

**METROPOLITAN WASHINGTON D.C. SYNOD OF THE ELCA
SYNOD COUNCIL MEETING – NOVEMBER 16, 2013
CHRIST THE KING LUTHERAN CHURCH, GREAT FALLS, VA**

Dr. White called the meeting to order at 9:00 am.

Kurt Lowe offered devotions.

Pastor John Bradford, Senior Pastor, Christ the King, Great Falls, VA, host for the Council Meeting, welcomed the Council and provided historical and current information about the congregation.

Motion 13.11.01 approved the agenda for the November 16, 2013 Synod Council Meeting.

Motion 13.11.02 approved the minutes of the September 21, 2013 Synod Council Meeting.

Motion 13.11.03 approved the minutes of the September 26-27, 2013 Synod Council Meeting.

Motion 13.11.04 approved the minutes of the October 30-31, 2013 Synod Council Meeting.

Synod Council Primary Mission Table

The topic before the Primary Mission Table today is the support of Good Samaritan, Lanham, MD from the Bethany Fund. Good Samaritan Lutheran Church in Lanham is approximately 50 years old. They are in a neighborhood that is just down the road from the Goddard Flight Space Center, originally comprised mainly of people who worked at the University of Maryland or the Goddard Flight Space Center. Over time, a large number of the original folks that founded the congregation retired and moved away. The congregation also made some decisions to take on more debt than they probably should have and for a number of years they decided to fund their building largely by renting it out to tenants. Thus, the building and the ministry suffered as a result of hard use by the tenants. The tenants ran up debts and there was a great deal of wear and tear that the congregation simply could not keep up with, and so it seemed that it might be time to close. The church and the parsonage directly behind the church are very small buildings and the only non-commercial buildings in a large grouping of commercial buildings. The immediate area is mostly apartments. A large number of the residents of these apartments are East African Lutherans. The interim pastor, Gloria Cline-Smythe, is originally from West Africa. The document before the Council proposes to use funds from the Bethany Fund set aside for Prince George's county – \$173,777 – for the next four years in a declining amount. The covenant between the Synod and Good Samaritan calls for significant benchmarks – to commit to more of the pastor's salary, tithe to the synod and other benchmarks so that the Synod Council will know how they are succeeding. The congregation has voted to become a congregation under synodical administration.

Motion 13.11.05 approved up to \$173,770.00 for the redevelopment of Good Samaritan, Lanham, MD from the Bethany fund set aside for Prince George's County to be allocated over four years in declining amounts.

1. Staff and Officer Reports

a. Bishop Graham:

i. Roster Matters

We still have not found a worship coordinator, but the Bishop has some ideas. With an ad hoc worship team headed by Pr. Steven Buechler, the Synod held a Reformation Worship at the National Cathedral, during which the Synod received into membership the Oromo Evangelical Church.

ii. There is ongoing discussion in the synod office about how the staff can most effectively move into the future. An in-house retreat was held in December to help think, plan and refocus on the work of the Synod staff and how they do it together.

iii. The emphasis for the Synod is the renewal and revitalization of congregations in the Synod. The Shape of the Synod Task Force is in the process of reorganizing and will begin working again. The plan is to visit congregation councils – to determine what is up and how the Synod can help them. We want to convey that the Synod is interested in what is going on in our congregations.

b. Vice President White:

i. Update on Synod Constitution

Kevin Anderson is working on updating the Synod Constitution; the product of his work in the form of a draft updated constitution will be sent out shortly. The January council meeting will look at the draft Synod Constitution and By-Laws.

ii. Schedule of Synod Council Meetings (Jan 2014/Global Mission)

The Secretary of the Synod will send out an updated listing of meeting dates and venues later this month.

a. Treasurer's Report, Mr. John Handley

Mr. Handley updated the Council on the overall status of the budget.

Year-to-date, the synod is running undesignated deficit of \$70,818.00. That is in line with our performance over the last five years, but must still be made up by the end of the year. Receipts tend to increase during our fiscal fourth quarter. We are usually a little behind at this point, and that is where we find ourselves as of the end of October – but, there is nothing to be alarmed about at this point. Line 33 reflects less than what it should be as we need \$1.8 million – this is cause for some concern and we will track this number through our next meeting. Receipts are down but spending is also down.

Our performance against budget for the year through the month of October shows reduced expenses. We should have spent three quarters of our budget, but have spent 70%. River of Grace is spent from this but reimbursed from the Bethany Fund and designated funds received for River of Grace. The cost for the office staff is down because Harold Sargeant left – Karen Krueger is a little higher due to increased hours.

Schedule 3 – designated funds. Lines 34 and 35 – money spent out of Bethany funds, most significantly River of Grace.

Schedule 4 – reflects some council action, especially the two board designated funds which were released from their designation.

Investment Policy for “Permanent Restricted Accounts” held by the Metropolitan DC Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

To date the synod has not had a policy on the investment of these funds; previously the treasurer made the decisions regarding the investment of these funds with information to Synod Council. The finance committee developed a policy that would place the ultimate responsibility for investment decisions with the synod council. The treasurer and the finance committee will advise but the council makes the decisions regarding the investment of the funds.

Significant items in the policy:

- Describes a process for investment decisions to be made
- For permanent restricted funds of \$100,000 or more only, as it is hard to fully diversify a smaller fund
- Describes asset allocation limits by investment category
- Invest for long term growth; limit cash and cash like investments, and balance that with the ability to grow value over time by investing in equity funds.

The overall objective is to provide long term growth in these permanently restricted funds and to use the funds according to their purpose. The policy sets the parameters for managing the investment of these funds. The policy also facilitates discussions between the treasurer and the synod’s investment advisors.

Motion 13.11.06 accepted Investment Policy for “Permanent Restricted Accounts” held by the Metropolitan DC Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America as drafted by the finance committee.

Mr. Handley also mentioned that since 2007/8 have had a primary banking relationship with Capital One, which cannot keep up with electronic capability (international wire transfer) – and so, he will be looking at other banks.

b. Women of the ELCA

Ms. Kathleen Meier

The Metro DC Synodical Women’s Organization Executive Board met on October 19, 2013 and continued work on its mission to increase active membership. The SWO Growth Committee has to date contacted 18 currently inactive congregations. Through a series of questions and discussions we have gathered information that will assist us in continuing these relationships. Follow-up calls will be made to pursue the possibility of a visit to their congregations to discuss the “WELCA Today.”

ii. New Business

John Handley is the Bishop's representative to Caroline Furnace Lutheran Camp and Retreat Center. Mr. Handley recommends John Schlegal, King of Kings, Fairfax, VA, to be appointed to member of the board.

Motion 13.11.07 approved the appointment of Mr. John Schlegal to the board of Caroline Furnace Lutheran Camp and Retreat Center.