

**METROPOLITAN WASHINGTON, D.C. SYNOD OF THE ELCA**  
**SYNOD COUNCIL MEETING – MARCH 19, 2016**  
**ST. MARK’S LUTHERAN CHURCH, SPRINGFIELD, VA**

**Call to Order** Dr. White called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m.

**Greetings** Pastor Espinosa greeted the members of the Synod Council and provided a brief history and profile of St. Mark’s Lutheran Church.

**Devotion** Pastor Robert Lewis provided a devotional message and began by noting that March 19 is the day set aside to commemorate Joseph, Guardian of Jesus.

Dr. White presented the proposed agenda for the meeting.

**SC16.03.11:** To approve the agenda for the March 19, 2016, Synod Council meeting.

The draft minutes of the January 16, 2016, Synod Council meeting were presented to the Council for approval. Vice President White asked for corrections or amendments. There were none.

**SC16.03.12:** To approve the minutes of the January 19, 2016, Synod Council meeting

**1. Synod Council Primary Mission Table**

a. Synod Campaign Feasibility Study Report

Pastor Hirsch introduced Pr. Mike Ward, a partner of Gronlund Sayther Brunkow, of Fletcher, North Carolina. At the November 21, 2015, Synod Council meeting, the Council approved a feasibility study for a capital campaign across the entire Synod. During the early part of March, prior to the Council meeting, Pr. Ward and Jennie Wolf Smith, one of his colleagues, conducted 38 interviews with individuals or couples from around the Synod. After discussing the procedures used to conduct the study, Pr. Ward summarized the following recommendations:

- Proceed with a fundraising appeal;
- Set the base campaign goal at \$2 million, and consider “challenge” goals beyond the base goal;
- Develop very clear descriptions of how the leadership development money will be used and how the expected outcomes of that investment will help to revitalize existing ministries;

- Secure a part-time appeal director and provide adequate support staff and resources to conduct an effective campaign;
- Ensure that Bishop Graham is willing and available to focus on the appeal effort;
- Secure a full data base/donor software program, together with training and implementation; and
- Proceed on the campaign timetable as outlined in the study prospectus.

Pr. Ward responded to questions from the Council. At the conclusion of the discussion, a motion was made to proceed with the campaign.

**SC16.03.13:** To authorize a Synod-wide capital campaign with a goal of \$2.250,000, using the firm of Gronlund Sayther Brunkow as capital campaign consultants, for the purposes of growing each congregation by 10%, planting new congregations, and developing leadership.

## **2. Staff and Officer Reports**

### **a. Treasurer Knoll**

Pastor Knoll, Treasurer, led the Synod Council through a review of the financial statements of the Synod for the recently completed fiscal year ended January 31, 2016. These unaudited statements reflect a relatively small deficit of approximately \$64,000 compared with total undesignated receipts of approximately \$1.74 million.

### **b. Assistant to the Bishop and DEM, Pr. Hirsch**

Pastor Hirsch advised the Synod Council that one of its congregations, Community of Christ, Washington, DC, has voted to close, and plans to do so within the next several months. The congregation is currently considering the proper course of action regarding the disposition of its building and the use of the proceeds of disposition.

Pastor Hirsch also brought to the Council a proposal for the Synod to join the Lutheran Development Alliance, formerly known as the Lutheran Planned Giving Consortium. Council members were provided with a copy of a Memorandum of Agreement, which would be used as the basis for the Synod's participation in the Alliance. The proposal had been considered and recommended by the Stewardship Support Table.

**SC16.03.14:** To authorize the Metropolitan Washington, DC, Synod to become a member of the Lutheran Development Alliance by executing a Memorandum of Agreement with the ELCA Foundation, and to commit \$10,250 of financial support to the

Alliance for the first year of its membership, payable out of the restricted funds account identified as “Planned Giving.”

**c. Bishop’s Report**

- i. Roster Matters for Synod Council Action. Bishop Graham brought six roster matters to the Synod Council, while noting that the first three matters are the result of recent changes adopted by the Conference of Bishops regarding the standards for placing rostered leaders on leave from call and the time limits for being placed on leave from call.

**SC16.03.15:**

That:

1. The Rev. Catherine Feil’s status as on leave from call, to care for family responsibilities, be extended for one year, effective July 5, 2016;
2. The Rev. Philip Gaines be placed on leave from call, to care for family responsibilities, for a period of three years, effective October 10, 2016;
3. The Rev. Thomas Kenea be placed on leave from call, to care for family responsibilities, for a period of three years, effective September 1, 2016;
4. The Rev. Eugene Kern be called to Specialized Ministry as interim pastor at Bethlehem Lutheran Church, Fairfax, Virginia, effective March 13, 2016;
5. The Rev. Alexis King be called to Specialized Ministry as the Chaplain of the Village at Rockville, effective November 2, 2015; and
6. The Rev. Heidi Moore be placed on leave from call, effective March 22, 2016.

- ii. Roster Matters for Information. Although not requiring any action on the part of the Synod Council, Bishop Graham’s written report to the Council noted the following additional matters affecting the Synod’s rostered leaders:

1. The Rev. Shannon Anderson is serving as interim pastor at Saint Nicholas Lutheran Church, Huntingtown, Maryland;
2. The Rev. Ray E. Blanset has been transferred to the Delaware-Maryland Synod, effective January 14, 2016;
3. The Rev. J. Vincent Guss Jr. has been transferred to the Central States Synod, effective October 16, 2015; and
4. The Rev. Douglas P. Jones has been transferred to the Delaware-Maryland Synod, effective February 7, 2016.

- iii. Other Appointments. Bishop Graham brought recommendations for appointments to two other organizations to the Synod Council.

**SC16.03.16:**

That:

1. Mr. David Appler be appointed to the Board of Directors of Caroline Furnace Lutheran Camp and Retreat Center; and
  2. Dr. Tommie L. Robinson, Jr., and Ms. Donna Duss be appointed to the Board of Trustees of National Lutheran Communities & Services.
- iv. National Lutheran Choir Event. Bishop Graham advised the Council that plans were being made for the National Lutheran Choir, a pan-Lutheran choir based in Minneapolis, to present a concert at the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception, Washington, DC, on October 22, 2017. He asked the Synod Council to approve the sponsorship of this event, while noting that it does not require any financial support from the Synod.

**SC16.03.17:** To authorize the Metropolitan Washington, DC, Synod to endorse and sponsor a concert by the National Lutheran Choir, Minneapolis, Minnesota, to be held at the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception, Washington, DC, on October 22, 2017, but without using any Synod financial resources in support of this event.

- v. Mission Statement. Bishop Graham distributed a revised draft of a proposed mission statement for the Synod. Comments and suggestions were offered at the meeting, and Bishop Graham expressed his intention to bring the completed mission statement to the Synod Council for approval at its April 16 meeting.

**d. Assistant to the Bishop, Pr. Sevimli**

Pastor Sevimli had no formal report, but expressed her gratitude to the Synod for her recently-completed sabbatical leave, during which her five priorities were rest and prayer; re-imagining the Synod office structure; personal discernment; gospel fluency; and building relationships.

**e. Vice President White**

- i. Synod Assembly Planning. Vice President White asked Pr. Mark Edwards to provide an update on the planning for the June 2016 Synod Assembly.
- ii. Synodical Elections. Secretary Kevin Anderson provided the Council with a summary of the elections to various offices to take place at the 2016 Synod Assembly, reminding the Council members of their respective terms and, in some cases, their eligibility to be reelected to the positions they now hold.

**3. Synodical Women's Organization**

Ms. Meier noted that the principal focus of the organization's activities is the planning for its April 16, 2016, Annual Convention, at which leaders for new terms of office are expected to be elected.

#### **4. Youth Organization Report**

Ms. M. briefly summarized initiatives for involvement of youth on a synod-wide basis.

**The meeting adjourned** with the Lord's Prayer at 11:50 a.m.