

**METROPOLITAN WASHINGTON D.C. SYNOD OF THE ELCA
SYNOD COUNCIL MEETING – JANUARY 26, 2013
HOPE LUTHERAN CHURCH, COLLEGE PARK, MD**

Motion 13.01.01 approved the agenda for the January 26, 2013 Synod Council Meeting.

Motion 13.01.02 approved the minutes of the November 15, 2012 Synod Council Meeting.

Primary Mission Table Conversation

Pastor Dave Sonnenberg, Chair, Stewardship and Mission Table presented information regarding the purpose and functionality of the Stewardship and Mission Table.

Shape of the Synod Task Force

Bishop Graham updated the council on the progress of The Shape of the Synod Task Force.

This is a focus for the whole synod. The task of the synod is to nurture congregations as they make disciples for Jesus Christ. This task is becoming the focus and standard by which we will measure all that we do, from determining the structure of our synod to forming our budgets.

Deciding to concentrate on helping congregations form disciples and to claim this as the principle ministry of our synod means that we will have to decide not to do other things. Perhaps our greatest struggle will be the one that involves learning to say “no” or “not now” or “not that way” to ourselves and to the world around us. But the work to which we intend to say “yes” will certainly come to involve all of us and to lead us all toward the joy and peace that Jesus promised us.

We have already started.

- 1. COMPARING CONSITUTION AND PRATICE** In the middle of November, members of the synod staff met with two members of the Synod Council, Tom Kern and Tom Knoll, and with Barbara Topel, as the initial Shape of the Synod Task Force.
- 2. STARTING WITH PRAYER** On December 12, an Advent Day of Prayer will introduce our theme and focus to the rostered leaders of the synod. Led by staff members and by Dr. Greg Finch, the theme of that day of prayer will be “Think about these things,” drawn from Philippians 4:8.
- 3. LINING UP THE FINANCES.**

4. **CONGREGATIONS ON *THE JOURNEY*.** Pastors Amy Sevimli and Phil Hirsch are leading The Journey, a gathering of more than twenty of our congregations with five parishes of the Episcopal Diocese of Washington. With Pastors Chris Nelson and Mary Pechauer from Bethlehem Church in Minneapolis, teams of pastors and lay members of each congregation are working on plans to redevelop and redefine mission. Participants have made a three-year commitment to this project.
5. **PUBLIC PROFESSIONS, PUBLIC VOCATION** Plans are underway for two spring gatherings, perhaps small and quiet, which will assemble members of the synod in specific public professions and ask how Christian faith informs public vocation.
6. **VISITING A SAMPLE OF THE SYNOD.** Finally, members of the initial Shape of the Synod Task Force have agreed to visit fifteen church councils before the end of February.

Staff and Officer Reports:

Vice President

Dr. White

Dr. White provided an update on the Synod Finance Committee membership and actions. Dr. White is still looking for a committee member from the DC and Virginia conferences. The plan is to have the committee up and running by February 2013.

Dr. White provided an update on the Bishop Election process. Tom Kern is involved in this process.

Treasurer

Mr. Handley

Mr. Handley highlighted the following:

The regular monthly reports for December are attached as well as the annual report of the Faith Fund.

Overall, our cost control efforts have paid off as we are seeing expenses come in line with income as we approach the end of our fiscal year. Income in December was much improved: this was our best December since 2008. We continued to manage expenses such that our undesignated deficit is now below \$25,000 where it had been hovering near \$100,000 for the last six months.

During 2012, the Faith Fund portfolio performed well. The total value of the Faith Fund as of 12/31/12 was \$774,515 compared to a closing value of \$764,829 at the end of 2011. For 2012, the value of the main portfolio, net of amounts transferred to the distribution accounts, gained 8.1%.

2012 Activity

During 2012, Synod Council approved a \$50,000 grant from the Faith Fund to assist with the building program at Shepherd of the Hills, Haymarket. The funds were sent to Shepherd of the Hills in July 2012. After annual transfers were completed, the distribution account for local missions held \$24,394.

During fiscal year 2012, \$7,498 in financial aid was granted to seminarians from the Faith Fund. \$7,498 was transferred from the distribution account to cover this expense prior to the end of fiscal 2012. After pending transfers in and out, the distribution account for seminarian support held \$7,654. This entire balance is currently available for distribution.

Treasurer Handley indicated that two of the synod's Board Designated funds have sat unused for more than seven years. Those two funds are the Horizon Internship Reserve Fund and the Howard University Internship Reserve Fund. Each fund has a balance of \$8000.00. Treasurer Handley recommended that the designation be removed from the funds. Several members of Synod Council discussed possible uses of the funds.

Motion 13.01.03 approved the postponement for six months of the removal of the board designation for the Horizon Internship Reserve Fund and Howard University Internship Reserve Fund (\$8000.00 each).

Assistant to the Bishop

Pr. Thompson Sevimli

Bill Johnson's role as Synod Council Liaison on behalf of the Synod Council with River of Grace is changing as he has decided to move his congregational membership to River of Grace. It was therefore determined that another member of the Synod Council should act as the Synod Council Liaison to River of Grace.

Motion 13.01.04 approved Diaconal Minister Kathy Garrison as the new Synod Council Liaison to River of Grace.

Youth Protection Policy

In 2011 Synod Assembly voted on a resolution related to youth work in the Synod. The resolution had four parts. Work has proceeded on this resolution. A Youth Protection Policy has thus been written.

Motion 13.01.05 approved the document, "Youth Protection Policy for Synod-Sponsored Youth Events" to be effective January 26, 2013.

Bishop Graham

It has been determined that each synod within the ELCA must designate a Standing Legal Counsel.

Motion 13.01.06 approved the appointment of Robert Tuttle, Esq., as the Synod Attorney for the Metropolitan Washington DC Synod.

The Oromo Evangelical Lutheran Church has found themselves unable to elect a nominating committee to find people to serve on the church council and thus for a call committee. A meeting has been scheduled for February 10, 2013 to place the congregation under Synodical Administration. This means that the Synod would be the congregation council for a period of time while they reconcile themselves to each other.

LSS NCA – will come before us soon to ask our blessing on having a capital campaign in recognition of their one hundredth anniversary.

Bishop will submit a letter to the Synod indicating that he is willing to serve as Bishop for another term.

WELCA Report

Cheryl Dwyer representing the ELCA Synodical Women's Organization was present in Bonnie Priebe's absence.

Youth Report

Jack Hill

Mr. Hill reported that he attended Chrysalis last December There were 126 youth in attendance

Closing Prayer and Adjournment at 11:52 am.