Action

SC 18.11.07. Approval of Restated Articles of Incorporation and Bylaws for Outreach for Hope

The Council voted to approve the restated Articles of Incorporation and restated Bylaws for Outreach for Hope as presented.

GRANT REQUEST AUTHORIZATIONS

Executive Committee Action

ECSC 18.12.01. Approval of Grant Submission

The Executive Committee, acting on behalf of the Synod Council, approved submission of a grant request to the ELCA Churchwide Organization funding of \$23,000.00 through the Anchor Church program for Village Church to continue and expand their "Power Shift" and "Sacred Roots" ministries during 2019.

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Council Action

SC 19.05.05. Approval of Grant Submission

The Council voted to approve submission of a grant request by Lutheran Campus Ministry to the Siebert Lutheran Foundation for funds totaling \$24,250 for the 2019-2020 school year: including \$9,600 in Peer Ministry Stipends for Campus Ministry at Marquette University; \$11,200 in Peer Ministry Stipends for Campus Ministry at UWM; and \$3,450 for retreat costs, including \$1,250 for house rental, \$300 for food, and \$1,900 for facilitator fees.

CONTINUING RESOLUTIONS APPROVED OR MODIFIED

Council Action

SC 18.09.05. Approval of Continuing Resolution

The Council voted to approve Continuing Resolutions S7.21.A18. and S7.21.B18., replacing Continuing Resolution S7.21.A13., as follows:

S7.21.A18. All congregations may elect at least ~~three~~ **two** lay voting members of the Synod Assembly. Congregations having 750 to 1,249 baptized members may elect a ~~fourth~~ **third** lay voting member. Thereafter an additional lay voting member may be added for each additional 500 baptized members of the congregation (e.g. at 1,250 members, 1,750 members, etc.).

S7.21.B18. If more than two lay voting members of the Synod Assembly are elected under provision S7.21.A18. above, at least one shall be a youth or young adult.

Council Action

SC 18.11.06. Revision of Continuing Resolution

The Council voted to revise Continuing Resolutions S7.21.A18. and S7.21.B18. as follows:

S7.21.A18 All congregations may elect at least ~~three~~ **two** lay voting members of the Synod Assembly. Congregations having 750 to 1,249 baptized members may elect a ~~fourth~~ **third** lay voting member. Thereafter an additional lay voting member may be added for each additional 500 baptized members of the congregation (e.g. at 1,250 members, 1,750 members, etc.).

S7.21.B18. ~~If more than two lay voting members of the Synod Assembly are elected under provision S7.21.A18. above, at least one shall be a youth or young adult. All congregations may add one voting member to the number allotted in S7.21.A18. if that additional member is a youth or young adult.~~

Council Action

SC 18.11.10. Motion to Amend

The Council voted to amend the proposed revision to Continuing Resolution S10.01.A11., Appendix 2, to include the words “those who identify as gender non-binary can be nominated for any of the above positions” in the table.

Council Action

SC 18.11.11. Approval of Revision to Continuing Resolution

The Council voted to approve a revision of Continuing Resolution S10.01.A11, Appendix 2., Nominations for Synod Council, as amended by SC18.11.10.

ACTIONS REGARDING SYNOD INITIATIVES

Council Action

SC 18.11.12. Approval of Task Force

The Council voted to approve creation of a task force to interview potential fundraising consultants for a capital campaign, chaired by Treasurer Tom Gauthier, and including Vice President Joyce Caldwell, Bishop Paul Erickson, Outreach for Hope Executive Director Tim Larson, and Outreach for Hope Board Chair Cynthia Halverson.

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.

Council Action

SC 19.03.12. Action to Table

The Council voted to table consideration of Draft 2 of the Mission, Vision, Values statement until an electronic meeting can be held following completion of the draft.

Council Action

SC 19.04.01. Approval of Statement

The Council voted to approve Draft 2 of the Vision, Mission, Values, Practices Statement as presented to the Council

SYNOD ASSEMBLY – RECOMMENDATIONS

Approval of Synod Assembly Deadlines

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.

Approval of Synod Assembly Participation

Council Action

SC 19.03.15. Approval of Participation in Synod Assembly

The Council voted to extend voice and vote at the Synod Assembly to Pastor Debra Traekel, a pastor of the Episcopal Church, serving as interim Pastor at the Adoration Lutheran Church, Greenfield.

Recommendation of Synod Assembly Rules for Elections and Procedures

Council Action

SC 19.03.14. Recommendation of Rules and Procedures

The Council voted to recommend the 2019 Synod Assembly Rules and Procedures as presented for approval by the 2019 Synod Assembly.

Recommendation of Synod Assembly Agenda

Council Action

SC 19.03.16. Action to Table

The Council voted to table consideration of the 2019 Synod Assembly Agenda until an electronic meeting can be held following completion of the draft.

Council Action

SC 19.04.02. Recommendation of Agenda

The Council voted to recommend the 2019 Synod Assembly Agenda as presented for approval by the 2019 Synod Assembly subject to necessary adjustments prior to the Assembly.

Use of Synod Assembly Offerings

Council Action

SC 19.03.17. Recommendation on Designation of Offering

The Council voted to recommend to the 2019 Synod Assembly that the offering collected during assembly worship be designated to support Reconciling in Christ ministry and programs.

Recommendation of Proposed 2020-2021 Budget

Executive Committee Action

ECSC 19.03.01. Recommendation of Percentage of Mission Support Sent to ELCA

The Executive Committee recommended that the Synod Council recommend to the Synod Assembly a 2020-2021 budget forwarding 52.5% of mission support received to the churchwide organization.

Council Action

SC 19.03.10. Motion to Amend

The Council voted to reject an amendment to the main motion on recommendation of the budget which would have reduced the synod's contributions to ELCA Mission Support to 50% of synodical mission support received.

Council Action

SC 19.03.11. Recommendation of Budget

The Council voted to recommend approval of the proposed budget for the fiscal year ending January 31, 2021 to the 2019 Synod Assembly, based on budget option 2 as presented, with ELCA Mission Support reduced to 52.5% of overall mission support received.

Recommendation of Proposed Mission Appeal

Council Action

SC 19.05.02. Recommendation to Synod Assembly

The Council voted to recommend that the Greater Milwaukee Synod Assembly approve the continued development of a synod-wide mission appeal, seeking to raise up to \$2.5 million dedicated to priorities articulated in a case statement that will be refined by fall of 2019 and approved by Synod Council.

Recommendation of Mission, Vision, Values, Practices Statement

Council Action

SC 19.05.03. Action to Recommend

The Council voted to recommend that the Synod Assembly approve the Synod Mission, Vision, Values, Practices statement as presented.

PERSONNEL

The Synod Council regularly addressed personnel action, including synod calls, status changes for rostered leaders, other appointments, and review and action on personnel policies.

Approval of Synod Calls

Council Action

SC 18.07.02. Approval of Synod Call

The Council voted to approve a synod call to Interim Ministry at Mt. Zion Lutheran Church, Wauwatosa, for Rev. Joshua Graber, effective May 29, 2018.

SC 18.07.03. Approval of Synod Call

The Council voted to approve a synod call to Interim Ministry at Vernon Lutheran Church, Mukwonago, for Rev. Dave Patterson, effective August 1, 2018.

Council Action

SC 18.09.02. Approval of Synod Call

The Council voted to approve a synod call to serve as Director of Pastoral Care at Luther Manor to Rev. Laura B. Gerstl-Beukema, effective October 1, 2018.

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.

Council Action

SC 19.03.03. Approval of Synod Call

The Council voted to approve a synod call to Rev. Steve Clingman to Interim Ministry at Christ the Servant Lutheran Church, Waukesha, effective February 1, 2019.

Council Action

SC 19.03.04. Approval of Synod Call

The Council voted to approve a synod call to Rev. James D. Holmberg to Interim Ministry at Christ the King Lutheran Church, Delafield, effective January 7, 2019.

Council Action

SC 19.03.05. Approval of Synod Call

The Council voted to approve a synod call to Rev. Cynthia Aasen to Interim Ministry at Spirit Alive Lutheran Church, Kenosha, effective October 1, 2018.

Council Action

SC 19.03.06. Approval of Synod Call

The Council voted to approve a synod call to Rev. Jonathan M. Breimeier to Interim Ministry at Living Christ Lutheran Church, Germantown, effective March 14, 2019.

Council Action

SC 19.03.07. Approval of Synod Call

The Council voted to approve a synod call to Rev. Elizabeth Baires to Interim Ministry at St. Luke's Lutheran Church, Waukesha, effective December 20, 2018.

Approval of On Leave from Call Status

Council Action

SC 18.07.01. Approval of [On Leave from Call Status]

The Council voted to approve all items from the consent agenda as presented, including . . . approval of on leave from call status for Rev. Cynthia Aasen, effective June 3, 2018, for the standard three-year leave period.

Council Action

SC 18.09.01. Approval of [On Leave from Call Status]

The Council voted to approve all items from the consent agenda as presented, including . . . approval of on leave from call status for Rev. Steven Clingman, effective September 10, 2018, for the standard three-year leave period.

Council Action

SC 18.11.03. Approval of [On Leave from Call Status]

The Council voted to approve all items from the consent agenda as presented, including . . . approval of on leave from call status for Rev. Kelli Weiss and for Rev. Betty Baires, both effective October 1, 2018, and both for the standard three-year leave period.

Council Action

SC 19.01.01. Approval of [On Leave from Call Status]

The Council voted to approve all items from the consent agenda as presented, including . . . 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 19.03.02. Approval of [On Leave from Call Status]

The Council voted to approve all items from the consent agenda as presented, including . . . approval of on leave from call status for Rev. Jay McDivitt, effective February 1, 2019, for the standard three-year leave period; [and] approval of the current On Leave from Call Roster.

Approval of Retired Status

Council Action

SC 18.09.01. Approval of [Retired Status]

The Council voted to approve all items from the consent agenda as presented, including . . . approval of retired status for Rev. Dean Natterstad, effective October 1, 2018.

Council Action

SC 18.11.03. Approval of [Retired Status]

The Council voted to approve all items from the consent agenda as presented, including . . . approval of retired status for Rev. John Holm, effective December 1, 2018.

Council Action

SC 19.03.02. Approval of [Retired Status]

The Council voted to approve all items from the consent agenda as presented, including . . . approval of the Retired Roster A-1.

Council Action

SC 19.05.01. Approval of [Retired Status]

The Council voted to approve all items from the consent agenda as presented, including . . . approval retired status for Rev. Mary (Molly) Doreza, effective June 1, 2019.

Approval of Appointments and Nominations

Council Action

SC 18.07.05. Appointment

The Council voted to appoint Rev. Jim Lynch to the Advisory Council of the Lutheran Office for Public Policy in Wisconsin.

Council Action

SC 18.10.01. Appointment as Churchwide Assembly Voting Member

The Council voted to appoint Rev. Rebecka J. Fetters to serve as a Voting Member of the 2019 Churchwide Assembly from the Waukesha Cluster.

Council Action

SC 18.11.01. Appointment to Council

The Council voted to appoint Rev. Kevin Kretzmann Farrar to the Synod Council to fill a vacancy for a member of the clergy representing the Waukesha Cluster through August 31, 2019.

Council Action

SC 18.11.08. Approval of Directors – Mt. Meru Coffee Project

The Council voted to approve as Directors of the Mt. Meru Coffee Project for continuing terms: Mr. Ronald Bohrer, All Saints Lutheran Church, serving a fifth term ending June 30, 2020; Mr. Andrew Petersen, St. John's Lutheran Church, Brookfield, serving a second term ending June 30, 2020; and Ms. Sue Johnson, Vernon Lutheran Church, serving a second term ending June 30, 2021, and for new terms: Ms. Marilyn Heyde, Holy Cross Lutheran Church, Menomonee Falls; and Mr. Rick Fowein, Ascension Lutheran Church, Waukesha; both for new terms ending June 30, 2021.

Executive Committee Action

ECSC 19.01.01. Approval of Voting Member Profile

The Executive Committee approved seeking a youth or young adult who is a person of color or whose primary language is other than English to serve as a Voting Member for the 2019 Churchwide Assembly.

Council Action

SC 19.03.01. Appointment to Council

The Council voted to appoint Mr. Joshua Kuehn to the Synod Council to fill a cluster-nominated vacancy for the Kenosha/West Racine Cluster, created by the resignation of Mr. George Sorenson, for a term ending August 31, 2021.

Council Action

SC 19.03.13. Appointment of Churchwide Assembly Voting Members

The Council voted to appoint Mr. Kou Thao to replace Ms. Aliliywa Mbise as an at-large Churchwide Assembly Voting Member who is a lay youth/young adult person of color or whose primary language is other than English and to appoint Ms. Maria Liedtke to replace Ms. Nanette Smith as the lay female Churchwide Assembly Voting Member from the Northwest Cluster.

Council Action

SC 19.05.04. Approval of Board Members

The Council voted to approve the election of three members of the Lutheran Campus Ministry Board of Directors; Marissa Knopick, Christ the Servant Lutheran Church, Waukesha to serve as a student member through January 2020; Seth Kiefer of Lake Park Lutheran Church, Milwaukee, to continue in his second term through January 2021; and Rev. Carolyn Sellers-Rizzo, Kingo, Shorewood, to serve through January 2022.

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Council Action

SC 19.05.06. Nomination for Synod Secretary

The Council voted to nominate Rev. Matthew Schlake-Kruse to serve as synod secretary for a term beginning September 1, 2019 and continuing through August 31, 2023, with the nomination to be presented to the 2019 Synod Assembly.

Council Action

SC 19.05.08. Nomination for Synod Council

The Council voted to nominate Sara Booher to serve as the youth representative on the Synod Council for the period from September 1, 2019 through August 31, 2021.

Housing Allowances

Council Action

SC 18.12.01. Approval of Housing Allowances

The Council voted to approve 2019 housing allowances of \$40,000 for Rev. Jennifer Arnold, \$35,000 for Bishop Paul Erickson, \$20,000 for Rev. Kristin Nielsen, and \$9,000 for Rev. Mark Thompson.

Employment, Compensation and Personnel Policies

Executive Committee Action

ECSC 18.09.01. Recommendation on Approval of Health Insurance Option for GMS Staff

The Executive Committee voted to recommend that the Synod Council approve continuing Portico Gold+ health insurance for all covered synod staff members for 2019.

Council Action

SC 18.09.08. Approval of 2019 Compensation Guidelines

The Council voted to approve the 2019 Compensation Guidelines for Clergy and for Deacons as presented.

Council Action

SC 18.09.09. Approval of Health Insurance Coverage Level for Staff

The Council voted to approve continuation of the Gold Plus Health Insurance Plan for all covered synod staff for 2019.

Council Action

SC 18.11.05. Modification of Compensation Guidelines

The Council voted to approve a modification of the 2019 Compensation Guidelines for Clergy as follows:

Part IV. H. 2019 Compensation for Altar/Pulpit Supply clergy

\$175.00 - Preaching and leading one worship service, plus mileage (this applies when a supply pastor is both preaching and presiding, as well as when a layperson is preaching but not presiding)

\$50.00 - Each additional service on the same day or at another time (Saturday evening or weekday),

when the preparation involved is already completed for the related Sunday.

\$50.00-Presiding at Communion only, plus mileage (this applies when a layperson is preaching and a pastor is needed only to preside at Communion)

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Executive Committee Action

ECSC 19.01.02. Recommendation of Staff Pay Adjustments

The Executive Committee recommended that the Synod Council approve a 2 ½% pay increase for synod staff, retroactive to January 1, 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.

Submitted,

Mr. Matthew Brockmeier
Secretary, Greater Milwaukee Synod, ELCA
May 2019