

METROPOLITAN WASHINGTON, D.C. SYNOD OF THE ELCA
SYNOD COUNCIL MEETING – MARCH 18, 2017
SAINT STEPHEN LUTHERAN CHURCH, SILVER SPRING,
MARYLAND

Call to Order Dr. White called the meeting to order at 9:03 a.m.

Greetings Pastor Bailey greeted the members of the Synod Council and provided a brief history and profile of Saint Stephen Lutheran Church.

Devotion Bishop Graham provided a devotional message based on John 4, the story of Jesus and the Samaritan woman at the well. Among other observations, he noted the very simple and effective evangelism strategy demonstrated by the woman, who returned to her city and said, “Come and see” (John 4: 29).

Vice President White presented the proposed agenda for the meeting.

SC17.03.04: To approve the agenda for the March 18, 2017, Synod Council meeting.

The draft minutes of the January 14, 2017, Synod Council meeting were presented to the Council for approval. Vice President White asked for corrections or amendments. There were none.

SC17.03.05: To approve the minutes of the January 14, 2017, Synod Council meeting.

1. Synod Council Primary Mission Table

a. King of Kings Proposal

Members of the Synod Council were presented with a written document identified as “King of Kings 2.0 Proposal,” describing a proposal for the ministry of this Fairfax-based congregation to expand into Southeastern Loudoun County, Virginia. The proposal included a request for financial assistance from the Synod. The concept is being developed as one congregation in two locations, without immediate plans to acquire and develop a second physical site. Pastor Lynn Miller was present for the discussion, and responded to questions from the members. The narrative proposal was supplemented by a five-year budget, indicating the expected expenses and the sources of funding, including from the Synod. Pastor Hirsch identified this proposal as the first of three such projects that could be made possible by the New Connections Campaign, in which new ministries would be created out of existing

congregations. The proposal had been previously reviewed and approved by the New and Renewing Missions Table. A substantial discussion of the proposal ensued, and the proposal was clarified through questions and answers, as well as additional background information.

SC17.03.06: To express the support of the Metropolitan Washington, D.C. Synod for a new mission site development from King of Kings Lutheran Church, Fairfax, Virginia, in the Stone Springs area of Loudoun County, Virginia, with support of up to \$400,000 as needed and as available from the New Connections Campaign.

b. New Connections Campaign Update

Pastor Hirsch provided a brief update on the New Connections Campaign. In addition to the use of Campaign funds for the purpose of starting new ministries, funds will be used to support existing congregations in their growth. Two congregations have agreed to participate in a pilot program to assess these efforts. Pastor Hirsch reported that commitments of approximately \$300,000 have been made to the Campaign thus far.

2. Staff and Officer Reports

a. Bishop Graham:

- i. Roster Matters for Synod Council Action. Bishop Graham brought three roster matter to the Synod Council.

SC17.03.07: That:

- 1. The Rev. Craig Endicott be placed on the retired roster, effective February 1, 2017;
 - 2. The Rev. Karis Graham be called to specialized ministry as Interim Pastor of Epiphany Lutheran Church, Mt. Vernon, Virginia, effective February 1, 2017; and
 - 3. The Rev. Michael Kuchinsky be placed on the retired roster, effective April 1, 2017.
- 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. Kendall Summers has been moved to the called roster from the on-leave-from-call roster after having been called by Christ Evangelical Lutheran Church, Bethesda, Maryland, effective January 1, 2017;

2. The Rev. Shannon Anderson has been moved to the called roster from the specialized ministry roster after having been called by Peace Lutheran Church, Waldorf, Maryland, effective February 7, 2017;
 3. The Rev. Thomas Montgomery has been moved to the called roster from the specialized ministry roster after having been called by St. Nicholas Lutheran Church, Centreville, Virginia, effective March 1, 2017;
 4. The Rev. John Kallerson transferred to the Northwest Pennsylvania Synod, effective December 12, 2016;
 5. The Rev. Cathy Rosenholtz transferred into the Synod after having been called by Augustana Lutheran Church, Washington, D.C., effective February 7, 2017;
 6. The Rev. Henry Langknecht transferred into the Synod after having been called by Christ the King Lutheran Church, Great Falls, Virginia, effective February 26, 2017;
 7. The Rev. Gerard Johnson was called by Holy Trinity Lutheran Church, Leesburg, Virginia, effective March 19, 2017;
 8. The Rev. Wendy Moen was called by Grace Lutheran Church, Washington, D.C., effective April 3, 2017; and
 9. The Rev. Cathryn (Kate) Costa was called by Good Shepherd Lutheran Church, Gaithersburg, Maryland, effective May 1, 2017.
- iii. Immigration Update. Bishop Graham referred to the ELCA strategy known as “Accompanying Migrant Minors with Protection, Advocacy, Representation and Opportunities” (AMMPARO). The AMMPARO strategy is focused on the people of El Salvador, Honduras, and Guatemala, in light of our relationship to companion churches in that region. One of the goals of this strategy is to improve local conditions so that, instead of seeking to migrate to other countries, individuals may remain safely in their own countries. Bishop Graham also referred to “sanctuary” congregations in this country by reference to their activities in protecting undocumented immigrants, even though no legal status can be conferred on such places under applicable law. Finally, he also referred to efforts of Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service, including a summit planned for the following week to be held in Washington, D.C. Among other goals, this effort prepares individuals from around the country to meet with their elected representatives in Congress.
- iv. Update on Reformation 500th Anniversary Activities. Bishop Graham reminded members of two events scheduled for the end of October to commemorate the 500th anniversary of the Reformation. The first is a concert by the National Lutheran Choir to be presented at the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception, jointly sponsored with Lutheran Social Services of the National Capital Area and the Lutheran Church Missouri Synod, on October 22. The second is the Reformation Sunday worship service at the Washington National

Cathedral, on October 29. Presiding Bishop Elizabeth Eaton is scheduled to preach at this service.

b. Assistant to the Bishop, Pr. Ortiz:

Pastor Ortiz provided an overview of the recent and planned activities and efforts, including candidacy matters; identification and assignment of coaches for rostered leaders, primarily those in their first call; a first call retreat planned for September; a discernment event planned for January 2018; plans for a potential candidacy retreat; and certain efforts in partnership with the Delaware Maryland Synod.

c. Assistant to the Bishop, Pr. Hirsch:

- i. Luther Place Memorial/New Ministry. Pastor Hirsch reported that the New and Renewing Missions Table had approved a \$12,500 grant to support a new ministry for young adults, an event that is regularly held on Sundays at 5:00 PM.
- ii. Abiding Presence (Burke). The New and Renewing Missions Table has also approved a grant, payable over three years and from multiple sources, for ministry expansion and to assist in calling a second pastor focused on outreach.
- iii. Stewardship Training. Pastor Hirsch also advised the members that a two-day stewardship training event is being planned, and will be held at Advent Lutheran Church, Arlington, Virginia.

d. Vice President White:

Vice President White noted that there is one remaining vacancy to fill on the Finance Committee.

e. Treasurer's Report:

- i. Review of Financial Statements. Copies of the unaudited financial statements for the full 12 months of the Synod's most recent fiscal year, *i.e.*, the period ended January 31, 2017, were distributed in advance of the meeting. These statements reflect a surplus in undesignated receipts over expenditures of approximately \$71,000. The surplus was the result, in part, of historically high benevolence receipts during January 2017. However, these statements do not yet reflect the amount of churchwide support that was (or will be) paid after the end of the fiscal year, as the result of the January receipts.
- ii. Young Adult Initiative. Treasurer Pr. Thomas Knoll called to the members' attention a line item in the fiscal year 2016 expenditures budget identified as Young Adult Initiative. The approved budget provided for total expenditures of

\$2,000, but none of these funds were expended during the fiscal year. Pastor Knoll raised the question of whether this authorization could be set aside for future use, notwithstanding that expenditures are traditionally budgeted and approved on a “use it or lose it” basis for each fiscal year. Because the specific request was not fully articulated, members agreed to postpone consideration of this request until the next regular meeting of the Synod Council.

- iii. Status of Budget Process. Development of the fiscal year 2018 budget is in the early stages, with all appropriate inputs currently being requested. A proposed budget will be introduced to the Synod Council at its April meeting, with the goal of approving it in May and recommending it for adoption by the Synod Assembly in June.
- iv. New Connections Campaign Brokerage Account. Pastor Knoll noted that the New Connections Campaign has received, and will likely continue to receive, contributions in the form of publicly-traded stock. As such contributions are received, they are to be credited to a brokerage account for prompt sale. The Campaign does not have an account established for this purpose, and proper authorization is needed in order to establish such an account.

SC17.03.08: To authorize the Treasurer of the Metropolitan Washington, D.C. Synod to establish a brokerage account for the receipt, investment, and disposition of securities received by the New Connections Campaign with Thrivent Financial or an affiliate thereof.

3. Synodical Women’s Organization

Cheryl Dwyer provided comments to supplement the written report that had been provided to the members of the Council in advance of the meeting, and highlighted the upcoming Spring Convention to be held on May 6, efforts to combat human trafficking, and the 2017 Tenth Triennial Gathering, to be held July 13-16 in Minneapolis, Minnesota.

4. Youth Organization Report

Secretary Kevin Anderson provided a brief summary of a written report that had been received from the Synod’s youth representative shortly before the meeting, and indicated his intention to provide the report to the Synod Council members following the meeting. The report identified a number of youth events planned or in the planning stages: (a) the middle school youth program, Shekinah, taking place at the same time as the Synod Council meeting, at the 4H Center in Front Royal, Virginia; (b) a YM103 (Youth Ministry 103) event at Peace Lutheran Church, Alexandria, Virginia, on April 29; (c) a

youth-led experience by LutheranGRACE called Facts Not Fear: Youth Reducing HIV and AIDS Stigma (pending); (d) Shema, an elementary age ministry, on April 30 at King of Kings Lutheran Church, Fairfax, Virginia; and (e) two informational sessions regarding the 2018 Houston Youth Gathering, the first on May 20, and the second on May 21, both at Trinity Lutheran Church, Bethesda, Maryland.

5. **New Business**

Members received a brief update on planning for the 2017 Synod Assembly. Bishop Graham noted that the ELCA will be represented at the Assembly by Presiding Bishop Eaton.

Members also expressed their appreciation for the Racial Equity Team training that was provided immediately following the January Synod Council meeting.

The meeting adjourned with the Lord's Prayer at 9:48 a.m.

Next Scheduled Meeting: April 22, 2017, at Luther Place Memorial, Washington, D.C.