

**METROPOLITAN WASHINGTON D.C. SYNOD OF THE ELCA
SYNOD COUNCIL MEETING – SEPTEMBER 21, 2013
COMMUNITY LUTHERAN CHURCH, STERLING, VA**

Dr. White called the meeting to order at 9:00 am. Gretta Williams offered devotions.

Pastor Joe Vought, Senior Pastor, Community, Sterling, VA, host for the Council Meeting, welcomed the Council and provided historical and current information about the congregation.

Motion 13.09.01 approved the agenda for the September 21, 2013 Synod Council Meeting.

Motion 13.09.02 approved the minutes of the July 20, 2013 Synod Council Meeting.

Motion 13.09.03 accepted the minutes of the 2013 Synod Assembly to be presented to the 2014 Synod Assembly for approval.

Synod Council Primary Mission Table

I. Ministry to second- and third-generation immigrants

1. The synod has seven ministries among first generation (worship language other than English) and several others that have a number of first and second generation immigrants. We need to better understand how to minister to the children and grandchildren of those who have come to live here from other places. This is a group that the Lutheran Church may be well positioned to reach but with whom we not had been very effective.
2. Leila Ortiz is approved for ordination in the ELCA and has completed all her studies toward a PHD in Theology with a focus in this area of ministry. This proposal would bring her to Herndon, VA on October 1, 2013 where she would work at Holy Cross for 5 hours a week and help the congregation and the Synod understand how this kind of ministry might be done. This pioneering effort would be for a 10 month term call, issued through the Synod.
3. Ms. Ortiz and Holy Cross may explore the possibility of her being called to that congregation as an associate pastor (full or part time), with her call to begin at the end of her ten month term position. If it becomes clear that such a call is not going to happen, Ms. Ortiz will be free to consider other calls in the synod that would begin at the end of her 10 month term of service. If she is not under call in the Synod by September 1, 2014 she will be free to explore call options elsewhere

Motion 13.09.04 approved the call of Leila Ortiz by the Synod Council to serve as Pastor in Residence at Holy Cross Lutheran Church, Herndon, VA effective October 1, 2013 for a period of ten months during which she will work five hours a week at Holy Cross and work on finishing her work on her PHD. The Synod will contribute \$10,000 from the Bethany funds.

II. Redevelopment of Good Samaritan, Lanham

The Synod Council at its July 2013 meeting approved bringing this congregation under synodical administration. Phil met with leadership team to talk about an addendum to the agreement, as follows.

Background:

Before approving the Redevelopment Covenant and the associated funds for this ministry project, the Synod Council has requested that the congregation and Council clearly state what will happen in the event the benchmarks are not reached along the way. In addition, this addendum makes a first effort at thinking through the resource benchmarks needed to sustain a pastor's salary after the redevelopment is completed.

The ultimate three year goal is that the congregation attain an average worshipping community of 100 and (this part is new) be self-sustaining at a ¾ time pastor's defined compensation according to synod guidelines.

Proposed: At the annual review (by Sep 1 of each year), if the benchmarks are not met and it is decided by the Director of Evangelical Mission and the Synod Council that the development and funding end, the Synod Council may vote to close the congregation as an Act of Mission as outlined in that separate statement, especially if the minimum and first benchmark is not met. The number of giving units will also be considered as a measure of health and vitality.

Benchmarks:

December 31, 2014: 50 and able to pay all bills including 25% of pastors Defined Compensation

December 31, 2015: 75 and able to pay all bills including 50% of pastors Defined Compensation

December 31, 2016: 100 and able to pay all bills including 75% of pastors Defined Compensation

III. Closing as an Act of Mission

What does this mean? To close as an act of mission means that the congregation would be watched over by someone in the congregation and assets would be sold.

The Metropolitan Washington DC Synod will walk with the members of the congregation for a predetermined period of time (perhaps 3-9 months). In that time we would work together to accomplish the following:

IV. Staff and Officer Reports

a. Bishop Graham:

i. Roster Matters

Motion 13.09.05 approved the below listed roster matters

Call the Rev. Wayne Shelor to Specialized Ministry to serve as Interim Pastor at Hope, Annandale, VA (begins Oct 1, 2013)

To place the Rev. Thomas Kenea, On Leave from Call, first year, effective, Sep 2013.

To place the Rev. Lisa Hufford, On Leave from Call, second year.

To remove Alebachew Engedayehu from the roster of the ELCA by resignation.

ii. Life of the Synod:

Harold Sergeant retired, which left the synod office overworked! The result has been the necessary adjustment to the staff's workload. The Synod Office is in the process of reconfiguring job descriptions. There may be a need to add another person part-time for specific tasks. There is no intention of hiring a full time person to take Harold's place. The intention is to live with the confines of the budget.

The staff has spent a lot of time lately working with interim ministry in the synod. The expected result is that this ministry is both more important and more of a challenge. The Synod would like to move toward having full-time intentional interim pastors that are specifically trained for interim ministry.

The Intentional interim process would adjust the call process for the next pastor one year to eighteen months after the former pastor leaves in order to give the congregation time to work through a study to assist in identifying "who are we" and to put their profile together. This should also speed up the end process to allow congregation to deal with whatever issues are before them, then they can say "these are the kind of people we are looking for or not looking for." This process should help to expedite the call process and make it more effective. The bottom line is that getting the interim transition right is important.

The Bishop has made some decisions for the future of the Synod; among them, to try to spend more time in conversation with congregations, councils and pastors. Appointments will be scheduled with pastors and councils to talk about current and future needs – not just "troubled" congregations.

The Bishop has also been visiting other synods and has recently led three synod retreats.

b. Vice President White:

- i. Elections – selection of remaining members for the Executive Committee
Motion 13.09.06 approved Pr. Emmanuel Grantson to continue to serve as a member of the Synod Executive Committee effective immediately.

- ii. Mr. White indicated that we are in search of a Synod Worship Coordinator.
 - iii. The Constitution/By-Laws were referred back to the Synod Council by the Synod Assembly. Kevin Anderson has agreed to be the Chair of the Constitutional Review Team and will report back to the Council in February 2014.
- c. Assistant to the Bishop Pr. Phil Hirsch:
 Update on Oromo Evangelical Lutheran Congregation. Pr. Hirsch reported that the Oromo Evangelical Lutheran Church of Washington, DC (OEC) has split into two congregations. The second congregation became a congregation on September 15, 2013 and chartered as Oromo Evangelical Lutheran Church (OELC) and currently worships at Grace Lutheran Church on 16th St., NW, Washington, D.C. Bishop Graham recommended that the OELC be welcomed to the Metropolitan Washington, D.C. Synod. Pr. Grantson suggested that funding come from the Synod New and Renewing Mission Table and the ELCA. All agreed.
- d. Assistant to the Bishop Pr. Amy Sevimli:
- i. Thirty young adults attended a DC event: “Spirituality and Money.” There will be a follow-up event: 1) Earning Money and Stewardship presented by Greg Roemer, Thrivent Financial for Lutherans; and (2) Don’t have as much money follow-up event
 - ii. Pr. Sevimli requested a Change in Housing Allowance from \$40,000 to \$53,000. This is NOT a change in compensation, only a change in allowance.
- e. Treasurer’s Report, Mr. John Handley
 Mr. Handley updated the Council on the overall status of the budget. Receipts are about \$4000.00 behind expenses as of August 31, 2013. But we still have not received the final bill for synod assembly. Line 54 Undesignated Surplus/Deficit is the best it has been in the past five years. The Synod is doing a good job of managing its budget. We need to receive \$1.8 million in general mission support from congregations to fully fund the budget. We are on track to make that number.

V. Women of the ELCA

Ms. Kathleen Meier

Action to reach several goals previously established and reported to the Council in the July 20th report, have been moving along. The Board met again on August 10th and appointed a Chairman and committee members including one member outside the Board. Their charge is to investigate the various opportunities for using social media as a way to communicate with our church women: web site, facebook, and texting. We are happy to report that on September 13th the SWO launched its Facebook page.