

METROPOLITAN WASHINGTON, D.C. SYNOD OF THE ELCA
SYNOD COUNCIL MEETING – JULY 20, 2019
LUTHERAN CHURCH OF THE REDEEMER, McLEAN, VIRINIA

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

Devotion Pastor Kessinger provided a devotional message based on Luke 10.

Greetings Pastor Kessinger greeted the members of the Synod Council and provided a brief history and profile of Redeemer Lutheran Church, its demographics, and other characteristics.

Introductions Inasmuch as the Synod Council included several new members who had been elected by the 2019 Synod Assembly, Bishop Graham invited all of the members present to provide a brief biographical introduction.

Orientation An informal multi-part orientation session was held for the benefit of new members of the Synod Council and continuing members. Secretary Kevin Anderson provided an overview of the composition of the Synod Council, the terms of office for each position, and the governing provisions that apply to Council elections and service. Bishop Graham identified each of the members of the Synod staff and their duties and responsibilities, and continued with an overview of the current tables, teams, and committees of the Synod. Bishop Graham described some of the characteristics of the congregations within the Synod. Secretary Anderson identified some of the key provisions of the Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions, and continued with a description of the duties, responsibilities, and potential risks of service as a member of the Council. Bishop Graham concluded the orientation session by identifying the Synod attorney and describing the types of questions that could be raised for his consideration.

Vice President Crenshaw presented the proposed agenda for the meeting.

SC19.07.24: To approve the agenda for the July 20, 2019, Synod Council meeting.

The draft minutes of the June 14, 2019, Synod Council meeting were presented to the Council for approval. Vice President Crenshaw asked for corrections or amendments. There were none.

SC19.07.25: To approve the minutes of the June 14, 2019, Synod Council meeting.

1. Bishop Transition Matters

a. Remarks from Bishop-Elect Ortiz

Bishop-Elect Ortiz began with reflections on the 2019 Synod Assembly, and noted that she had recently returned from an orientation session held at the Lutheran Center in Chicago for recently-elected synod bishops. She announced that she intends to appoint Pr. Erin Swenson-Reinhold, currently with Lutheran Church of the Redeemer, McLean, Virginia, as Assistant to the Bishop, and Pr. Lamar Bailey, currently with Saint Stephen Lutheran Church, Silver Spring, Maryland, as Assistant to the Bishop and Director for Evangelical Mission, effective September 1. The bishop-elect's priorities include congregational vitality, leadership development, physical and spiritual health and well-being, and advocacy/accompaniment.

SC19.07.26: To call the Rev. Erin Swenson-Reinhold and the Rev. Lamar Bailey to specialized ministry on the staff of the Metropolitan Washington, D.C. Synod, effective September 1, 2019.

b. Bishop Election/Transition Task Force Update

Jackson Droney provided a brief update on the mostly-completed work of the task force. The group met after the conclusion of the 2019 Synod Assembly, and will submit one final report to the Synod Council in advance of the September meeting. In their efforts to plan for the Synod Assembly, the task force encountered some uncertainty and confusion about (and potential overlap among) the respective roles of the Synod Assembly Planning Committee, the Elections Committee, and the task force.

c. Transition Events (Installation and Farewell)

Treasurer Julie Hamre provided a brief update on the current status of the planning for two significant transition events. The first is a celebration of Bishop Graham's service to be held on Sunday, August 25, at Saint Luke Lutheran Church, Silver Spring. The second is the installation of Bishop-Elect Ortiz to be held on Saturday, October 12, at National Presbyterian Church, Washington, DC.

The Synod Council then went into executive session to discuss and act on a confidential matter. At the conclusion of the executive session, the Synod Council resumed its consideration of the remaining agenda items.

2. Synod Council Primary Mission Table

a. New Connections Campaign Overview and Update

Treasurer Julie Hamre briefly discussed the financial reports for the Campaign, which had been distributed to the Council in advance of the meeting. She noted that staff would be following up with those who had made pledges to the campaign.

3. Staff and Officer Reports

a. Bishop Graham:

Bishop Graham did not have any substantive matters to bring before the Synod Council, but used his last meeting as bishop to bid farewell to the members present.

b. Assistant to the Bishop, Pr. Ortiz:

Pastor Ortiz provided a brief description of the current status of mobility and candidacy efforts. Ten congregations are in the study process. Three congregations are awaiting names of candidates and two other congregations have issued calls. There have been no changes in the status of the candidacy process.

c. Vice President Crenshaw:

Synod Council Executive Committee Membership. In addition to the four officers, the Executive Committee consists of four other members elected from the Synod Council. Of these four elected members, two members will continue in the second year of their respective two-year terms. Accordingly, two vacancies on the Committee remain to be filled, each for a two-year term. The members were asked to consider their willingness to serve in this capacity so that a full Executive Committee may be constituted at the September meeting.

Consultation and Discipline Committees. Each of these committees is required to have 12 members. At present, there are several vacancies on each of these two committees. At the 2019 Synod Assembly, four individuals agreed to be nominated to fill vacant positions on the Committee on Discipline. However, three candidates were lay persons and only one candidate was a minister of Word and Sacrament. The governing provisions of the Synod require that the candidates to be elected at the 2019 Synod Assembly were to be two individuals from each category, to serve six-year terms. Accordingly, the Assembly elected two lay persons and the sole minister of Word and Sacrament. The remaining candidate not elected by the Assembly had expressed a willingness to serve a shorter term on the Committee on Discipline.

SC19.07.28: That Matthew J. Fuehrmeyer, Lutheran Church of the Reformation, Washington, D.C., is elected to serve on the Committee on Discipline for a term that will expire on the date on which the 2023 Synod Assembly has concluded.

d. Treasurer's Report:

- i. Introduction and Overview of Financial Statements. Treasurer Julie Hamre began her report by noting that she fulfills both the bookkeeper and the Treasurer roles, and that certain additional controls have been implemented in light of these dual roles and responsibilities. She described the one endowment fund and various other restricted funds available for use by the Synod, as well as certain funds held by the Synod for use by other organizations and activities.
- ii. Review of Year-to-Date Financial Statements. Ms. Hamre had distributed copies of the financial statements for the first five months of the Synod's current fiscal year, *i.e.*, the period ended June 30, 2019, in advance of the meeting. These statements reflect a deficit in undesignated receipts, compared with expenditures, of approximately \$24,700.
- iii. Financial Statement Audit. Copies of the draft report of the independent certified public accountants on the Synod's financial statements for the fiscal year ended January 31, 2019, were also distributed to the Synod Council in advance of the meeting.

e. Secretary's Report:

Secretary Anderson briefly discussed the processes for communicating with the Synod Council in between meetings, the development of contact information for each Synod Council member, and the proposed schedule of meetings for the remainder of the 2019-2020 Synod Council year.

4. Synodical Women's Organization

A written report had been provided to the members of the Council in advance of the meeting by Donna Nelson, President. No further comments were made in connection with the report.

5. Youth Organization

Joseph Triolo provided a brief summary of the upcoming youth events in the Synod.

6. New Business

The Synod Council bid farewell to Bishop Graham in his last meeting as an officer of the Synod. In addition, several members of the Synod Council are preparing to attend the 2019 Churchwide Assembly, to be held in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, in August. A report of the principal actions from this Assembly will be provided at the September Synod Council meeting.

The meeting adjourned with the Lord's Prayer at 12:00 p.m.

Next Scheduled Meeting: September 21, 2019; ELCA Washington Office, Washington, DC.