

**SIERRA PACIFIC SYNOD
EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN AMERICA**

**SYNOD COUNCIL MINUTES
May 5, 2010
Silver Baron, Room D
Silver Legacy, Reno, NV**

Present: Bp. Mark Holmerud, Pr. Adisa Armand Miller, Don Strauch, Karen Anderson, Perry Gray-Reneberg, Gisela Daetz, Kay Valler, Ann Brannen, Mauri Hamilton, Pr. Susan Birkelo, Pr. Sarah Isakson, Pr. Tom Beck, Pr. Brian Malison, Jay Hines-Shah, Pr. Newt Kerney, Merle Hanson, John Kuehner (Chair pro tem), Lou Smith (Treasurer Pro tem), Pat Cash (Secretary).

Staff: Pr. Harvey Blomberg, Pr. Jim Goldsmith, Pr. Nancy Feniuk Nelson, Steve Krefting

Discipling Team Chairs: Margaret McLean (Leadership), Ann Watson (Word and Sacrament)

Visitors: Barbara Droher-Kline (LSSNC), Pr. Bob Hutson (Assembly Parliamentarian), Rev Susan Engh (Churchwide Representative), Mark Myers (CW Synod Council Member), Dave Sanders (Sierra, Auberry), and Dave Bremmel (Concordia, Kingsburg)

Absent: Pam Bertani

Welcome John Kuehner, Chair Pro Tem, opened the meeting at 2:10pm welcoming all gathered. The Behavioral Covenant was read.

Bishop Holmerud introduced guests Pr Susan Engh our Churchwide representative for the Assembly, Mark Myers -CW Council member, Jeff Sanders from Sierra Lutheran in Auberry and Dave Bremmel from Concordia in Kingsburg.

SC10.05.20 MSC (Isakson/Beck) to adopt the agenda as printed

SC10.05.21 MSC (Daetz/Anderson) to approve the January and March draft minutes with the following changes:

March 11 minutes: under proposed budget, second bullet, change the amount to \$800,000; add Ann Brannen under list of those absent;

January 15-16 minutes: under the Bishop's report #2e. Sierra Auberry should be identified as an ELCA congregation, not ALC; under Ministry Partners, create a paragraph following W-ELCA Synodical President where the Mt Cross information begins

Presentation by Pr Susan Engh, Churchwide representative

Susan spoke about the ELCA's latest initiative, **Living Into the Future Together (LIFT)** led by a Task Force of 12. The goal of LIFT is to evaluate and re-imagine the ELCA's ecology and ecosystem. This initiative was authorized by the Church Council in March of 2009 in an effort to examine factors such as the ELCA's shrinking numbers, the realities of living in a pluralistic society, and the effects of the economic crisis. This is designed to create an opportunity for people to share and listen to one another.

Focus areas for Task Force:

1. Identity-who are we and who will we be
2. What are our opportunities, how to serve best the best...
3. What are the interrelationships we are a part of
4. Congregations- heart of who we are as a church
5. Partnerships
6. Financial resources
7. Structure and governance- does it do we need; make adjustments 22 years into our life together

What is God calling this church to do and be in the future? What changes are needed? Reports at the 2011 CW might be recommendations; changes will be dependent upon input.

Continued Business

Congregations Voting to Depart the ELCA: Sierra Lutheran Auberry; Concordia, Kingsburg

Sierra Auberry- MS (Grey-Reneberg/Malison) to approve the vote to leave the ELCA. Dave Sanders from Sierra LC shared that the church is located in a small, conservative community and those voting to leave felt they needed to for the furthering of the kingdom in that area. The congregation is active and reaching out to their community. They plan to join LCMC.

Call the question

SC10.05.22 Carried (2 abstentions) to approve the vote of Sierra Lutheran Church, Auberry, CA to leave the ELCA.

Concordia, Kingsburg- MS (Daetz/Birkelo) to approve the vote to leave the ELCA. Dave Bremmel explained that the congregation plans to join LCMC and have called a pastor. The Ecumenical community in Kingsburg is conservative and the ability to do ministry in the community would be hindered. Call the question.

SC 10.05.23 Carried (4 abstentions) to approve the vote of Concordia Lutheran Church, Kingsburg, CA to leave the ELCA.

ELCA Synod Council Representative- Mark Myers shared recent work of the Council and the Conference of Bishops.

1. **Visions and Expectations** and other items governing rostered leaders were reviewed and changed as per the decision of the 2009 Churchwide Assembly. Some items related to pension, marital status etc were left undefined because of differing state laws. They is currently being addressed.
2. 308 congregations took **votes to leave** the ELCA. Of those, 201 passed the first vote, 90 took a second vote and 89 passed the 2nd vote.
3. **Social statements...2011:** genetics, criminal justice; **2015:** justice for women. Some discussion at Church Council as to whether there is the capacity to continue to turn out Social Statements at the current pace. Comments from Synod Council members indicated a need for social statements since the ELCA is a center for moral deliberation
4. CWA 2011 – Orlando, FL Aug 14-19; CWA 2013- Pittsburgh, PA

Reports

1. ***Bishop Mark*** -
 - a. Nine congregations have held a second vote and one more will in June. Emanuel, Lodi would be the 10th to leave. Most are very small congregations, rural or remote and haven't had much association with the Synod in recent years. Total mission support of all 10 congregations was \$33,000 St Timothy's Lutheran, San Jose has affiliated with CORE. (If CORE becomes a denomination, then a choice will need to be made) There will be a Farewell and Godspeed to congregations leaving at Assembly.
 - b. Bp Mark read a letter lifting the censure placed on University Chapel in Berkeley. This will be part of his report to the Assembly.
2. ***Bishop's Associate Pr. Nancy Feniuk Nelson***
 - a. Candidacy Committee meetings have been set for ELM pastors, and Pastors Sabin & Merkle have begun the reinstatement process.
 - b. Transition By the end of May, the Rio Linda temporary site will be ready. In Fresno work has been done on the lease and the contract for renovations. Work is being done on the lease at St Mark's, SF, 3rd floor of the Urban Life Center. The current staff has been informed that positions end June 30 and all are welcome to apply for the new positions as they may be so inclined. Karen Idler has been hired as Executive Assistant effective May 17, based out of the Sacramento office. The new DSO is Laureen Sullivan who has a 90 day contract so all parties can determine if the job fit is right. By the end of the year, hopes are that an ecumenical site can be obtained for the Sacramento

office. Work is in progress. Support positions will be the next hires, then an Assistant to the Bishop in San Francisco and last, an Assistant to the Bishop in Sacramento. Suzanne Bruce has been hired to assist with the move

- c. Pr Nancy has had discussion with St Francis, SF about their return to the Synod.

3. Pr Harvey Blomberg

- a. American Canyon has a start date of June 1 or July 1
- b. Transformational ministry –EOCM folks came to lead a pilot program with three congregations: Emmanuel - San Jose, Christ- Fairfax, Grace - Richmond
- c. Consultations: Hilmar & Livingston, Trinity-Ft Bragg, Gloria Dei, Visalia (with the Lahu people)
- d. EOCM struggling as well financially
- e. Oregon Synod work-OR clusters meet with staff for a day and the staff visits congregations. This is done in a community organizing(CO) fashion. New congregation are based on CO. There are 6 new starts in Oregon.
- f. Nationally: In January, Churchwide will hold a training for Mission Developers. Harvey serves as part of the Asian new starts team. The College of Developers (experienced developers) shares with other developers about what to expect. He met with others in Tijuana to see how the church can be more supportive of people working for nothing and living in poor situations. Harvey also serves on the Development Team which looking at 53 applications for new starts.

4. Pr Jim Goldsmith-

- a. Working on Fresno office set up. Move should be the middle or end of July. A major renovation of facility is involved.
- b. Starting to connect with clergy in the area and working with Campus ministry. Since the ELCA formation, the California board has had oversight of Campus Ministry throughout the state. A process has begun to dissolve the state Tri-synod Campus Ministry board and place Campus Ministry oversight within each synod. Funding, which is allotted by state, will need to be divided accordingly. The SP Synod has 8 sites and plans are to help make these sites more closely related with congregations in the area.
- c. Director for Mission Support (Stewardship) work is beginning. How do we change the culture to make stewardship as a spiritual practice? This will be the topic of a Friday afternoon workshop

5. Discipling Teams-

- a. Leadership (Margaret McLean):
 - 1. There was a workshop on polarities at St Marks, SF led by Roy Oswald
 - 2. Two workshops to be held at assembly: mutual ministry and sabbatical
 - 3. Compensation Guidelines are to be reviewed and conversation begun within the synod (one S CA synod votes on an annual resolution Re: compensation guidelines.)
- b. Word and Sacrament (Ann Watkins):
 - 1. There will be two workshops on Book of Faith.
 - 2. Catechumenate training will be held in Jan 2011.

New Business

SC10.05.24 Consent Calendar MSC(Daetz/Anderson) to approve the consent calendar with the removal of items 4 and 8.

Assembly Committee approvals: Pr John Valentine (chair)- *Resolutions Committee*; Susan Hertless (chair), Pr Duane Woida, and Margie Back-

Elections Committee; Laurel Lindstrom(chair) and Marilyn Minke-Credentials Committee

Candidacy Committee Appointment- Trudy Franzen

Special Call for Rev Frederick W. Weidmann to serve at Hillcrest Congregational Church UCC, Pleasant Hill, CA and Rev Adam Knutson (Presbyterian) to serve as Youth and Family Minister at Hope Lutheran Fresno, CA.

On leave from call Pr Debra Slifer

Affirmation of hiring Laureen Sullivan, Director of Synod Operations and Karen Idler, Executive Assistant for the Office of the Bishop, Sacramento

Approval of Assembly offering recipients 1/3 of offerings each to

a. LAMN: specifically for their relationship with RAIN (prisoner re-entry)

b. Lutheran Malaria Initiative

c. LWR: with a special emphasis on Haiti & Darfur

Approval of Congregation Constitutions : Immanuel, San Jose and Davis Lutheran, Davis

Witness and Service DT Chair: Kent Madsen

SC10.05.25 MSC (Birkelo/ Isakson) to approve Study Leave for Rev Suk Yeon Lee

SC10.05.26 MSC (Hines-Shah/Birkelo) to affirm the appointment of Larry Moeller as Lay Mission Developer for Bethel, Sacramento

SC10.05.27 MSC (Malison/Holmerud) to approve the proposed **Candidacy Committee contract** for psychologists.

SC 10.05.28 MSC Isakson/Hines-Shah) to approve the **\$2000 funding request** from the Western Youth Gathering Steering Committee

SC10.05.29 MSC (Beck/Kerney) to appoint Lisa Herlocker and Pr Craig Minick as representatives from the SP Synod to the Western States Youth Gathering Steering Committee and to serve as resource contacts for the event

Process for Selecting CW Voting Members from among those elected by the Assembly. Fifteen are elected but the Synod is allotted 13 plus the Bishop.

SC10.05.30 MSC (Isakson/Birkelo) to use the process as described below:

1. Thirteen papers of one color, 2 of another. Each person will draw a slip of paper.
2. When the first person draws one of the two "other" colored slips, that category of Voting Member no longer draws. This person is the First Alternate.
3. Of the remaining 13 slips of paper, the same number as those remaining in the category of the first alternate are then removed.
4. The next person to draw the "other" color serves as Second Alternate.
5. Exempt from drawing are folks representing diversity categories.
6. SB9.01.01d does not apply to this particular process

Assembly Overview and Assignments

1. Hearings- *Budget* , Expo Hall- Lou Smith, John Kuehner
Resolution 10-01 Silver Baron 1 and 2, Pr. Sarah Isakson, Jay Hines-Shah, Margaret McLean
Resolution 10-02 Silver Baron 3 & 4 Gisela Daetz, Merle Hanson, Karen Anderson

Westlake Property- allocation amounts. The attorney indicated that the Council is not bound by the set of allocations defined by the original congregation.

SC10.05.31 MSC (Hines-Shah/Cash) to distribute the Westlake funds as originally requested only to PLTS, LSS, Night Ministry, Mt Cross LOM and to send \$10,000 (a tithe) to the ELCA. The remainder of funds to go into the Synod's operating fund

SC10.05.32 MSC (Isakson/Birkelo) to add \$10,000 to the list of disbursements for the Racial and Ethnic Ministries Working Group.

Budget- Lou Smith led the Council through the budget as presented to the Assembly. He noted a change in language from "permanently restricted" to "unrestricted Council designated." The budget includes income of \$250,000 from the proposed challenge to congregations to have a gift of \$5 per confirmed member ingathered each month, tithing to the Synod. This would result in additional ministry funds for each congregation plus the estimated \$250,000 for the Synod.

Other Two ELM clergy have been nominated for Churchwide Assembly and Synod Council. The asterisk by their names indicate that the election is provisional until such time as they become rostered with the ELCA.

Reminders to Council members about participating in the discussions as needed.

Barbara Droher-Kline shared information about the LCMS conferences this summer which may have a significant effect on the ELCA's joint ministry areas: LSSNC and LOM Mt Cross.

Meeting adjourned at 6:59pm

Respectfully submitted,

Pat Cash, Secretary