

METROPOLITAN WASHINGTON, D.C. SYNOD OF THE ELCA
SYNOD COUNCIL MEETING – APRIL 9, 2022
ST. MATTHEW LUTHERAN CHURCH; WASHINGTON, DC

Call to Order Vice President Slagle Peck called the meeting to order at 9:05 a.m. The roll was called to verify attendance.

Devotions Sheena Foster provided a devotional message based on Psalm 104.

Vice President Slagle Peck presented the proposed agenda for the meeting and the minutes of the previous meeting as a single motion. The draft minutes of the March 12, 2022, Synod Council meeting were presented to the Council for approval. Vice President Slagle Peck asked for corrections or amendments. There were none.

SC22.04.15: To approve the agenda for the April 9, 2022, Synod Council meeting and the minutes of the March 12, 2022, Synod Council meeting.

1. Special Reports

a. Global Mission Committee/Global Goals Team

Pastor Richard Hoehn and Ted Steege addressed the Synod Council on behalf of the Global Missions Committee/Global Goals Team to discuss the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals. These 2030 Global Goals consist of 17 items in five categories, *i.e.*, for the people, the planet, prosperity, peace, and partnerships. Members of the Committee offer informational sessions and follow-up consultations to congregations, universities, and communities. The Committee aspires to reach out to every congregation in the Synod regarding the maintenance of the congregation's grounds. The representatives responded to questions from the Synod Council. No formal action was requested of the Synod Council.

b. Ecumenical and Inter-Religious Relations Committee

Pastor Mark Brown provided an update on the work of this Committee, which provides counsel on and maintenance of the ecumenical relations of the Synod. The Committee is actively seeking additional members to assist in its efforts. Pastor Brown responded to questions from the Synod Council.

2. Staff and Officer Reports

a. Bishop Ortiz:

- i. Sierra Pacific Synod. Bishop Ortiz provided updates on the aftermath of the dismissal of Pr. Nelson Rabell-González as pastor of Misión Latina Luterana in Stockton, California, by Bishop Megan Rohrer, Sierra Pacific Synod, on December 12, 2021. Presiding Bishop Eaton has appointed a three-member listening panel which conducted interviews on the territory of the synod on April 1 and 2. Bishop Ortiz disclosed that she was also interviewed by members of this panel on April 2. A report is expected to be completed by the members of this panel and delivered by the end of April for Bishop Eaton's consideration and further action, if appropriate.
- ii. Churchwide Assembly Planning. The 2022 Churchwide Assembly will be held on August 6-12 in Columbus, Ohio. While several important matters will be addressed by the Assembly, Bishop Ortiz noted that the Region 8 bishops will be bringing one or more resolutions to the Assembly arising out of the Sierra Pacific matter. In preparation for the Assembly and these resolutions, informational sessions will be made available to all voting members.
- iii. Assistant to the Bishop, Deacon Julie Stecker. Bishop Ortiz noted that Deacon Julie Stecker, Assistant to the Bishop for Youth and Family Ministry, had returned from her family leave but was attending the meeting of the Delaware-Maryland Synod Council. On behalf of Deacon Stecker, Bishop Ortiz noted that she is in the process of organizing a joint youth gathering at Mar Lu Ridge in July for the two synods.
- iv. Assistant to the Bishop, Pr. Erin Swenson-Reinhold. Bishop Ortiz referred to the recent announcement that Pr. Swenson-Reinhold has resigned from the synod staff, effective June 30, 2022, in order to accept a call from Preston Meadow Lutheran Church, Plano, Texas. Bishop Ortiz has substantially completed the process of identifying a successor but is not yet in a position to make a public announcement. Bishop Ortiz hopes to make a public announcement in the near future and to install the new Assistant to the Bishop at the Synod Assembly in June.

b. Assistant to the Bishop and DEM, Pr. Bailey:

Pastor Bailey provided a written report and made brief additional remarks regarding the work of two tables (New and Renewing Missions and Stewardship and Mission Support) and the Racial Equity Team. Pastor Bailey also referred to Cohort 2 of the

Holy Listening Project, which had met during the week preceding the Synod Council meeting.

c. Assistant to the Bishop, Pr. Swenson-Reinhold:

Pastor Swenson-Reinhold provided a written report and provided additional remarks concerning her personal transition plans. She also described a potential collaboration with the Virginia Synod on discernment matters.

d. Assistant to the Bishop, Youth and Family Ministry, Deacon Julie Stecker:

Deacon Stecker was not present and did not provide a report, except for the remarks made on her behalf by Bishop Ortiz (described above).

e. Assistant to the Bishop for Generosity, Pr. David Shank:

Pastor Shank made his first appearance before the Synod Council, having begun his role as the Assistant to the Bishop for Generosity on April 1. He described his initial meetings with the New and Renewing Missions Table and the Stewardship and Mission Support Table, his desire to assist in the development of a gift acceptance policy, and his goal to arrange individual meetings with members of the Synod Council.

f. Vice President Jennifer Slagle Peck:

Vice President Slagle Peck called on Sheena Foster, who provided a brief update on the work of the Nominating Committee. The Committee has met once. Although nomination forms are due on May 1, there are no candidates for Synod Secretary or youth Synod Council member, and there is an insufficient number of candidates for the Consultation Committee based on the number of vacancies to be filled.

Vice President Slagle Peck also provided an update on the work arising out of the Racial Equity Plan, including the services provided by Gold Enterprises LLC, and plans for one or more workshops to be conducted at the Synod Assembly.

g. Treasurer Julie Hamre:

- i. Year-to-Date Financial Statements. Treasurer Julie Hamre had distributed copies of the financial statements for the first two months of the current fiscal year, *i.e.*, the period ended March 31, 2022, in advance of the meeting. These statements reflect a deficit in undesignated receipts, compared with expenditures, of approximately \$120,700. Of this total, approximately \$92,000 consisted of four categories of expenditures where all (or substantially all) of the full-year

budgeted amount had been disbursed. In addition, this total included realized and unrealized losses from invested assets of approximately \$18,100.

- ii. Synod Assembly Budget Proposals. The Finance Committee expects to have completed its work on a proposed FY 2023 budget prior to the May Synod Council meeting. FY 2023 is the fiscal year of the Synod that will begin on February 1, 2023. At the May meeting, the Synod Council will be asked to recommend a proposed budget to the 2022 Synod Assembly. In addition, the Finance Committee expects to propose that the Synod Assembly adopt a modification of the FY 2022 budget in light of additional expenditures that were not anticipated at the time of the 2021 Synod Assembly. The proposal contemplates an increase of up to \$100,000 in authorized expenditures.
- iii. Compensation Guidelines. Each Synod Assembly acts upon rostered minister compensation guidelines for the ensuing year. Members of the Synod Council were asked to offer their views on whether to propose a cost-of-living adjustment and, if so, how much of an adjustment should be proposed. A recommendation will be presented to the Synod Council at its May meeting.
- iv. External Financial Statement Audit. The external financial statement audit will not begin until after April 18, 2022, the due date for federal income tax returns for most taxpayers. The external auditing firm provides both tax and audit services to its clients, and generally does not have staff professionals available for fiscal-year audits until after this due date has passed.

3. Synod Women's Organization

Members were reminded of the 2022 Virtual Gathering to be held on May 7, 2022.

4. Youth Organization

[No report]

5. New Business

None.

The meeting adjourned with a version of the Lord's Prayer at 11:50 a.m.
Next Scheduled Meeting: May 14, 2022; (location TBD)

Respectfully submitted,
Kevin D. Anderson
Secretary