

**METROPOLITAN WASHINGTON, D.C. SYNOD OF THE ELCA**  
**SYNOD COUNCIL MEETING – NOVEMBER 16, 2019**  
**SAINT STEPHEN LUTHERAN CHURCH, SILVER SPRING,**  
**MARYLAND**

**Devotion** Vice President Crenshaw provided a devotional message based on 2 Thessalonians 3.

**Greetings** Pastor Steege greeted the members of the Synod Council and introduced Roger Barnes, President of Saint Stephen Lutheran Church. Mr. Barnes provided a brief summary of the history of the congregation.

Vice President Crenshaw presented the proposed agenda for the meeting.

**SC19.11.38:** To approve the agenda for the November 16, 2019, Synod Council meeting.

The draft minutes of the September 21, 2019, Synod Council meeting were presented to the Council for approval. Vice President Crenshaw asked for corrections or amendments. There were none.

**SC19.11.39:** To approve the minutes of the September 21, 2019, Synod Council meeting.

**1. Synod Council Primary Mission Table**

a. New Connections Campaign Overview and Update

Pastor Bailey discussed several of the recent and planned activities of the Campaign. Six congregations were represented at an annual Mosaix conference held in Dallas, Texas, during the previous week. The Prayer as Oxygen event for rostered leaders was held on October 29 and 30. A Stewardship and Mission Support Table event was held on September 28. At a New and Renewing Missions Table meeting, members discussed a review of the process for submitting grant proposals. Plans are being made for an event on January 20, 2020, Martin Luther King, Jr., Birthday. A three-day event for Directors for Evangelical Mission in Regions 7 and 8 was also held.

b. New Connections Campaign Financial Reports

Financial reports for the Campaign had been distributed to the Council in advance of the meeting. Staff members are continuing to collect and follow up on pledges made to the Campaign.

**2. Staff and Officer Reports**

a. Bishop Ortiz:

- i. Roster Matters for Synod Council Action. Bishop Ortiz brought two roster matters to the Synod Council.

**SC19.11.40:**

That:

1. The on-leave-from-call status of the Rev. Amy Sevimli be extended for one year through August 15, 2020; and
2. The Rev. Lisa M. Hufford be called to Specialized Ministry as Interim Senior Pastor of Hope Lutheran Church, Annandale, Virginia, for the period from December 1, 2019, through August 31, 2020.

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

1. The Rev. Yvette Schock transferred to the Northwest Intermountain Synod, effective September 14, 2019;
2. The Rev. Karis Graham was called to serve as Part Time (3/4) Minister of Word and Sacrament at Hope Lutheran Church, Clinton, Maryland, effective November 1, 2019; and
3. The Rev. Eva Steege (retired) is serving as Transitional Pastor at Saint Stephen Lutheran Church, Silver Spring, Maryland, for the period from November 1, 2019, through May 1, 2020.

- iii. Revised Mission Statement. Bishop Ortiz discussed the background of staff consideration of a revised mission statement for the Synod. The proposed statement had been distributed to the members in advance of the meeting and has been developed in an effort to streamline it and use it for future communications, effective January 1, 2020.

**Moved:**

**Seconded:** To replace the existing mission statement of the Metropolitan Washington, D.C. Synod with the following statement:

**Mission Statement:**

By the inspiration of the Holy Spirit we are called to cultivate a bold and boundless love for Jesus and God’s beloved creation.

**How we live into this mission as the Metropolitan Washington, D.C. Synod:**

We will:

- Equip and develop healthy leaders
- Empower and nurture vibrant ministries
- Encourage and model faithful accompaniment

**SC19.11.41:** To amend the foregoing motion by inserting a comma after “Spirit” and before “we” and to insert “for” between “and” and “God’s.”

**SC19.11.42: To adopt the foregoing motion, as amended.**

iv. Leadership Academy Preliminary Calendar. Bishop Ortiz provided a description of the current status of plans to hold a series of leadership events for congregations, rostered ministers, and other leaders in the synod throughout the calendar year 2020. The goal is to share the talents and skills of leaders from the synod and, in so doing, to equip others to be effective leaders throughout the synod. Although some initial funds were raised through the offerings made at the October 12 bishop installation service, the events are designed and intended to be self-sustaining. The events being planned consist of the following, with dates, locations, and participants in various stages of being confirmed, tentative, or planned:

- (A) On January 30 and 31, an event entitled “Three Holy Days Intensive Learning” will be a time of learning and active participation in the global restoration and updating of the Great Three Days.
- (B) On March 14, a full-day congregational council retreat will address legal and constitutional matters, child protection policies, treasurer and budget best practices, congregational rolls, and congregational meeting best practices. The retreat is intended for congregational presidents, treasurers, and pastors.
- (C) On March 25, mandatory boundaries training will be conducted for rostered leaders.
- (D) On April 18, participants will address communications best practices.
- (E) On May 20, participant will receive enneagram (emotional intelligence) training.
- (F) On a date to be determined, participants will discuss suicide counseling and prevention.
- (G) On October 8, participants will discuss mental health and addiction.
- (H) From October 27 through October 29, the Bishop’s Academy will focus on intentional Sabbath.

(l) On November 7, participants will learn about business resources for congregational leadership.

b. Assistant to the Bishop and DEM, Pr. Bailey:

Pastor Bailey provided an update on Our Redeemer Lutheran Church, Washington, DC, noting that the New and Renewing Missions Table had approved a grant for a boiler replacement. The congregation has also identified additional uses for its facility in an effort to share the costs of operations and maintenance. Pastor Bailey also identified a goal to have a Martin Luther King, Jr., Birthday service project undertaken by all of the members of the Synod Council in January 2020.

c. Assistant to the Bishop, Pr. Swenson-Reinhold:

Pastor Swenson-Reinhold reported that 14 congregations are in some phase of leadership transition. Two congregations are awaiting names. Four congregations are interviewing candidates. Eight congregations are in a study process. As indicated above, Pr. Karis Graham has been called to, and installed by, Hope Lutheran Church, Clinton, Maryland. Two other installations are pending. First Call Theological Education Training was held in Pennsylvania, attended by seven pastors. A Candidacy Committee meeting will be held on December 4. A new discernment process is in the pilot stage.

d. Treasurer's Report:

In the absence of the Treasurer, copies of the financial statements for the first nine months of the Synod's current fiscal year, *i.e.*, the period ended October 31, 2019, were distributed in advance of the meeting. These statements reflect a surplus of undesignated receipts, compared with expenditures, of approximately \$5,300.

e. Secretary's Report:

i. Proposed Amendments to Constitution and Bylaws. Secretary Anderson led the Synod Council through a discussion of the proposed amendments to the non-required provisions of the Synod's Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions. Changes to the required provisions adopted by the 2019 Churchwide Assembly automatically became part of the Synod's Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions upon certification by the Office of the Secretary of the ELCA shortly after the conclusion of the Churchwide Assembly. Recommended changes to the non-required provisions would be brought before the 2020 Synod Assembly for approval, but would need to be provided to all congregations of the Synod not less than six months before the Synod Assembly. Other proposed amendments to the governing documents would also be proposed as needed. A set of proposed amendments was provided to the Synod

Council in advance of the meeting. After a discussion of the proposed amendments, a consensus emerged that, with two exceptions, the proposed amendments would be brought before the 2020 Synod Assembly. S8.11.01. of the Model Constitution for Synods is a new, non-required provision that permits the synod bishop to be compensated as an employee or independent contractor of another expression of the church, when authorized by the Synod Council. This provision will not be recommended to the 2020 Synod Assembly for adoption. S18.14. of the existing provisions requires the Synod to establish a reserve annually to be carried forward to subsequent years to address potential fluctuations in income. This provision will be proposed to be deleted.

**SC19.11.43:** To approve the proposed amendments to the Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Metropolitan Washington, D.C. Synod in the form presented in writing as part of the meeting materials, with the exception of the non-adoption of proposed S.8.11.01. (regarding authorization for other sources of compensation for the synod bishop) and the deletion of S18.14. (regarding the establishment of annual reserves), and to recommend their adoption by the 2020 Synod Assembly.

ii. Church Council Report. Secretary Anderson provided a brief report of the meeting of the Church Council held November 7-10 at the Lutheran Center, Chicago, Illinois, his first as a newly-elected Church Council member. Although a summary of the meeting was posted to the ELCA Web site, the following matters were highlighted for discussion:

- (A) The impending retirement of the Rev. Wyvetta Bullock as the Executive for Administration;
- (B) The establishment of a Resource Development Committee to develop strategies related to funding initiatives and future churchwide appeals following the conclusion of the Campaign for the ELCA;
- (C) The approval of a Memorandum of Mutual Recognition of Relations of Full Communion, recognizing that the relations of the ELCA with the Anglican Church of Canada serve as full communion;
- (D) The referral of the Conference of Bishops recommendation on the global crisis of climate change to the Domestic Mission unit;
- (E) Continued discussion of the scope and significance of the sanctuary church body resolution adopted by the 2019 Churchwide Assembly;
- (F) The policies and procedures adopted to facilitate and encourage Church Council members to engage regularly with their own synods and with other partner synods;
- (G) An update on the replacement of "Vision and Expectations;"
- (H) An update on the mission support experiment being conducted in five synods, including the Metropolitan Washington, D.C. Synod; and

- (l) Reflections on the 2019 Churchwide Assembly as it informs planning for the 2022 Churchwide Assembly to be held in Columbus, Ohio.

### 3. **Synodical Women's Organization**

[No report]

### 4. **Youth Organization**

Joseph T. reported that the youth events that have historically been held annually in the Synod, Chrysalis and Shekinah, will not be held this year. Instead, a listening session will be held on December 7, at Lord of Life Lutheran Church, Fairfax, Virginia, to discuss the future of the youth organization in the synod.

### 5. **New Business**

Several matters were briefly discussed prior to adjournment:

- a. A final Transition Task Force report will be presented to the Synod Council at its January 2020 meeting.
- b. The Secretary was asked to provide a communication to the entire Synod Council, especially for the benefit of those not present at the meeting, for the purpose of initiating a discussion regarding the plans for a Synod Council service project in January 2020.
- c. The specific date for the May 2020 Synod Council meeting was discussed in light of potential conflicts with May 16. Inasmuch as the following Saturday is part of the Memorial Day holiday weekend, a consensus emerged to hold this meeting on Saturday, May 30.
- d. Bishop Ortiz announced that Bishop Yehiel Curry of the Metropolitan Chicago Synod will be preaching at the worship service to be held at the conclusion of the 2020 Synod Assembly on June 20.
- e. Lutheran Social Services of the National Capital Area has commenced a search for a new Chief Executive Officer.

**The meeting adjourned** with the Lord's Prayer at 11:30 a.m.

Next Scheduled Meeting: January 18, 2020; The Lamb Center, Fairfax, Virginia.