

METROPOLITAN WASHINGTON D.C. SYNOD OF THE ELCA
SYNOD COUNCIL MEETING – MAY 16, 2015
GOOD SHEPHERD LUTHERAN CHURCH, GAITHERSBURG,
MARYLAND

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

Devotion Pastor Johnson provided a devotional message based on Luke 24, beginning with verse 36, when Jesus appeared to the disciples following His resurrection.

Greetings Pastor Sonnenberg greeted the members of the Synod Council and provided a brief history of Good Shepherd Lutheran Church, which had recently celebrated its 50th anniversary.

SC15.05.21: To approve the agenda for the May 16, 2015, Synod Council meeting.

The draft minutes of the April 18, 2015, Synod Council meeting were presented to the Council for approval. Changes were requested in order to properly identify the member providing the devotional message and to clarify the scope of SC15.04.17, regarding the direction to the Finance Committee for the development of a mission spending plan for the fiscal year beginning February 1, 2016. As modified, the minutes were considered and voted upon.

SC15.05.22: To approve the minutes of the April 18, 2015, Synod Council meeting.

1. Synod Council Primary Mission Table

- a. Mission Spending Plan, FY 2016. Following the direction given by the Synod Council to the Finance Committee at the April 2015 meeting, the Committee presented a proposed mission spending plan for the Synod for the fiscal year beginning February 1, 2016. The central features of the plan are (i) total expenditures of \$1,660,000, (ii) churchwide mission support at the rate of 35% of the undesignated receipts, and (iii) the Synod's direct funding of compensation for the Director for Evangelical Mission and new and renewing grants for ministries. Members of the Finance Committee and Synod leadership responded to questions from the members of the Council regarding the proposed mission spending plan.

SC15.05.23: To approve the proposed mission spending plan for the Synod for the fiscal year beginning February 1, 2016, in the form presented to the Synod Council, and to recommend approval of the spending plan by the 2015 Synod Assembly.

- b. River of Grace Matters. Pastor Hirsch noted that River of Grace Lutheran Church, Manassas, Virginia, had recently taken steps to organize itself as a congregation of the ELCA, in accordance with its long-term plans. The congregation had previously been placed under synodical administration pursuant to S13.25 of the Constitution and Bylaws of the Synod, and had requested the Synod to terminate the status of synodical administration.

SC15.05.24: To remove River of Grace Lutheran Church, Manassas, Virginia, from synodical administration pursuant to S13.25 of the Constitution and Bylaws of the Metropolitan Washington, D.C. Synod, effective immediately.

Pastor Hirsch and Treasurer Handley provided the Council with additional background regarding the process of refinancing the mortgage indebtedness of this congregation. Further details were set forth in the minutes of the April 18, 2015, meeting of the Council. The Synod had co-signed the indebtedness in 2008 when it was first incurred, and the lender has requested that the Synod continue to be liable on the refinanced indebtedness. Treasurer Handley also described the principal terms of an agreement with this congregation to limit the Synod's potential financial exposure with respect to this indebtedness.

SC15.05.25: To authorize the appropriate officers of the Synod to co-sign documents relating to the refinanced mortgage indebtedness of River of Grace Lutheran Church, Manassas, Virginia, having a principal amount not exceeding \$550,000.

2. Staff and Officer Reports

a. Bishop Graham:

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

SC15.05.26: That:

1. The Rev. Thomas F. Montgomery be placed on leave from call, effective June 1, 2015; and
 2. The Rev. Angela K. Zimmann be transferred to the Metropolitan Washington, D.C. Synod, effective August 11, 2014.
- 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. Michael Gutzler has been called to serve at Holy Trinity Lutheran Church, Falls Church, Virginia, as Senior Pastor, effective June 1, 2015.

- 2. Ms. Amy Carter Feira has been called to serve at St. Andrew Lutheran Church, Centreville, Virginia, as Associate Pastor for Education and Family Ministries, and will be ordained on May 31, 2015.
 - 3. The Rev. Nathan S. Swenson-Reinhold has been called to serve at Lord of Life Lutheran Church, Fairfax, Virginia, as Senior Pastor, effective August 1, 2015.
- iii. Gettysburg Seminary Board of Directors. Bishop Graham advised the Council that the Synod appoints two members of the Board of Directors of the Lutheran Theological Seminary at Gettysburg, and that a vacancy exists in one of these two positions.
- SC15.05.27:** To appoint Ms. Carol Goddard to the Board of Directors of Lutheran Theological Seminary at Gettysburg, for a term as specified in the Seminary's governing documents.
- iv. Introduction of Katharyn Wheeler. Bishop Graham introduced Ms. Wheeler, who has recently joined the Synod staff, to the members of the Council.
- v. Synod Compensation Guidelines. Bishop Graham provided an update on the process of developing compensation guidelines for the Synod's rostered leaders, as directed by the 2014 Synod Assembly. The task force appointed for this purpose had met several times to develop a new set of compensation guidelines, but will be unable to produce a set of recommendations to the 2015 Synod Assembly. Bishop Graham expressed his intention to continue the work of the task force, perhaps with additional members, and to present a report to the 2016 Synod Assembly.
- SC15.05.28:** To make no recommendation to the 2015 Synod Assembly regarding compensation guidelines for rostered leaders.
- b. Assistant to the Bishop, Pr. Hirsch. Pastor Hirsch briefly reported on three matters, none of which required any action on the part of the Council:
- i. Initial communications with Good Samaritan Lutheran Church, Lanham, Maryland, following the Council's action to terminate funding of this congregation in May 2015;
 - ii. A Go Grant made to Lutheran Church of the Abiding Presence, Burke, Virginia; and
 - iii. Plans by Resurrection Lutheran Church, Arlington, Virginia, to implement a worship service for Amharic-speaking Ethiopians.
- c. Vice President White:

- i. Synod Assembly Planning Update. Pastor Kleiber and others involved in the planning process provided an update on the plans for the 2015 Synod Assembly and responded to questions from the members of the Council.
 - ii. Reference and Counsel Update. Pastor Edwards, Chair of the Committee on Reference and Counsel, provided a summary of the resolutions that had been submitted to the Committee for review prior to presenting them to the 2015 Synod Assembly.
 - iii. Nominations/Elections Update. The Council was provided with a summary of the current status of all nominations for open positions to be elected at the 2015 Synod Assembly.
- d. Treasurer's Report:
- i. Year-to-Date Financial Statements. Treasurer John Handley distributed and discussed the financial statements for the three-month period ended April 30, 2015. These statements reflect a deficit of approximately \$27,000 for the first three months of the Synod's current fiscal year.

3. Youth Organization Report

Ms. Moran provided a brief summary of youth activities planned or under consideration.

The meeting adjourned with the Lord's Prayer at 11:10 a.m.