

Synod Council Minutes

September 12, 2020 (Zoom)

Present: Bishop Daniel Beaudoin, Melissa Peper Firestone, Becky Seibert, Casey Cox, Rev. Mindy Elliott, Cindy Harris, Rev. Ann Marshall, Jacob Nekoranec, Deb Noll, Rev. Steve Ramsey, Tom Ritter, Rev. Jarrod Schaaf, Michelle Schaffer, Rev. Ed Strietelmeier, Christina Wheeler

Synod Staff Present: Jacob Henry, Jennifer Prueter, Calla Gilson

Absent/Excused: Brent Gardner, Cindy Milbry, Diana Schneider, Rev. Janine Shearer, Jari Knowlton Simard

1. Opening Devotions and Eucharist

Pastor Jarrod Schaaf lead with stories of when he worked at Camp Agape in North Carolina, an environmental camp. He worked at a different camp as nature director the following summer and learned to appreciate all of God's creatures large and small. Psalm 8. We are co-stewards of God's creations. Find something near that brings you joy. Psalm 8. Everyone shared something that brings them joy. Many shared pictures of family and friends, items of remembrance of family and friends and connection to nature. The main theme was the connection we have to each other and to community.

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

Melissa called the meeting to order at 9:03 a.m.

- **Approval of May 2 Minutes -**
Motion to approve made by Casey Cox, 2nd Rev. Ed Strietelmeier.
Minutes approved
- **Review of Executive Committee decisions**
No decisions made since last meeting

Action SC 20.15 Appointments to Council Vacancies

“As authorized by S10.03f, Synod Council appoints the following individuals to fill council vacancies until the next regular meeting of the Synod Assembly:

Casey Cox, Central Lay

Pastor Mindy Elliot, Maumee Valley Clergy

Brent Gardner, Eastern Lay

Pastor Ann Marshall, Eastern Clergy

Deb Noll, Southeastern Lay and Tom

Ritter, Toledo Lay”

Motion to approve made by Jarrod Schaaf, 2nd Cindy Harris –

Motion approved

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

We are grateful for those who agreed to extend their time on Council. We are looking are a new treasurer as we are appreciative of the time given by Phil Koenig as he retires.

God's people have a problem standing still; they are always on the move. Always on the move-Jesus is on the move Bethlehem to Egypt, the child grows but still he goes-always on the move – on the go on the move on the way. Jesus did not start a church he started a movement.

Bishop Daniel asked us to think of a Tag line- a simple 3-word statement for what captures the essence of the mission. - Movement and motion. Most compelling stories are those that invite you to come in along for the journey. They invite us to become part of the movement. Invites us, takes us in, captures our mission. "On the Way" How is God calling you to live out this phrase over the next three months?

Bishop Daniel reviewed his report on pages 10-12. We have adapted well to this time of virtual worship and learning. These are challenging times. God has equipped us with the gifts to get through this.

Paul's mission is a 3 part mission: 1st-make disciples and equip leaders; 2nd launch new communities, strengthen established parishes, 3rd raise funds for the poor in Jerusalem and the church

The annual fund drive in the year 2021 will be "Focusing on our mission."

As staff we try to work on professional and personal goals. The running community is running again as a community. Covoid changed many group plans. Adjustments were made to accommodate guidelines of covoid restrictions.

We are thankful for the reporting of counties in Ohio as to the color-coded status of covoid to help guide each parish as to their re-opening plans.

Bishop Eaton and Churchwide team will share their plan for re-organization October 1-2. Voting to take place in November.

Shared reflections of the book: Be the Bridge: Pursuing God's Heart for Racial Reconciliation (see page 10 in packet)

Racial healing is hard work that takes conversation. There is power in we. *What have you learned about God or God's people during this pandemic?* Some responses were: Pastor Jarrod S-people can learn a lot more than they let on. Yes, Lutherans can change they just need to have a good reason to. Cindy E. this has made us look at what we need to now and gets us out of our comfort zone. Made us think outside out walls. *How do you reach people?* It has made us stretch and given us hope to go beyond ourselves. Casey Cox: I have seen constantly the frustration of everyone on both sides. Lack of unity and division. Ps Ed: The book of Jeremiah makes a lot more sense now. The lack of unity and frustration.

Action SC 20.16 On Leave from Call Request

“At the recommendation of the Bishop, Synod Council approves the following individuals for on leave from call:

Pastor Rob Johnson, year 1
Pastor Tim Reynolds, year 1 starting Oct 4, 2020,
Pastor Sharon Stonerock, year 3,
Pastor Beth Huener, year 1,
Pastor Brian Krause, year 4 (one-year extension for CPE) and
Pastor Matt Musteric, year 1.

Motion to approve on mass made by Tom Ritter, 2nd Deb Noll.

Motion approved

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Action SC 20.17 Retirement Request

“At the recommendation of the Bishop, Synod Council approves the retirement status of Pastor Jim Lehman.”

Motion to approve made by Casey Cox, 2nd Pastor Jarrod Schaaf

Motion approved

Action SC 20.18 Synodically Authorized Ministers

“At the recommendation of the Bishop, Synod Council authorizes the following individuals to serve as Synodically Authorized Ministers for one year:

Ryan Cordle, Trinity Convoy,
Chris Staup, First Stryker,
Deb Noll, St John’s New Washington and Nazareth Chatfield,
Alex Hefflefinger, St. John’s Hicksville
Deb Monin, First English Wapakoneta and Trinity Moulton,
Deacon Amanda Carpenter, Bethlehem Defiance and St Marks Defiance,
Tanyce Addison (TEEM Candidate), Good Hope Bucyrus and Rebecca
West-Estell (TEEM Candidate), Monroe Street Corridor Parish
(Glenwood, Memorial, St. Paul’s, Toledo).

Motion to approve made by Pastor Jarrod Schaaf, 2nd Mindy Elliott,

Motion approved

4. **Vice President’s Report** – Led by Melissa Peper Firestone – Nothing new to report
5. **Secretary’s Report** – Led by Becky Seibert-Nothing new to report
6. **Treasurer’s Report** – provided by Synod Administrator Jacob Henry – The annual audit was difficult due to logistics of Cvoid shut-down during this time. This is the first year of a transition of accounting which added to time to share documents. There were different expectations from each party involved with lead to lengthening of time to complete. Jacob reviewed the enclosed packet. Thank you to Synod office for all the work and results of this audit. Pastor Jarrod questioned the Macedonia project. Are there ways we can make use of some of the funds that are not being used? Jacob shared Proposed Fund Designations using some of these unused funds. Jacob will share this document for Council to review and address at the December meeting.

Action SC 20.19 Acceptance of 2019/20 Audit Report

“Synod Council accepts the audited financial statements and audit report of the 2019/20 fiscal year by Apple Growth Partners and directs the administrative staff to publish the report on the Synod’s website.”

Motion to approve made by Casey Cox, 2nd Ps. Ed Strietelmeier

Motion approved.

Jacob reviewed The Statement of Activities 2020/21 page 15-16 of packet and pages 17-18 Statement of Financial Position. Also reviewed page 19 Council Designated and Donor Restricted funds.

Action SC 20.20 2021-22 Compensation Guidelines

“Synod Council approves the revised 2021 Compensation Guidelines for Rostered Ministers, including a recommended 1.5% increase in base salary.”

Motion to approve made by Tom Ritter, 2nd Rev. Ann Marshall

Motion approved

Conversation on Future Synodical Funding

Jacob shared that we continue to see decreased Mission Support. 51% goes to Churchwide and Synod operates on 49%. Across the board synods are experiencing a decrease in support. 90% of income comes from Mission Support. \$50000 in mission support each year since 2016. About 60% comes from 31 congregations. The decreases coming from remaining 130 congregations. NWOS blessed to have decent financial reserves. Long-term this is not sustainable 15-20 years down the road.

Long Term Strategy: Strengthening of the Endowment Fund, Implementation of Planned Giving, Diversification of Income, Growing our individual donors. Short Term Strategy consider changes to Mission Support and appropriate.

Bishop shared changes at the structure at Churchwide. Exploring the possibility retaining the DEM and grants from the Mission support to Churchwide. Revisit our share to Churchwide support. We will review these in December. We are looking to put together a task force to explore these possibilities. Jake offered prayer.

Jacob continues with report of software update that is more usable for staff. The Fall Gatherings will be virtual events in October. Fall Gatherings dates Oct 15 at 6pm as dinner table conversation, Oct 29 at 7:30 am with morning coffee and Nov 5 at 9pm for a nightcap. Combination video and zoom conversation.

Calla Gilson, lead coordinator for Discipleship Grants shared thank you for approvals. She shared some of the results of the 23 projects, \$23, 375 of support. Thank you to team. The team started with weekly reviews and now gather bi-weekly to review applications. Fund raising has continued throughout the process. We have been able to identify leaders throughout the Synod and awesome relationships have developed. Calla shared some pictures of the projects and how they have been able to engage with many in communities and to continue and develop new connections with each other and communities.

These microgrants have brought hope. The microgrants have shown us that there are folks who have a heart. A year-end ask-never for us but outside the walls. We will begin an 18-month pilot where we will launch 22 new communities by the year 2022. The year-

end ask will be for \$50,000. “On the way” launching new communities. Go where people are already gathering (running communities, taco groups, etc.) bringing Jesus into these communities where we are already gathered.

7. Administrative Matters – Led by Synod Administrator Jacob Henry

Action SC 20.20 Renewal of LMM Accounting Contract

“Synod Council renews the terms of the contract for accounting services with Lutheran Ministries of Mercy for one year, at \$35,000.”

Jacob addressed the action as being reasonable. Hopefully over the next year things should level out and hopefully be able to reduce in the next year.

Motion to approve made by Cindy Harris, 2nd Deb Noll. Motion approved.

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

We have shared much today. The next meeting will be December 12, 2020.

9. 9. Sending Blessing and Prayer

Melissa closed with prayer.

Respectfully submitted

Becky Seibert

NWOS Secretary

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