

**METROPOLITAN WASHINGTON, D.C. SYNOD OF THE ELCA**  
**SYNOD COUNCIL MEETING – June 6, 2025**  
**at Synod Assembly, College Park, MD**

*College Park, MD, is located on the original and ancestral homelands of the Piscataway and Nacotchtank peoples. We give thanks for their presence here since time immemorial. We also wish to recognize and honor all our Indigenous siblings who have and continue to call this land their home.*

**Present:**

Bishop Leila Ortiz, Bishop  
Jennifer Slagle Peck, Vice President  
Barbara Bilodeau, Secretary  
Julie Hamre, Treasurer  
Sheena Foster, DC – Lay  
Pr. Judith VanOsdol, DC – Rostered  
Breeze Lawless, Fairfax - Lay  
Pr. Elijah Mwitanti, Fairfax - Rostered  
Rachad Ya Ntima Esengo, Maryland – Lay  
Pr. Eric T. Randolph, Maryland - Rostered  
Anita Smallin, Montgomery - Lay  
Pr. Betty Landis, Montgomery – Rostered  
Patrick Anderson, Potomac – Lay  
Pr. Alexander P. Stall, Jr., Potomac – Rostered  
Don Wallace, Virginia - Lay  
Pr. Henry Langknecht, Virginia – Rostered  
Edyn Wheeler, At-Large Young Adult  
Nolan G, At-Large Youth

**Absent:**

**Synod Staff:**

Pr. Sarah Garrett Krey  
Pr. Jason Shank  
Katharyn Wheeler

**Guests:**

Bishop Matthew Riegel, West Virginia-Western Maryland Synod  
Pr. Mark Edwards, Reference and Council

**Devotions led by VP Jennifer Slagle Peck**

**Call to Order** Vice President Slagle Peck called the meeting to order at 8:37am. The secretary verified the attendance.

**Moved/Seconded/Adopted:** **SC25.06.24** To approve the agenda for the June 6, 2025, Synod Council meeting; and to approve the minutes of the May 10, 2025.

**Reports and Other Matters**

## 1. Council

- a. Introduction of Guests: ELCA Representative Bishop Riegel.
- b. We expressed appreciation to the outgoing Council members: Jennifer Slagle Peck, Julie Hamre, Sheena Foster, Pr. Betty Landis, Don Wallace, Pr. Henry Langknecht, and Nolan G.

## 2. Staff and Officer Reports

- a. Bishop Ortiz
  - i. Holy Closure Tithing Conference Grants. **Moved/Seconded/Adopted: SC25.06.25** *To establish a Holy Closure Fund consisting of 10% of the net revenue received by the Synod from any Holy Closure from a congregation that was under Synodical Administration for the purpose of supporting congregations within the conference of the closed congregation; administration of this fund to be handled as set forth in the “Holy Closure – Synodical Administration” document attached to these minutes.*
  - ii. Our Redeemer, DC: Decision and Response to Dissolution letter from congregation: **Moved/Seconded/Adopted: SC25.06.26** *That the Synod Council approves the disaffiliation of Our Redeemer. The Synod will hold the congregation in prayer and boldly ask the Holy Spirit to inspire, lead, and guide Our Redeemer as an independent congregation in sharing its boundless love for Jesus and God’s beloved creation.*
  - iii. Legal Fund Recommendation. **Moved/Seconded/Adopted: SC25.06.27** *To allocate \$25000 from the Bethany Fund to an Emergency Legal Assistance Fund to support legal expenses resulting from civil protests or protection given on behalf of marginalized people. Recipients of funds must be members of a MetroDC ELCA congregation; priority will be given to support rostered staff. Requests for funds will be reviewed and approved by the Executive Committee.*
- b. Assistant to the Bishop and DEM, Pr. Jason Shank
  - i. New and Renewing Missions Table - grant request for Campus Ministry, The Humble Walk, UMD **Moved/Seconded/Adopted: SC25.06.28** *to grant The Humble Walk, UMD College Park Campus Ministry \$7,500 to help support the ministry activities.*
- c. Treasurer’s Report, Ms. Julie Hamre
  - ii. Financial reports: The bequest from the Straub estate of \$22,000 will offset deficits elsewhere in the budget. At about a third through the fiscal year, with the estate bequest we are at 30% of the budgeted income, and are about level.
- d. Holy Closure Updates:
  - i. Good Samaritan, Lexington Park, MD: **Moved/Seconded/Adopted: SC25.06.29** *To provided an interest-free loan not to exceed \$50k to handle closing expenses pending sale of property; the Executive Committee to approve disbursements.*
  - ii. Holy Comforter, DC: ten days ago, we entered the building with a locksmith. The building is depressing and clearly not serviceable, although the sanctuary looked good and ready for a service. Recovered unopened mail and bills with overdue balances (some very high). We are getting someone to look at the organ.

## 3. Review of Memorials and Resolutions – Secretary and Pr. Mark Edwards

**The meeting adjourned** at 9:20am with prayer.

Next Scheduled Meeting: July 19, 2025, location TBD (or zoom)

Respectfully submitted,

Barbara A. Bilodeau  
Secretary