

METROPOLITAN WASHINGTON D.C. SYNOD OF THE ELCA
SYNOD COUNCIL MEETING – JANUARY 17, 2015
FIRST TRINITY LUTHERAN CHURCH, WASHINGTON, DC

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

Remarks Pastor Allard introduced Dr. Bohdan Hroboň, President of the Center for Christian Education, Martin, Slovakia, who was separately participating in a Global Missions meeting. Dr. Hroboň described the work of the Center in Slovakia and his efforts to find partners in the United States for the Center’s venture of faith. He concluded his remarks by presenting the Synod with a painting depicting the churches of Slovakia. At the conclusion of this presentation, the three guests left the meeting.

Greetings Pastor Knoll, pastor of First Trinity Lutheran Church, welcomed the Synod Council and provided a brief history of the congregation and its related ministries within the community.

SC15.01.01: To approve the agenda for the January 17, 2015, Synod Council meeting.

SC15.01.02: To approve the minutes of the November 15, 2014, Synod Council meeting.

1. Synod Council Primary Mission Table

- a. New Ministries in the Synod. Pastor Hirsch led a discussion of the initiative to begin new ministries within the Synod. The discussion included plans for seven new ministries, recognizing that these plans will not necessarily result in seven new congregations; plans to discuss these initiatives at the 2015 Synod Assembly; and the budgetary implications of these plans. No specific action was taken by the Synod Council in connection with new ministries.

2. Staff and Officer Reports

- a. Bishop Graham:
 - i. Roster Matters for Synod Council Action. Bishop Graham brought several roster matters to the Synod Council as a single resolution.

SC15.01.03: That:

1. The Rev. James Vigen be placed on leave from call, effective September 1, 2014 (first request);

2. The Rev. Tom Prinz be placed on the retired roster, effective October 1, 2014;
 3. The Rev. Jeff Jacobson be called to specialized ministry contracted to the United States Navy as the Core Plus Facilitator for the Naval District of Washington CREDO program;
 4. The Rev. Gene Kern be called to specialized ministry to serve St. Nicholas Lutheran Church, Huntingtown, Maryland, as Interim Pastor; and
 5. The Rev. Margrethe Kleiber be called to specialized ministry to serve Holy Trinity Lutheran Church, Leesburg, Virginia, as Interim Pastor.
- ii. Roster Matters for Information. Although not requiring any action on the part of the Synod Council, Bishop Graham noted the following additional matters affecting the Synod's rostered leaders:
1. The Rev. Robin Steinke was transferred to the St. Paul Area Synod to serve as President of Luther Seminary.
 2. The Rev. Lynn Miller was transferred to the Metropolitan Washington, DC, Synod, ELCA, from the Allegheny Synod to serve as Pastor of King of Kings Lutheran Church, Fairfax, Virginia.
 3. The Rev. Varinia Espinosa was transferred to the Metropolitan Washington, DC, Synod, ELCA, from the Grand Canyon Synod to serve as Associate Pastor at St. Mark's Lutheran Church, Springfield, Virginia.
 4. The Rev. Leila Ortiz has been called to serve as Associate Pastor of Good Shepherd Lutheran Church, Gaithersburg, Maryland.
 5. The Rev. David Slagle Peck has been called to serve as Associate Pastor of Good Shepherd Lutheran Church, Gaithersburg, Maryland, to serve at Epiphany Lutheran Church, Burtonsville, Maryland.
 6. Ms. Deb Cantrell was commissioned and is serving as Director of Youth and Family Formation at Christ the King Lutheran Church, Great Falls, Virginia.
 7. The Rev. Richard Hoehn, Retired, is serving as Interim Pastor, Hope Lutheran Church, College Park, Maryland.
 8. The Rev. Paul Opsahl, Retired, is serving as Interim Pastor, Christ Lutheran Church, Fairfax, Virginia.
- iii. Recent Deaths. Bishop Graham also noted several recent deaths of rostered leaders who were either currently or formerly on the roster of the Synod at the time of their deaths:
1. The Rev. Arthur Cubbon, Jr.
 2. The Rev. Daniel Oravec
 3. The Rev. M. Gregory Shannon, Jr.
 4. The Rev. Russell O. Siler
 5. The Rev. Ross Trower

Although not a rostered leader of the Synod, Bishop Graham also noted the death of Tony Walker, a member of Grace Lutheran Church, Washington, DC, who had been actively involved in Synod matters.

- iv. Synod Staffing Update. Bishop Graham provided the Synod Council with an update on changes to the Synod staff, including the planned departure of Amy (Acland) Tattersall at the end of January and the ongoing efforts to fill the vacancy resulting from her resignation. Bishop Graham and Pr. Hirsch also described the duties that will be undertaken on a part-time basis by Pr. Shannon Anderson, who will provide assistance to Pr. Hirsch.

b. Assistant to the Bishop, Pr. Hirsch:

- i. River of Grace Review Report. Pastor Hirsch reported the completion of the work by the review team established to examine the extent to which prescribed benchmarks had been achieved by River of Grace Lutheran Church. The review concluded that the congregation had met its benchmark relating to finances but had not met its benchmark relating to worship attendance. Nevertheless, the review team recommended that the congregation be funded in accordance with the resolution adopted by the Synod Council at its November 15, 2014, meeting and that it be organized as a separate, self-sustaining congregation. Secretary Anderson reviewed with the Synod Council the terms of the funding resolution that had been previously adopted, contingent on the completion of the review report. The report has yet to be prepared in written form, and will be provided to the Synod Council upon its completion. No further action was taken by the Synod Council in connection with this matter.

c. Vice President White:

- i. Synod Council Vacancy. Dr. White reminded the Synod Council that a vacancy on the Synod Council occurred when Kurtis Lowe, an at-large member, had tendered his resignation effective on or about September 12, 2014. At the November 15, 2014, meeting of the Synod Council, Dr. White noted that a former member of the Council, Mr. William Johnson, had expressed his willingness to serve again. Dr. White reported to the Synod Council that Mr. Johnson has since asked that his nomination be withdrawn. Accordingly, the vacancy will remain until filled by the election of another candidate who is qualified and willing to serve.

d. Treasurer's Report:

- i. Year-to-Date Financial Statements. Treasurer John Handley discussed the financial statements for the current fiscal year of the Synod through December 31, 2014. Mr. Handley noted that, while expenditures to date exceeded receipts by approximately

\$56,000, he does not expect to conclude the fiscal year (January 31, 2015) with a significant deficit. He also noted that expenses are generally within budgetary limitations and are otherwise under control. Finally, he provided comments on the investment performance of the endowment funds for 2014.

- ii. **Synod Assembly Expenses.** The financial statements for the current fiscal year reflect designated income for the Synod Assembly of \$25,125 and expenses of \$11,796, for a surplus of \$13,329. The Treasurer proposed to the Synod Council that the surplus be moved to the Synod Assembly Reserve Fund in order to offset any deficit for the 2015 Synod Assembly.

SC15.01.04: To transfer the excess of designated income over expenses for the Synod Assembly, in the amount of approximately \$13,330, to the Synod Assembly Reserve Fund.

3. **Synodical Women’s Organization**

Ms. Meier called the Synod Council’s attention to the April 11, 2015, convention of the Synodical Women’s Organization, which will focus on human trafficking concerns.

4. **New Business**—Pastor Johnson distributed a written proposal for a synodical immigration team. The Synod Council is authorized to recognize and support teams of the Synod pursuant to S11.01.20. of its Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions.

SC15.01.04: That the Synod Council recognize and support a synodical immigration team, in accordance with the written proposal presented to the Council, a copy of which is attached to and made a part hereof.

5. **Other Matters**—Without taking any action on any of the following matters, the Synod Council briefly discussed three items for informational purposes:
 - a. The arrest of an Episcopal bishop in Baltimore, Maryland, on charges arising out of a fatal motor vehicle accident, and its implications for the Synod’s policies and procedures regarding background checks for appointed and elected leaders in the Synod;
 - b. The Together in Mission event, scheduled for January 31, 2015; and
 - c. The initial plans for the 2015 Synod Assembly.

The meeting adjourned with the Lord’s Prayer at 11:37 a.m.