

**METROPOLITAN WASHINGTON D.C. SYNOD OF THE ELCA  
SYNOD COUNCIL MEETING – MAY 18, 2013  
ALL SAINTS LUTHERAN CHURCH, BOWIE, MARLYLAND**

Dr. White called the meeting to order at 9:10 am. Bishop Graham offered an opening prayer.

**Motion 13.05.02** approved the agenda for the May 18, 2013 Synod Council Meeting.

**Motion 13.05.03** approved the minutes of the April 20, 2013 Synod Council Meeting.

**Motion 13.05.04** approved the minutes of the May 9-11, 2013 (Electronic) Synod Council Meeting.

**Primary Mission Table**

**Pr. Phil Hirsch**

- Narrative for Spending Plan for 2013 Assembly
  - Pr. Tom Knoll drafted the narrative, highlighting that the work of the Synod can be broken down into two categories: stewardship and outreach, with the overall, ultimate goal of making disciples
    - The breakdown is a little unclear, because there are many items that overlap (like staff salaries), so there will be further discussion and work to
    - Risk is also making sure that while the terms are defined broadly, we don't go so broad as to render the terms meaningless
    - Some discussion over the terms to make sure that we are expressing what we are doing and what we want accurately (for example, how do we convey the idea of development to go beyond status quo?)
  - The spending plan then breaks down the line items between the two categories (which still needs to be massaged a bit), leaving about \$200k for outreach and around \$700k for stewardship (including Gettysburg and the Office of the Bishop) for the portion of the budget the Synod retains
- Proposal for Bethany funds to Good Shepherd, Gaithersburg (along with Pr. Dave Sonnenberg of Good Shepherd)
  - We have heard from Good Shepherd before, but issues in the past have included sufficient ELCA mission support and the requested amounts
    - This request is bolstered by a grant from the ELCA, which covers about half of what they want/need
    - While the current level of ELCA mission support is low, they are committed to growing throughout the life of the requested grant
  - Modeled on the “fast growth” grants from the ELCA to help congregations that are facing tight finances to maintain the mortgage but keep growth and outreach activities going
  - We have the funds available to cover the grant request in our short-term Bethany funds

- Pr. Emmanuel Grantson moves **Motion 13.05.05: to provide Good Shepherd, Gaithersburg with \$69,000 over three years (\$23,000/year) out of the Bethany Fund.**
  - Seconded by John White
  - Motion passed by voice vote

#### **Report of the Committee for Reference and Counsel**

**Pr. Mark Edwards**

- 7 resolutions (4 memorials), some of which are still under construction
  - Memorial: Raising awareness and advocacy for people of the Holy Land
  - Memorial: Conversations and support for ministering to same-sex couples and families
  - Resolution: Support for safe and responsible use of firearms
  - Memorial: Supporting legislation prohibiting employment discrimination on gender or sexual identity
  - Resolution: Social statement on criminal justice
  - Resolution: Supporting community of St. Dysmas
  - Memorial: Supporting support of the Uniting American Families Act (immigration)
- In addition, the usual ones of greetings to other synods, welcoming guests, etc.

#### **Report on Synod Assembly**

- As far as we know, the nominations committee has a full slate of candidates
- Synod Council members (which are paid for by the Synod if they are not voting members for their congregation) have both voice and vote (S7.28 of constitution)
- There is an introductory video on the Synod website they are seeking feedback on

#### **Report by Assistant to the Bishop**

**Pr. Hirsch**

- Good Samaritan Lutheran, Lanham, MD
  - Membership has been steadily declining, so we put in an intern (to see if we could help); the intern is also in the middle of the candidacy process.
  - Congregation has grown from teens to 30s in worship, growing out of the increasing (English-speaking) African immigrant population
  - Internship ends at the end of CY2013, so Pr. Hirsch is meeting with them to see what redevelopment might look like
    - Generally, ELCA will only do redevelopment if there is no pastor and membership is at least 50
    - Proposal Pr. Hirsch will present to the congregation:
      - Congregation would vote for voluntary temporary synodical administration
        - Council would dissolve, instead forming a redevelopment team to oversee the congregation's work
        - Team would have members from larger synod and congregation
        - Synod Council would have ultimate responsibility for the congregation, could potentially make legal decisions for

them, but idea is to delegate that legal authority to the redevelopment team

- We would write a Bethany Fund grant for them
- Benchmarks of growth over the next 3 years (after number of 50 is reached, will apply to ELCA for funds)
  - Congregation meets in June to discuss the proposal, so Pr. Hirsch presenting this now so we can think about it and be prepared to act in the short meeting just before Synod Assembly
  - As this goes on, will make concerted efforts to bring in additional resources in the area that might help the work
- In Christ Fellowship, North Bethesda
  - Approved for funding from ELCA and New and Renewing Missions Table
  - Last we heard, had a worshipping community of around 90
- Oromo Evangelical Lutheran Church at Grace Church, DC
  - Split from other Oromo Evangelicals, seeking to become an additional congregation
  - Drafting bylaws and constitution now for review by the Synod
  - In June, Synod Council will need (assuming the proper votes in the congregation are taken) to accept them as a congregation
- There are several non-English speaking congregations that are looking to start English worship experiences that would then reach out to the (extremely diverse) community at large, as well
- Shepherd of the Hills, Haymarket, VA
  - Opened new building and have had to go to two worship services and are growing
  - June 2, at 2 p.m. is the dedication of the building

### **Bishop's Report and Roster Matters**

**Bishop Graham**

- Shape of Synod Task Force
  - Met again last week and realized that there were many people in the Synod that don't understand what's going on
  - So there will be a report of the Task Force at the Assembly to report on what has happened (e.g., bylaws, changes to budget, etc.) and proposals to use synod staff to interact more with church councils
- No roster matters

### **WELCA Report**

**Ms. Meier**

- Synodical Women's Organization Convention was successful
  - 82 participants
  - Offerings split between WELCA and WELCA Anniversary Fund (of which 50% will go to Malaria Campaign)
  - Adopted resolution calling for ELCA to promote annual month of prayer for victims of violence and their families worldwide; will send to the WELCA asking for it to be included in the 2014 Triennial convention
- Next board meeting is June 22, and newsletter in August