

METROPOLITAN WASHINGTON, D.C. SYNOD OF THE ELCA
SYNOD COUNCIL MEETING – September 27, 2025
Via Zoom

The Metropolitan Washington, D.C. Synod wishes to acknowledge and honor the Piscataway peoples upon whose ancestral homelands we gather, as well all our Indigenous siblings who have and continue to care for this place – this land – and call it home.

Present:

Bishop Phil Hirsch
Patrick Anderson, Vice President
Barbara Bilodeau, Secretary
Camille Trott, DC – Lay
Pr. Judith VanOsdol, DC – Rostered
Breeze Lawless, Fairfax - Lay
Pr. Kelsey Kresse, Fairfax - Rostered
Anita Smallin, Montgomery - Lay
Pr. Kari Parsons, Montgomery – Rostered
Pr. Alexander P. Stall, Jr., Potomac – Rostered
Deborah Tyler, Virginia - Lay
Edyn Wheeler, At-Large Young Adult
Ethan B, At-Large Youth

Absent:

Pr. Mike Gutzler, Treasurer
Rachad Ya Ntima Esengo, Maryland – Lay
Pr. Eric T. Randolph, Maryland - Rostered
Pr. Elijah Mwitanti, Virginia – Rostered

Synod Staff:

Pr. Amy Sevimli
Katharyn Wheeler

Vacancies:

Potomac - Lay

Sharing VP Patrick Anderson led us in sharing of recent highs and lows, and what is unexpected of each of us.

Prayer offered by Bishop Hirsch

Call to Order Vice President Patrick Anderson called the meeting to order at 10:32am. The secretary verified the attendance.

Moved/Seconded/Adopted: **SC25.09.35** To approve the agenda for the September 27, 2025, Synod Council meeting

Moved/Seconded/Adopted: **SC25.09.36** To approve the minutes of the August 16, 2025 Synod Council Meeting; and to approve the minutes of the September 8, 2025 Electronic Vote.

Reports and Other Matters

1. Council

- a. Noted Synod Council opening for the Potomac Lay member.

2. Staff and Officer Reports

- a. Bishop Hirsch
 - i. Roster matters – None.
 - ii. Events, activities, and other updates – Started holding listening sessions. Recommended reding the “Strategic Recommendations for the ELCA” by Barna and Fuller. (available on the ELCA web site) to be discussed at a future meeting.
- b. Treasurer’s Report, Pr. Mike Gutzler
 - i. FY25 budget status and account balances were provided. Noted that a large CD recently matured and we plan to acquire a new CD with a 3 month term to ensure the funds will be available in January for additional staff or deficit office.
 - ii. **Moved/Seconded/Adopted: SC25.09.37** To Accept the Audit Report of the “Audited Financial Statements, Year Ended January 31, 2025”
 - iii. **Moved/Seconded/Adopted: SC25.09.38** That for the balance of this fiscal year, 54 percent of the compensation paid in the form of salary to Bishop Philip Hirsch and 55 percent of the compensation paid in the form of salary to the Rev. Amy Sevimli be designated as a rental/housing allowance in accordance with the provisions of section 107 of the Internal Revenue Code.
 - iv. Bishop Hirsch noted that Global Refuge has ended its contract with LSS-NCA, causing financial distress. **Moved/Seconded/Adopted: SC25.09.39** To contribute the offering from the Bishop Installation event on November 9 to LSS-NCA.
- c. Assistant to the Bishop for Candidacy & Mobility, Pr. Sevimli. No report yet. Noted that Katharyn Wheeler and Julie Jackson have been covering the Assistant to Bishop and DEM needs.
- d. Youth Organization Report, Ms. Katharyn Wheeler, Metro D.C. Synod Youth+Family Coordinator
 - i. Written report provided.
 - ii. Ms. Wheler attended an info session on a new Sacred Ground curriculum for youth. We may look at how if we can develop our own curriculum.
 - iii. The youth of St. Matthews Woodbridge and Saint Stephen Silver Spring are partnering and have submitted our first youth grant request.
 - iv. Gathering at the Gate offering was provided to the Local Ministry Fund.
- e. Secretary’s Report, Barbara Bilodeau
 - i. Reviews/approvals of congregation constitution updates – none.
 - ii. **Moved/Seconded/Adopted: SC25.09.40** To allocate 1 additional lay voting member per congregation at the 2026 Synod Assembly towards the appropriate balance of lay to rostered voting members.
- f. Vice President’s Report, VP Patrick Anderson
 - i. Saturday meetings will be held 10am to Noon; Evening meetings will be 7pm to 9pm.

3. Committees, Tables, and Teams - Reports as needed

- a. Holy Closure Updates
 - i. Holy Comforter, DC – Have set date of October 31 for the congregation to retrieve items.

- ii. Good Samaritan, Lexington Park, MD – original contract for property sale fell through for lack of funding; property is being re-listed.

4. New Business

Noted concern for Camille Trott and our colleagues in Bermuda with the approaching hurricanes.

The meeting adjourned at 1136 with prayer offered by Pr. Kresse.

Next Scheduled Meeting: November 1, 2025, via Zoom

Respectfully submitted,
Barbara A. Bilodeau
Secretary