

**METROPOLITAN WASHINGTON, D.C. SYNOD OF THE ELCA  
SYNOD COUNCIL MEETING – November 12, 2022**

**By Zoom**

**Present:**

Interim Bishop and DEM, Pr. Lamar Bailey  
Vice President Jennifer Slagle Peck  
Secretary Barbara Bilodeau  
Treasurer Julie Hamre  
Sheena Foster  
Pr. Judith VanOsdol  
Melody Stachour  
Pr. Elijah Mwitanti  
Anita Smallin  
Don Wallace  
Pr. Hank Langknecht  
Andreas Dangin  
Pr. Eva Steege  
Kirsten Nusum

**Absent:**

Pr. Sarah Scherschligt  
Pr. Angela Shannon

**Vacancies:**

Maryland Conference lay  
Potomac Conference lay  
VACANT - Member of Youth Organization  
VACANT - MD Lay

**Synod Staff:**

Assistant to the Bishop, Pr. Sarah Garrett Krey  
Administrative Assistant to the Bishop, Katharyn Wheeler

**Call to Order**

Vice President Slagle Peck called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m. The secretary verified the roll via the zoom display.

**Devotions**

Pr. Bailey shared a division based on Isaiah Chapter 40 and the Reconciliation cross in el Salvador.  
<https://www.elsalvadorperspectives.com/2009/11/subversive-cross.html> We were invited to write down sins of our community and nation, followed by writing down sources of hope. Further invited to pray this week over both the brokenness and give thanks for the hope.

**AGENDA ITEMS**

**Moved/Seconded/Adopted:** **SC22.11.37** To approve the agenda for the November 12, 2022, Synod Council meeting; To approve the minutes of the September 24, 2022, Synod Council

meeting, the September 20-21, 2022 electronic meeting, and the October 6-11,2022 electronic meeting.

## Reports and Other Matters

### 1. Council

- a. Council Vacancies. Noted three current vacancies: MD Conference Lay Position; Montgomery Rostered Position; Potomac Conference Lay Position. Pr. Betty Landis has agreed to serve in the Montgomery Roster position.

**Moved/Seconded/Adopted: SC22.11.38** To approve Pr Betty Landis from St. Stephen, Silver Spring to fill the Montgomery Rostered position until next Assembly.

- b. Executive committee vacancies. Noted two vacancies; Pr. Hank Langknecht willing to serve.

**Moved/Seconded/Adopted: SC22.11.39** To elect Pr. Hank Langknecht to the Executive committee.

- c. Executive Committee Size. Presented the recommendation from the Secretary to amend the Synod Constitution to change the size of the Executive committee. If agreed, the motion will need to be presented at the next Synod Assembly. The Council will consider the information and decide at the next Council meeting in January.

- d. Mar-Lu-Ridge Capital Campaign. Presented information letters on a request from Mar-Lu-Ridge.

**Moved/Seconded/Adopted: SC22.11.40** That Mar-Lu-Ridge be authorized to undertake a Capital Campaign of three years' duration beginning in 2023 per attached letter to Bishop Ortiz/Jennifer Slagle Peck.

### 2. Staff and Officer Reports

- a. Interim Bishop Bailey  
i. Roster matters.

**Moved/Seconded/Adopted: SC22.11.41** To approve Roster Matters as follows:

- That the Rev. Heidi Eickstadt be placed On Leave from Call for Family Leave effective August 15, 2022.
- That Deacon Kenny Champagne be placed On Leave from Call for Study effective November 2022.
- That the Rev. Tiffany Towberman's On Leave from Call status be extended effective August 31, 2023.
- That the Rev. Christine Dunn be called to Specialized Ministry serving as the Director for Community Engagement at Lutheran Social Services National Capital Area effective October 17, 2022.
- That the Rev. Shannon Anderson be called to Specialized Ministry serving as Interim Associate Pastor at Lord of Life Lutheran Church Fairfax and Clifton, VA effective December 1, 2022.
- That the Rev. Phillip Carl be placed on the Retired Roster effective December 1, 2022.
- That the Rev. Gerard Johnson be placed on the Retired Roster effective February 1, 2023.

- ii. Events, activities, and other updates. Noted that the staff has been doing really well, working together during the Bishop's sabbatical, accomplishing the goals that the bishop wanted us working towards while she's away. Thank you to all the staff.

b. Treasurer's Report, Ms. Julie Hamre

- i. Reviewed September financial reports. Finance committee expects to take a different approach for 2024 budget, asking council for hard decisions on how we budget. We are running deficits which we expected, but can't do it forever.
  - Expenses overall are where we had planned. Some higher than expected: \$40k loss on synod assembly (audio visual and electronic that was not anticipated but needed), and tech (web site).
  - Giving is down but expect end of year catchup from congregations. We may need to take more from reserves.
  - Some discussion of what church-wide resources may be available to our congregations. Sheena Fostered noted that she would be interested in joining Treasurer Hamre in being part of that conversation for connecting to church-wide resources, are there grants that our congregations would be eligible to receive.
  - It was noted that information on what is given by individual congregations has not been shared; there is debate in non-profit groups on how much to share about giving. Some synods make that information available, we have not previously made that available.
  - Short discussion about thank-you notes. Pr. Bailey confirmed; trying to improve that system. Notes and calls were assigned, but perhaps have not been as good as we could.
- ii. Status of Luther Place grant. Grant was provided with a written agreement.
- iii. Grant process. In developing the Luther Place grant, we realized we need a process and team to review and make recommendations to Council when a request for support does not fall into an existing table. Will be looking at the process to present at January meeting.

c. Vice President's Report, VP Slagle Peck

- i. Gold Audit – Reviewed the history and status of the Gold Audit; currently transitioning into a report/document that we can use for shared understanding and communications out to the synod. Please send your thoughts and prayers to us as we put this into a form we can use. Will be launching a strategic planning team. More info in January mtg.
- ii. Faith In Action Network – connecting individual leaders. Want more connection with the Synod and each other in racial equity efforts. It has its own page on our website, with a kit to help congregations create a racial equity team.

- iii. Retreat in January – full day retreat, hope to attend in person, break bread, worship. Locations lined up for March and May meetings, which can be hybrid meetings.
- d. Assistant to the Bishop, Pr. Sarah Garret Krey – Noted gratitude to Pr. Gohl and colleagues in the Delaware-Maryland Synod. Discussion about perception that more congregations than usual are in transition, an uptick in mobility. Noted that the pandemic in 20/21 used a lot of social and emotional capital which has contributed to mobility across ELCA and confirmed it is a trend. Pr. Mwitanti thanked her for what she is doing at this time of complexity. VP Slagle Peck Jennifer added the reminder to everyone of the need for rest.

**The meeting adjourned** at 9:52am, praying together a version of the Lord’s Prayer that VP Slagle Peck shared in chat; lifted up Bishop Ortiz in prayer for her wedding today.

Next Scheduled Meeting: **January 14, 2023, St Luke Lutheran, Silver Spring, MD. 9am - 5 pm.**

Respectfully submitted,

Barbara A. Bilodeau  
Secretary