

THE TWENTY-FOURTH ASSEMBLY OF THE SIERRA PACIFIC SYNOD

“LORD, WHEN DID WE...”

May 13-15, 2011 • Hyatt Regency San Francisco Airport, Burlingame, CA

HIGHLIGHTS

The Sierra Pacific Synod met in Assembly under the theme “Lord, When did we...” based on Matthew 25:31-46, with 589 in attendance. Of those present, 478 were voting members. 108 of those were voting members for the *first time* and 42 were under 31 years of age. For the first time, simultaneous translation services for all business sessions were offered in Spanish for voting members. Assembly chaplains were pastors who are called to serve as chaplains in a number of institutional settings in the Sierra Pacific Synod.

Bishop Medardo Gomez, Bishop of the Lutheran Church of El Salvador (one of our Companion Synods of the Lutheran World Federation, arranged through the Evangelical Lutheran in America) was present, brought greetings, and preached at the Assembly’s closing worship. He was joined by three pastors and one parish worker from congregations and ministries in the Lutheran Church of El Salvador. During and after the Synod Assembly, Bp. Gomez and his party had a variety of opportunities to meet Sierra Pacific Synod pastors and congregation members who have “sister parish” relationships with congregations in El Salvador.

Keynote addresses were presented by **Dr. Mark Allan Powell**, Trinity Lutheran Seminary: *The Least of These* and *Hearts and Treasures*. **Dr. Carol Jacobson**, PLTS, offered the **Bible Study: Living in Three D: Becoming a Matthew 25 Church**. The **Rev. Ruben Duran**, Congregational and Synodical Mission Unit, brought the **report** of the **ELCA** and the **Presiding Bishop** Mark Hanson, and **Mark Myers**, member of the **ELCA Church Council**, brought greetings and shared the work of the Council.

St. Francis Lutheran Church, San Francisco, was warmly welcomed back onto the roster of Sierra Pacific Synod Congregations and the ELCA.

The **Racial and Ethnic Ministries Working Group** made presentations lifting up the work of each of its three teams: *Cultural Competency/Multicultural Ministries*, *Anti-Racism* and *Mission/Strategy*.

An **Assembly Banquet** on Friday evening celebrated the significant anniversaries of congregations and rostered leaders, with those pastors celebrating their 50th Anniversary of Ordination invited to speak to the gathering. Additionally, Mr. Jim Gray, who has helped to plan assemblies for the past 23 years, and is retiring, was recognized. Members of the former Golden Gate Lutheran Church, San Francisco, shared a history of their congregation’s ministry, and the Assembly thanked them for their generous gifts to the congregations of the San Francisco Conference, Pacific Lutheran Theological Seminary, Lutheran Social Services and the Sierra Pacific Synod, which came from the sale of their property after the congregation closed.

Resolutions passed

Resolution 2011-01 *Regarding Appropriate Pastoral Compensation* (which provides an annual baseline and a worksheet for calculation and discussion of pastoral compensation. The third resolve was neither affirmed nor rejected, and will be referred to the Synod Council, along with Resolutions 2011-04 and 2011-05.)

Resolution 2011-02 *Regarding the Use of the Trinitarian Name in Synodical Worship Services* (which resolved that the Sierra Pacific Synod “continue to affirm and celebrate the Holy Trinity in its life and liturgies”)

Resolution 2010-03 *Regarding Annual Synod Budgets* (which asks the Synod Council, beginning with the 2012 Assembly, to present at least one budget option that shows a balanced budget)

Additional Resolutions have been referred to the Synod Council for its consideration, as unfinished Assembly business.

Elections

Discipling Team members elected in District Caucuses were *Rev. Kerstin Barnes*, Leadership, District A; *Rev. Scott Guemmer*, Word & Sacrament, District B; *Rev. Dawn Roginski*, Witness & Service, District C; *Louise Rankin*, Leadership, District D; *Bill Johnson*, Word & Sacrament, District E.

Synod Council members elected include *Rev. Newt Kerney*, District A; *James Anderberg*, District B; *Elaine Whitney*, District C; *Rev. Susan Birkelo*, District D; *Steve Herzfelt*, District E; *Rosie Ellis-Falik*, Youth Member; *Larry Struve*, At-Large.

Those elected to serve in these offices were installed at the Closing Worship Service. *Karen Ilder*, recently reinstated to the roster as a Lay Rostered Leader, was installed to her work in the Office of the Bishop as an Associate in Ministry.

In other business:

- The Assembly adopted a **2012-13 Budget** as proposed which showed anticipated income of \$1,927,500 with expected expenses totaling \$2,720,851. The Assembly met as a “Quasi Committee of the Whole” for discussions of the budget before convening in regular session for consideration and passage of the budget.
- Approved changes to the Synod By-Laws SB11.07.01 through SB11.07.09, moving them into Continuing Resolutions. These sections of the Constitution and By-Laws relate to Synod Discipling Teams. This change will make it easier to reconfigure Discipling Teams as needs may arise in the future.
- Approved a change to SB11.01.04b wherein the deadline for submission of a proposed budget by the Finance Committee to the Synod Council would change from ~~three months~~ to sixty days prior to the date of the Synod Assembly in which it will be considered. This change reflects the use of electronic media and messaging which did not exist when the By-Law was originally written.

There was morning worship in the chapel each day. A service of Peace, Healing and Reconciliation on Saturday was added to the Opening and Closing Worship Services, which provided for a variety of meaningful and celebratory worship experiences. Rev. Susan Scott preached at the Saturday service, and Bp. Holmerud preached at the Opening Worship service. Workshops were offered around the Assembly theme and were well attended.

2012 Sierra Pacific Synod Assembly • “For the Love of God – Care for Creation”
San José Marriott Hotel • Friday, May 18, 2012 *through* Sunday, May 20, 2012