

# December 1 Synod Council Minutes

**Present:** Bishop Daniel Beaudoin, Melissa Peper Firestone, Phil Koenig, Mark Wentz, Casey Cox, Ann Marshall, Tom Ritter, Deb Noll, Sue Lawrence, James Schwabero, Diane Ninke, Brent Gardner, Jacob Nekoranec, Julie Parsell, Jarrod Schaaf, Janine Foster, Christina Wheeler, Jennifer Pruefer (Synod Staff), and Jacob Henry (Synod Staff)

**Not Present:** Steve Edmiston, Cassie Yeager, Cindy Milbry, Pete Bowmer, Becky Seibert

## 1. **Opening Devotions and Eucharist** – Led by Bishop Daniel

## 2. **Business Meeting Call to Order** – Led by Vice-President Melissa Peper Firestone

### a. **Approval of September 8 Minutes**

Corrections:

Attendance

OLFC – all need 1 year added (Wicker, Olson, Guy)

**Motion to approve – Diane N., 2<sup>nd</sup> – Sue L.**

**Approved**

### b. **Review of Executive Committee decisions**

Candidacy will be brought back "in house".

Bishop Daniel shared a letter from Bishop Dilahunt who explained that Southern Ohio Synod will be withdrawing from the shared Ohio candidacy process. Bishop Daniel will be taking a more active role in the candidacy process.

## 3. **Bishop's Report and Teaching Time** – Led by Bishop Daniel

2019 will be the Year of Scripture with a three-fold focus on encouraging Bible reading as daily habit, becoming biblically fluent, and lifting up bible study.

Bishop's bible study will be on the Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 5-7) where Jesus reflects on scripture and focuses on discipleship (hear God's word, do God's word). The study will be available in January on the website. People are encouraged to do the study in small groups.

Video of the Bible Project was shared (a recommended resource for the year, in addition to the book "A Compact Guide to the Bible").

In 2019 at our meetings we will begin unpacking the four-fold focus of the Discipleship Initiative.

Review of the Bishop's report:

- Prayer planning team met last Thursday, this group will continue
- Annual day of prayer will continue (1st Wednesday in November)
- Retreats were well attended - geographically
- Bishop will attend Gathering First Fruits (next 10 years of learning to focus on Generosity)
- Transfer of Membership
- 3 Learnings - see report

**Action SC 18.31** On Leave from Call Requests

"Upon recommendation of the Bishop, the Northwestern Ohio Synod Council has approved the following individuals for On Leave from Call extensions:

Rev. Sam Payne, year 3  
Deacon Erin Bodenstab, year 3"

**Motion to approve – Bishop Daniel, 2<sup>nd</sup> – Jim S.  
Approved**

Question was raised about what is being done to address the clergy shortage?

- There simply are not enough pastors to fill the spots
- A team model is being taken up to fill needs
- TEEM & SAM programs are being highlighted and utilized
- Congregational Self-Assessment Viability Checklist
  - 360 assessment
- Sherry is working on assessments
- Being more proactive on pastor retirements

TEEM will be part of the candidacy process

**4. Vice President's Report – Led by Melissa Peper Firestone**

**Agreed to proposed 2019 meeting dates:**

January 26, 2019

April 6, 2019

September 7, 2019

December 14, 2019

## **5. Secretary's Report** – shared by Jacob Henry in Becky's absence

### **Assembly Resolution Update**

The assembly resolution was received by Churchwide and referred to a committee studying theological education in the wider church

## **6. Treasurer's Report** – Led by Phil Koenig

Phil shared the newly structured report examining seasonally adjusted projections and income. Cash flow is trending down. While it is not a panic situation it is unsustainable in the long run.

Efforts are underway to understand the stewardship challenges facing our congregations in relation to their local giving, and ways the synod can help through resources, coaching, etc.

The proposed revised budget was presented:

Mission Support was lowered from \$1.6million to \$1.5million

Funding of TEEM Scholarships was moved out of the budget and will be covered through our restricted scholarship funds

Discussion on reaching out to congregations who have restricted funds (for scholarships and other things) and helping these congregations locate places utilize these funds (like seminary students).

Question raised about reduction for campus ministry line item. This ministry has changed a lot through the synod's history, used to have a full time position but now has two part-time positions. Our synod also receives an ELCA grant which is used to fund this first, before this line item is used. The synodical budgeted amount was reduced to better reflect actual expenditures.

Candidacy line items were combined into one line item.

## 7. **Administrative Matters** – Led by Synod Administrator Jacob Henry

- a. **Action SC 18.32** Sonfire SAWC Renewal  
“Synod Council renews Sonfire by the River’s SAWC status for 2019 and directs synod staff to be in continued conversation with Sonfire leadership about their future ministry.”

**Motion to approve – Diane N., 2<sup>nd</sup> – Chrissy W.**  
**Approved**

- b. **Action SC 18.33** Approval of Revised 2019/20 Budget (**first reading**)  
“Synod Council has approved the revised 2019/20 budget.”

(budget will be voted on at the January meeting)

- c. **Action SC 18.34** Letter to Domestic Mission on DEM Funding  
“The Northwestern Ohio Synod Council respectfully requests that the Domestic Mission Unit reevaluate the amount of NWOS’s DEM purchase of service grant, as outlined in the accompanying letter.”

**Motion to approve – Bishop Daniel, 2<sup>nd</sup> – Brent G.**  
**Approved**

- d. Motion to enter **Executive Session** to discuss a proposed contract to restructure our accounting processes.

**Motion – Melissa P.F., 2<sup>nd</sup> – Casey C.**  
**Approved**

**Motion to exit – Melissa P. F., 2<sup>nd</sup> – Sue L.**  
**Approved**

No actions were taken in Executive Session

## **8. For the good of the order** – Led by Vice-President Melissa Peper Firestone

### Goings On

Mark shared regarding Tanzania  
Galion update - Jarrod  
Blue Christmas - Christina  
Lessons and Carols - Julie  
Packaway Hunger - Jacob N

### Lunch Conversation

#### **Williams County Parish presentation**

Deacon Jean Wise shared the story of the Williams County Parish was formed and functions

## **9. Sending Blessing and Prayer**

