

METROPOLITAN WASHINGTON, D.C. SYNOD OF THE ELCA
SYNOD COUNCIL MEETING – MARCH 12, 2022
ELECTRONIC/ZOOM MEETING

Call to Order The meeting was held electronically, using the Zoom platform, in light of the prevailing weather conditions. Vice President Slagle Peck called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m. The roll was called to verify attendance.

Devotions Bishop Ortiz provided a devotional message based on Luke 4:1-13.

Introductions In light of the significant number of Synod Council members newly elected by the 2021 Synod Assembly, Vice President Slagle Peck invited five members to provide more extensive biographical introductions. Remarks were made by Pr. Angela Shannon, Treasurer Julie Hamre, Pr. Eugene Kern, Deacon Katherine Miller-Holland, and Laura Stall.

Vice President Slagle Peck presented the proposed agenda for the meeting and the minutes of the previous meeting as a single motion. The draft minutes of the January 8, 2022, Synod Council meeting were presented to the Council for approval. Vice President Slagle Peck asked for corrections or amendments. There were none.

SC22.03.11: To approve the agenda for the March 12, 2022, Synod Council meeting and the minutes of the January 8, 2022, Synod Council meeting.

1. Staff and Officer Reports

a. Treasurer Julie Hamre:

- i. Year-End Financial Statements. Treasurer Julie Hamre had distributed copies of the financial statements for the full fiscal year, *i.e.*, the 12-month period ended January 31, 2022, in advance of the meeting. These unaudited statements reflect a surplus of undesignated receipts, compared with expenditures, of approximately \$217,900. Of this total, approximately \$144,100 consisted of realized and unrealized gains from invested assets.
- ii. Specific Fund Balances. The financial statements included a statement of fund balances as of January 31, 2022. The discussion of this statement highlighted the Congregational Mission Fund, the Bethany Fund, and remaining balance in the New Connections Campaign Fund. Further discussion focused on the status of

the Building Puentes fund balance and the financial implications of the proposal to engage the services of a resource development officer on a part-time basis.

b. Bishop Ortiz:

- i. Roster Matters for Synod Council Action. Bishop Ortiz brought one roster matter to the Synod Council.

SC22.03.12: That the Rev. Susanne Blume be called to Specialized Ministry to serve as interim pastor of Faith Lutheran Church in Arlington, Virginia, effective March 1, 2022.

- ii. Roster Matters for Information. Although not requiring any action on the part of the Synod Council, Bishop Ortiz's written report to the Council noted two matters affecting the Synod's rostered ministers, as follows:

1. The Rev. Joseph Vought, retired, transferred to the Lower Susquehanna Synod, effective February 11, 2022, and
2. The Rev. Mark Docken, retired, transferred from the Southeastern Minnesota Synod, effective December 14, 2021.

- iii. Proposed Staff Changes. In light of increasing needs for administrative staff support, the scheduled sabbatical leave for Bishop Ortiz, and anticipated changes in current staffing, Bishop Ortiz has proposed the addition of one full-time administrative assistant to the Synod staff. Inasmuch as the spending authorization for the current fiscal year ending January 31, 2023, approved by the 2021 Synod Assembly, did not provide for the compensation and related expenses of this position, Bishop Ortiz requested authorization and approval from the Synod Council for this proposal.

SC22.03.13: That:

1. The bishop of the Metropolitan Washington, D.C. Synod be authorized to employ one full-time administrative assistant as an addition to the current staff of the Synod; and
 2. Pursuant to S15.13. and S15.13.06. of the *Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions* of the Metropolitan Washington, D.C. Synod, the Synod is authorized to exceed the expenditures authorized for synod staff approved by the 2021 Synod Assembly to the extent permitted by S15.13.06.
- iv. Proposed Development Officer Engagement. Bishop Ortiz introduced Pr. David Shank, who is currently serving as the Assistant to the Bishop for Donor Relations and Development in the Delaware-Maryland Synod. As part of the written materials for the meeting, members received a written proposal for a part-time

Assistant to the Bishop for Generosity, with a view toward a potential collaboration modelled on the current arrangement to share the services of the Assistant to the Bishop for Youth and Family Ministry. Pastor Shank offered introductory remarks and responded to questions from members. He was then excused from the meeting. The spending authorization for the current fiscal year ending January 31, 2023, approved by the 2021 Synod Assembly, did not provide for the expenses of this position.

SC22.03.14: That:

1. The bishop of the Metropolitan Washington, D.C. Synod be authorized to enter into an agreement with the Delaware-Maryland Synod for the part-time (approximately one-third) services of the Rev. David Shank, as Assistant to the Bishop for Generosity, at an annualized cost not to exceed \$34,000; and
2. Pursuant to S15.13. and S15.13.06. of the *Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions* of the Metropolitan Washington, D.C. Synod, the Synod is authorized to exceed the expenditures authorized for synod staff approved by the 2021 Synod Assembly to the extent permitted by S15.13.06.

c. Assistant to the Bishop and DEM, Pr. Bailey:

Pastor Bailey provided a written report and, consistent with the original plans for an in-person meeting and worship, did not provide any additional remarks. The written report provided an update on the work of two tables (New and Renewing Missions and Stewardship and Mission Support) and the Racial Equity Team.

d. Assistant to the Bishop, Pr. Swenson-Reinhold:

Pastor Swenson-Reinhold provided a written report and, for the reasons set forth above, did not provide any additional remarks. The written report noted that, of five candidates considered during the February Candidacy Committee meeting, two were approved for Word and Sacrament ministry, one was approved for Word and Service ministry, and there were two entrances into the candidacy process.

e. Assistant to the Bishop, Youth and Family Ministry, Deacon Julie Stecker:

Deacon Stecker is on leave and did not provide a report.

f. Vice President Jennifer Slagle Peck:

Vice President Slagle Peck called on Melody Stachour, who called on the Synod to live into its Reconciling in Christ (RIC) status and previewed a memorial that would

be presented to the 2022 Synod Assembly that would, if adopted, be reported to the 2022 Churchwide Assembly for consideration. Bishop Ortiz noted the three aspects of justice, consisting of racial, gender, and climate justice.

g. Secretary Kevin Anderson:

Secretary Anderson noted that the Synod Assembly Planning Team had prepared a written report to the Synod Council summarizing the planning activities to date. The report included a draft of the agenda for the 2022 Synod Assembly.

Separately, he continued a discussion of the dismissal of Pr. Nelson Rabell-González as pastor of Misión Latina Luterana in Stockton, California, by Bishop Megan Rohrer, Sierra Pacific Synod, on December 12, 2021. He noted that Presiding Bishop Eaton had recently announced that a three-member listening panel will be convened “to review the interactions of Bishop Megan Rohrer with Misión Latina Luterana, particularly on December 12, the Feast Day of Our Lady of Guadalupe, and to make recommendations” to Bishop Eaton.

2. Synod Women’s Organization

Laura Stall provided a written report highlighting the 2022 Virtual Gathering to be held on May 7, 2022.

3. Youth Organization

[No report]

4. New Business

Vice President Slagle Peck closed the meeting with several matters relating the 2022 Synod Assembly, including the deadline for resolutions and nominations, the Synod Council meeting on Friday morning, June 10, preceding the opening of the Assembly, the need for Synod Council members to register for the Assembly, the opportunity for Synod Council members to reserve a Thursday night hotel room in view of the starting time for the Synod Council meeting, and the “60/40” representational requirement imposed by churchwide governing provisions. Under these provisions, the Synod Assembly voting members must be composed of at least 60% lay voting members and not more than 40% rostered ministers, including retired rostered ministers.

The meeting adjourned with a version of the Lord’s Prayer at 11:40 a.m.

Next Scheduled Meeting: April 9, 2022; (location TBD)

Respectfully submitted,

Kevin D. Anderson
Secretary