

**METROPOLITAN WASHINGTON, D.C. SYNOD OF THE ELCA**  
**SYNOD COUNCIL MEETING – MAY 18, 2019**  
**THE VILLAGE AT ROCKVILLE, ROCKVILLE, MARYLAND**

**Call to Order** Vice President Crenshaw called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m.

**Greetings** Bishop Graham began by noting the absence of Pr. Jeanne Lowe, member of the Synod Council and Chaplain at The Village at Rockville. Bishop Graham provided a brief background on the organization, which was founded as the National Lutheran Home and is now part of National Lutheran Communities & Services. It provides options for seniors designed for their individual living needs.

**Devotion** Bishop Graham provided a devotional message based on Revelation 21, one of the scriptures selected by the late Rev. C. Bernard Ruffin III for his memorial service to be held in the afternoon on the date of the meeting.

Vice President Crenshaw presented the proposed agenda for the meeting.

**SC19.05.12:** To approve the agenda for the May 18, 2019, Synod Council meeting.

The draft minutes of the April 13, 2019, Synod Council meeting were presented to the Council for approval. Vice President Crenshaw asked for corrections or amendments. There were none.

**SC19.05.13:** To approve the minutes of the April 13, 2019, Synod Council meeting.

**1. Synod Council Primary Mission Table**

a. New Connections Campaign Overview and Update

A financial report for the campaign was distributed to the members in advance of the meeting. The campaign will end with the 2020 Synod Assembly. A large-scale coaches meeting is being planned. Several individuals from the synod, including synod staff, were attending a Mosaix conference in Cleveland at the same time as the meeting was held.

b. Christ Lutheran Church, Bethesda, Maryland

Treasurer Julie Hamre reported that much had been accomplished since December. A contract for the sale of the congregation's property had been signed. Its loan has been refinanced with another institution. The sale of the building is expected to

close within approximately two years, depending on the progress of zoning approvals and permits, and other conditions. The amounts advanced by the synod will not be repaid until the property is sold.

## **2. Bishop Transition Task Force/Election Committee Update**

A task force meeting scheduled to be held before the date of the Synod Council meeting was postponed to a later date. The task force did not have updates to report except to note that the survey distributed in connection with the bishop transition has now been completed.

## **3. Synod Assembly Planning Update**

### **a. Registration Update**

Secretary Kevin Anderson reported on the status of registrations by lay members of the Synod Council, and reminded the members that the June Synod Council meeting will be held on Friday morning, June 14, immediately prior to the beginning of the Synod Assembly.

### **b. Rules of Procedure**

A draft of the proposed rules of procedure had been provided to the members in advance of the meeting. Secretary Anderson specifically noted the four provisions for election of a bishop based on guidance from the churchwide offices. No specific action was taken on the proposed rules, inasmuch as they will be further modified based on guidance from the Bishop Transition Task Force/Election Committee. The final modification is likely to remove time limits for candidates' responses to questions posed at the three concurrent meetings. At these meetings, each candidate will be appearing alone in separate meetings, and a strictly-enforced time limit is likely unnecessary.

### **c. Minutes of 2018 Synod Assembly**

A draft of the minutes from the 2018 Synod Assembly was provided to the members in advance of the meeting. No corrections or amendments were noted.

**SC19.05.14:** To approve the minutes of the 2018 Synod Assembly in the form provided to the Synod Council, and to recommend their approval by the 2019 Synod Assembly.

## **4. Staff and Officer Reports**

### **a. Bishop Graham:**

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

**SC19.05.15:** That the Rev. Cathy Rosenholtz be placed on leave from call, effective March 8, 2019.

- ii. Our Redeemer Update. Bishop Graham provided an update on the status of the Lutheran Church of Our Redeemer, Washington, D.C., which had been placed under voluntary synodical administration pursuant to S13.25 of the Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Synod. The congregation has established its own congregation council and expects to request that its status of synodical administration be terminated in the near future. Planning includes consideration of its building and property needs and the potential disposition of some of its property.
- iii. National Lutheran Bylaws Change. Bishop Graham noted that the synod is one of three synods comprising the members of National Lutheran, Inc., the corporate name for the umbrella organization that includes The Village at Rockville. The Board of Trustees has approved a modification to its bylaws which would, if adopted by its members, cause the trustees to be the members of the nonprofit, nonstock corporation in lieu of the three synods. The change would be accompanied by a more formal affiliation with the ELCA. Members were provided with proposed amendments to Sections 1.02 (Member) and 6.08 (Amendments), as well as a form of Unanimous Written Action of the Members of National Lutheran, Inc. Questions were raised and addressed concerning the extent of the continued relationship between the organization and the synod.

**SC19.05.16:** To approve the Unanimous Written Action of the Members of National Lutheran, Inc., approving amendments to Sections 1.02 and 6.08 of its bylaws, in the form presented to the meeting, and to authorize the bishop of this synod to sign the document on behalf of the synod.

- b. Director for Evangelical Mission in Transition, Pr. Rhinesmith:

No report.

- c. Assistant to the Bishop, Pr. Ortiz

Pastor Ortiz reported few changes in the status of congregations in transition, with one exception. Holy Cross Lutheran Church, Herndon, Virginia, has called a pastor effective July 1, 2019, after a long period of being served by an interim pastor.

Pastor Ortiz also provided a brief summary of the Bishop's Convocation held in San Juan, Puerto Rico, from April 23 to April 25. There were 59 individuals present, of

which 40 were rostered leaders and the rest were family members. Some participants remained after the conclusion of the event, while others travelled to the Virgin Islands. Pastor Ortiz expressed appreciation for the support given to this effort and for the relationships that were created as a result.

d. Vice President Crenshaw:

Vice President Crenshaw reminded voting members to the 2019 Churchwide Assembly that they should register for the Assembly and make all necessary travel arrangements.

e. Treasurer's Report:

- i. Year to Date Financial Statements. Treasurer Julie Hamre had distributed copies of the financial statements for the first three months of the Synod's current fiscal year, *i.e.*, the period ended April 30, 2019, in advance of the meeting. These statements reflect a surplus in undesignated receipts, compared with expenditures, of approximately \$59,000. However, virtually all of this surplus is attributable to the excess of Synod Assembly registration fees collected over the expenses paid to date.
- ii. Draft of FY 2020 Budget. As part of the materials distributed in advance of the April meeting, members were provided a copy of the current draft of the proposed budget for the fiscal year ending January 31, 2021. No changes were made to the proposed budget between the April and May meetings. Accordingly, the budget was recommended for approval by the 2019 Synod Assembly.

**SC19.05.17:** To approve the proposed budget of the Metropolitan Washington, D.C. Synod for the fiscal year ending January 31, 2021, providing for total expenditures of \$1,086,200, and to recommend the same for adoption by the 2019 Synod Assembly.

## 5. Synodical Women's Organization

Donna Nelson highlighted parts of the written report provided in advance to the Synod Council, including the annual Convention of the Synodical Women's Organization held on May 4, 2019. She also discussed efforts to fill vacancies for Triennial Convention delegates and local offices and boards.

## 6. Youth Organization Report

Katherine S. reported that Tony and Barbara Harner have reconsidered their plans to resign from their positions of leadership of the Youth Organization. They plan to continue serving as they have in the past.

## 7. New Business

None

**The meeting adjourned** with the Lord's Prayer at 10:45 a.m.

Next Scheduled Meeting: June 14, 2019; College Park Marriott Hotel & Conference Center, Hyattsville, Maryland.