

Northwest Washington Synod Thirty-second Annual Assembly

**Saturday May 15, 2021
Zoom Meeting**



PLENARY 1

CALL TO ORDER

The Assembly was called to order by Bishop Shelley Bryan Wee at 9:25 A.M. Bishop Shelley gave honor and glory to the people of the historic lands of the Coastal Salish Peoples. Remembering the oppression of Native people is not a relic of the past but continues today. May we live through God's Spirit, repent and walk forward together, changing systems that discriminate as we live into authentic diversity and healing. Bishop Shelley thanked all who participated in the two orientations and Trinity Lutheran in Lynnwood for hosting. Also, a huge thank you to everyone who spent hours working behind the scenes.

WORSHIP

Opening worship began with a prayer by various pastors and Assistant to the Bishop, Pastor Andrew Yee, with the Lord's Prayer; Pam Karas, Faith and Central, Sara Funkhouser, Phinney Ridge, Nisar Stephens, Lakeridge, and Cassandra Nagle, St. Matthew's.

OPENING OF THE ASSEMBLY

Bishop Shelley Bryan Wee opened the Assembly with prayer.

QUORUM

Bishop Shelley Bryan Wee declared a quorum and announced that the assembly was in session at 9:55 A.M

ORIENTATION

Bishop Shelley Bryan Wee extended a special welcome to Christopher Otten from Churchwide and Rev. Chris Boerger who is on the roster of the Synod, serving as interim Bishop in La Crosse Area Synod and is Parliamentarian for the business today. Bishop Shelley introduced Sr. Liz Colver, the Assembly Planning Chair, to offer a mini orientation.

CREDENTIALS REPORT

Bishop Shelley Bryan Wee introduced registrars Carsten and Joyce Thode. Carsten announced as of 10:00 AM, 317 voting members were registered. Bishop Shelley invited Synod Council Vice President Kay Edgerton to offer a motion to approve the agenda.

ASSEMBLY AGENDA

Speaking on behalf of the Synod Council, Synod Vice President Kay Edgerton moved adoption of the Assembly Agenda. The motion *carried*.

SA2021.01 **That the 2021 Northwest Washington Synod Assembly Agenda is approved as presented.**

STANDING RULES

Speaking on behalf of the Synod Council, Synod Vice President Kay Edgerton made a motion to approve the Standing Rules adding ***Rule 23: Item G-“In all elections, except for the bishop, the two names of the persons receiving the highest number of legal votes, but not elected by a majority of the legal votes cast on a preceding ballot shall be entered on the next ballot.*** Pastor Gail Rautmann second the motion.

Vice President Kay Edgerton presented to the Assembly, there was a missing rule in the standing rules. The Council did not address what happens when there is not a majority of votes/elections. The proposed and approved standing rule will help if one or two of the ballots where three or more people are up for one spot.

The Standing Rules were **adopted**.

SA2021.01 **That the 2021 Northwest Washington Synod Assembly approved proposed amendment as presented.**

Speaking on behalf of the Synod Council, Synod Vice President Kay Edgerton made a motion to approve the proposed amendment. A two-thirds majority is required to adopt. ***The motion carried.***

SA2021.02 **That the 2021 Northwest Washington Synod Assembly approve the amended standing rules as presented.**

REPORT OF THE VICE PRESIDENT

Vice President Kay Edgerton presented her VP report and shared highlights of the Council and Executive Committees.

AMENDMENT HIGHLIGHTS

On behalf of the Synod Council, Synod Vice President Kay Edgerton granted a motion to adopt en bloc the amendments to the Constitution of the Northwest Washington Synod. **The motion carried.**

SA2021.03 **That the 2021 Northwest Washington Synod Assembly adopt en bloc the amendments to the Constitution of the Northwest Washington Synod as presented.**

Vote on S09.03.01

Clint Beutow: Felt that the size of the nominating committee being moved from 7-3 was a rather drastic reduction. He was hoping to propose going to 5 members. To help keep our scope and diversity of the nominating committee at a level larger than 3 members. Amend the amendment to read: Change the number of members of the nominating committee to 5 members.

SA2021.04 **That the 2021 Northwest Washington Synod Assembly adopt en bloc S9.03, changing the size of the nominating committee from 7 members to 5 from amendment to the Constitution of the Northwest Washington Synod as presented.**

Speaking on behalf of the Synod Council, Bishop Shelley Bryan Wee motioned to approve the proposed amendment to move the nominating committee from 7 members to 5. A two-thirds majority is required to adopt. **The motion carried.**

SA2021.05 **That the 2021 Northwest Washington Synod Assembly adopt en bloc S9.03 changing the size of the nominating committee from 7 members to 5 amending the amendment to the Constitution of the Northwest Washington Synod as presented.**

Kay Edgerton brought forth the second set of recommended provisions from the Churchwide Assembly. These changes are mostly to bring the language of the Synod Constitution in line with that of the Churchwide Assembly expression of the church. S8.14, S13.40, S15.14, change the word “synodical” and “synodically” to Synod, reflecting current style guidelines. S14.17, and S14.42, change the word “chair” to “president”. The most substantial change is S8.11.01 which adds language allowing the Synod Bishop to be compensated for specified services in another expression of the church S10.08 is also added to designate Roberts Rules of Order as our parliamentary guide.

Shawn Dooley question: he was wondering about the rationale from moving from chair to president terminology?

Parliamentarian William Boeger answered: the change was made largely with language as every

reference referring to a position in the most normal circumstances would be the president of a corporation. In our case, the vice president and president of the committee are President of the council. That is the purpose of most of these recommended amendments: that we are in line with what is stated in the churchwide constitution.

Speaking on behalf of the Synod Council, a motion to adopt the amendments from the Churchwide Assembly en bloc.

SA2021.06 **That the 2021 Northwest Washington Synod Assembly adopt en bloc the amendments to the Constitution of the Northwest Washington Synod as presented.**

BREAK

The bishop declared a break of twenty minutes and encouraged members of the assembly to be back in their seats at 10:50 am.

PLENARY 2

CREDENTIALS REPORT

Carsten Thode announced as of 10:55 AM, 314 voting members were registered. The last observers were included incorrectly. This has been corrected.

Bishop Shelley thanked the nominating committee who worked so hard to secure a wonderful list of nominees. The members of the nominating committee are Emily Hughes, chair, Pr. Katy McCallum Sachse, Kristi Lambing, Elizabeth Stitt and Susan Berg. And a thank you to all the nominees who have allowed their names to go forward for election.

Bishop Shelley invited Emily Hughes, the chair of the nominating committee, to the mic to present the names for election.

Bishop Shelley also thanked the election team; Pastor Andy Arnold and Jacob Smith who are preparing the ballots. We are deeply grateful!

FIRST BALLOT FOR SYNOD COUNCIL

To elect a slate for the Synod Council nominees, the election begins by a majority vote. The results for Synod Council are the following: Rostered Ministers, Rev. Ivar Hillesland (M), Rev. Rebecca Langholz (F), Deacon Amy O'Collins (F), Rev. Herb Shao (M); Laypersons: Celine Imani Austin (Y, POC, NB), Curt Eidem (M), Sherianne Molzhan Caldwell (F) Lauren Ode-Giles (YA, F) and Elizabeth Stitt (F).

CONSULTATION COMMITTEE BALLOT

The next ballot is to elect members to the Consultation Committee. The members of this committee are called upon as needed to help with discernment of a discipline process of a rostered minister, a congregation, and/or discipline of a congregation member.

The results for the new slate of members of the consultation committee are as follows:
Rev. John Guthridge, Rev Richard Rouse, Donald Pearson and Margaret (Maggie) Smith.

COMMITTEE ON DISCIPLINE BALLOT

The next ballot is to elect members to the Discipline Committee. The members of this committee are called upon to fulfill a determined discipline process of a rostered minister, a congregation, and/or discipline of a congregation member. Reminder, this is a two-part ballot to elect a slate of nominees.

Under the first ballot, a vote to elect a slate of nominees. The nominees are Rev. Malcom Brown (M), Rev Darla DeFrance (F), and Elizabeth Stitt (F).

Under the second ballot, a vote for one lay man. *James Colver wins* with 53 percent of the votes, Colin Walker had 47 percent of the votes.

On behalf of the Northwest Washington Hunger Team, each congregation that told us what they could do with a \$500.00 grant, will receive \$500, in part funded by Lutheran Disaster Grant received by the Synod. The congregations are Mount Si in North Bend, North Lake Lutheran Church in Kenmore, Emmaus Table in Seattle, Hope Lutheran in Lynden, and St. Matthew Lutheran in Renton. Congratulations!

CHURCHWIDE ASSEMBLY VOTING MEMBERS BALLOT

In addition to our Synod Bishop and Synod Vice President, we can send 7 people to the 2022 Churchwide Assembly. This week-long gathering is the decision-making body for the ELCA. The election will consist of individuals in stages based on the representational principles set forth by the ELCA. Only 6 members will be voted upon today. The Council did not receive any nominees that fit the male identifying youth or young adult category by the nominating deadline. The Synod Council will work to identify that person later.

On the first ballot, the nominating committee prepared a two-part ballot. The council was asked to vote for the elected slate of 2 nominees for Persons of Color position. The Rev. Esau Cuevas (M, POC) and Laura Norton (F, POC) are the newly elected voting members for the Churchwide Assembly. The voting members for youth/young adult woman are Kyrie Fairbairn (YA, F) received 28 percent of the votes, Kasey Shultz (YA, F) received 40 percent, and Rev. Rachel Swanson (YA, F) received 33 percent. The result of the second ballot, Kasey Shultz is elected to be the youth/young adult representative for the Churchwide Assembly. Kasey received 204 votes and Rachel received 86 votes. Thanks, Rev. Rachel Swenson, for letting your name go forward.

Please know those not elected on the ballot will appear on any later ballots for which they are eligible.

REPORT OF THE SYNOD SECRETARY

Pastor Gail Rautmann thanked Pastor Laura Harris-Ferree for creating the anniversary video for the Synod rostered ministers during 2020 and 2021.

ROSTERED LEADER ANNIVERSARIES FOR 2020	
<i>Minister of Word and Sacrament, 5 years</i>	<i>Minister of and Sacrament, 20 years</i>
Robyn A Helmon	Eric J Wagen-Hoch
Anne Michelle L. Van Kley	Glen W Aaberg
Paul D. Kacynski	Jeffrey R. Spencer
Timothy M Feiertag	
<i>10 years</i>	<i>25 Years</i>
Chienyu J Yi	Deborah L.H. Mach
Shannyn C. Fuerst	Mia J Baumgartner
Suzanne J. Thomas	Scott E Brents
	Susan L. Wanwig
<i>15 Years</i>	
	<i>30 Years</i>
Anne Straffin Hall	
Charis A. Weathers	Carol A. Jensen
Jianhua Jimmy Hao	John M Bjorge
Jocelyn K. Carson	Mikkel J Hustad
Julie L. Hutson	
Chulhyuk Ko	
<i>Minister of Word and Sacrament, 35 years</i>	<i>50 Years</i>
Cynthia L Salo	Carl E Moll
Paul B Benz	Eduardo A. Cabrera
Susan Van Hoy Burchfield	Gerald T Bongard
Susan K Kirlin-Hackett	Stephen W. Grumm
Timothy T. Weber	William D. Anderson
Verlon Brown	
<i>40 Years</i>	<i>55 Years</i>
Jerry R O'Neill	Arnold L. Anderson
John O Liljenstolpe	Daniel R. Bloomquist
Stanley E Jacobson	Dennis L Schaffert

	Louis W Accola
45 Years	William G Perkins
F. Philip Strain	60 Years
James N McEachran	David C. Wold
Rodney J Vereb	Neal E Snider
Ronald A Melder	
Thomas L. Kidd	
Ministers of Word & Service, 5 years	
Elizabeth J. Colver	
25 Years	35 Years
	Helen L. McBride
Clara C Griffin	Sherry Kiefel

ROSTERED LEADER ANNIVERSARIES FOR 2021	
<i>Minister of Word and Sacrament, 5 years</i>	<i>Minister of Word and Sacrament, 35 years</i>
Ryan A. Marsh	Bryon H Hanson
	Erik P. Kindem
10 Years	James Lindus
Jeremy John Fuerst	Jeremy Shih
Krista R. Oppie	Roger C. Claxton
Priscilla N. Paris-Austin	40 Years
	James Kruse
15 Years	Timothy A. Whiteman
Dorcas Wang	45 Years
Erik T. R. Samuelson	Christen V Anderson
Malcolm S. Brown	Glen L Kluth
Marlon M. Wang	Nancy L Winder
Rita M. Anderson	
Sharon B Swanson	50 Years
Susan R. Hookham	Lowell E. Stime
	Mark H. Reitan
20 Years	
Cara E. Tanis	55 Years
Chad D. Johnson	Daniel W. Erlander
Gail S. Rautmann	George W. Nickelsburg Jr
Jana M Schofield	Jay R. Decker

Kathryn E. Buffum	
Marc L. Hander	60 Years
Majorie A. Lorant	Darrell E. Schoen
Mark A. Tanis	David L. Angersbach
Pamela Russell	
25 Years	65 years
Liza Okan	Kenneth H. Daugs
Peter K Shen	
30 Years	70 years
D. Scott Postlewait	Charles R Bomgren
Heidi L Fish	
Jeffrey L Larson	
Joseph Hezu Li	
Kevin L. Bates	
Paul W. Sundberg	
Sacia Vik	
Terry B. Kylo	
Ministers of Word and Service, 35 years	Ministers of Word and Service, 45 years
Clifford M. Bronson	Inez M. Hushagen

Bishop Shelley congratulated all who celebrated milestone ministry anniversaries. The Bishop acknowledged 4 congregations celebrating anniversaries during 2020 and 2021- Nativity in Renton, 50 years, Morning Star in Monroe, 25 years, Lakeridge Lutheran in Seattle, 75 years and Maple Leaf in Seattle, 75 years.

Bishop Shelley welcomed the Churchwide representative to this year’s Synod Assembly, Chaplain Christopher Otten. Chaplain Christopher Otten was ordained as a pastor in 1995 and has served in various parish ministry settings. He also served as a full-time federal Chaplain in the air force and national guard, and currently serves as the Assistant to the Presiding Bishop of the ELCA as the Director of Federal Chaplaincies since January 2019. He lives in Baltimore and commutes to work in WA DC at the ELCA’s Capitol Hill offices. Chaplain Otten, we are so grateful for your service, and for your presence and time here with us as our Churchwide Representative.

On behalf of Bishop Elizabeth Eaton, Chaplain Otten thanked the Synod for the partnership, the ministry, and leadership. The Synod is helping to lead the way for the entire church. We do operate in three expressions; the churchwide with ecumenical partnerships, and its global reach, through Synods as we are gathered here today virtually and in congregations. A word of appreciation and thanks from the 181 federal chaplains who serve on your behalf. They are there accompanying those who are working within the federal system. To bring word and sacrament

ministry to minister and care for our military members, our veterans, and those who are in the custody of our government.

LUNCH BREAK

Bishop Shelley asked members of the assembly to return at 1:00 PM. Members have an option to join breakout rooms; LiVE, MIF, Camp Lutherwood, PLU, LCM, Living Stones, Coach Northwest, Candidacy, C. Otten with CWO, PLTS. Pastor John Guthridge who serves at Edison Lutheran Church in Bow will lead us out in lunch break with song and dance.

PLENARY 3

CREDENTIALS REPORT

Joyce Thode announced as of 1:05 PM, 332 voting members checked in.

CHURCHWIDE ASSEMBLY VOTING MEMBERS BALLOT-ELECTION 2

The ballot will have two headings, under the first heading the vote is to elect the slate of 2 lay men. Curt Eidem and Franklin Loulan are elected as voting members for the Churchwide Assembly.

The next ballot is a vote for 1 rostered minister. The nominees are Rev Rachel Swenson and Rev Anne Van Kley. The results; Rachel Swenson 59%-164 votes and Rev. Anne Van Kley, 41%-112 votes. The Rev. Rachel Swenson has been elected as a voting member for the Churchwide Assembly.

REPORT OF THE BISHOP

Vice President Kay Edgerton called upon Bishop Shelley Bryan Wee for her report. Refer to the written report, share highlights.

Vice President Kay Edgerton called David Swartling for a moment to speak. David discussed how he is looking forward to the living legacy document Bishop Shelley Bryan Wee is creating. The word legacy, not just the word in an institutional sense, but in a personal sense as well. The ideal of legacy is multi-dimensional and congregations and individuals have legacies whether they want them or not. His prayer is that we come out on the other side of COVID-19 and we could focus on what our legacy would be as the ELCA as members of our congregations and its individuals. The ELCA foundation is here to help, with a regional gift planner, Beth Adams, and he hopes that the legacy we will all bring to the next generation will be that they understand and hear the word of Jesus.

Vice-President Kay Edgerton relinquished the chair back to the Bishop.

REPORT OF THE TREASURER

The treasurer's report can be viewed on the Synod website.
Bart Brosten discussed the spending plan for 2022 and budget cap for 2022

Speaking on behalf of the Synod Council, Bart Brosten, moved that the general fund budget adopted for Fiscal Year 2022 (ending January 31, 2023) shall be capped at \$1,453,484 and that motion to increase any expenditures item in said fund shall include a recommended offsetting decrease and that Fiscal 2022 (ending January 31, 2023) general fund receipts in excess of \$1,453,484 be disbursed as directed by the Synod Council. *The motion carried.*

DISCUSSION:

Karen Weller, Can we expect the PPP loan to be forgiven when we have consistent giving and expenses were lower with travel cost, etc?

Bart Brosten: We applied for that so that we would not have to lay any staff off. The first part of it was to be sure we could fully employ staff. The newer PPP looks at decreases in revenue, but that was not the case with this loan. And because we did not have to use the loan, we will have it for COVID grants.

Frank Loulan, At the bottom of the treasurer report it reads, net total 2021 12.00, at 2022 3.00, are those percentage increase over the previous year?

Bart Brosten: For clarification, that is the net budget, so income minus expense, are the net amounts. \$12 means there is \$12 more revenue in the budget, than we had in expenses. Total budgeted revenue less the total budgeted expense equals \$12.

Jean Goodrich: The budget for pastors being at 88%. Is there a plan to make it 100% anytime soon?

BB: Majority of the revenue comes from Mission support, couple of others...the way it currently exists, in order to increase staffing, pay, we'd have to move it from somewhere else. But the goal is to see how we can maximize our revenues to increase staffing compensation. We want to set the example by paying the guidelines that the Synod has set and we admit we haven't.

Jean Goodrich: If it happens during the year can you change it?

Bart Brosten: If we should have an abundance of giving, yes.

Sue Schneider. What dollar amount would get us to 100%?

Bart Brosten: About \$50,000 difference.

Sue Schneider: Can we take the PPP loan and apply it to that?

Bart Brosten: We had originally had that in the original draft budget. We did not do it as we wanted to have a sustainable compensation plan.

Bob Campbell: What are our reserves amount we keep on hand as a cushion?

Bart Brosten: Just under \$400,000.

Sally Simpson: Comment to increase wages to 100%, that would have to be approved first by Synod Council, correct? What would be the path in order to raise compensation to 100%?

Bart Brosten: If we had an abundance of income and we would like to pay the synod staff more, Synod Council Approval would be needed as it would go over our Budget cap. The PPP was applied for and used in 2020.

Erik Kindem: Use of PPP money that was not expended. The federal guidelines are very specific within a particular period of time. It seems that it could not be diverted to a different purpose other than what it was applied and received for.

Bart Brosten: The PPP was originally a loan, if the Synod could show the loan was used to pay for staffing for that period and be submitted for the application for forgiveness.

Michele Wiks: I am confused about the PPP loan, if it is used for paying staff, was the staff at 100 percent prior to receiving the loan? Was it always at 88 percent? The PPP was used to keep the salaries at what they used to be at.

Bart Brosten: We have not lowered salaries; in fact, we were under 88 percent before the 4 percent increase put into the 2022 budget. Not having to repay the loan gives us the excess cash.

Bishop/Parliamentarian: The motion on the table is the Budget cap. That is what must be addressed from the floor then we will go to the budget in general.

Curt Eidem: If we adjusted the budget cap to pay for 88 percent the budget was \$50,000, we would have to adjust the budget to 45 percent of churchwide so it would be close to \$100,000. If you adjust the budget, you must adjust a lot of things.

SA2021.07 **That the 2021 Northwest Washington Synod Assembly approves the Fiscal year 2022 (ending January 31, 2023) spending cap of \$1,453,484.00 as presented by the Synod Council.**

Speaking on behalf of the Synod Council, Bart Brosten, moved the adoption of the Fiscal Year 2022 (ending January 31, 2023) General Fund Budget. *The motion carried.*

SA2021.08 **That the 2021 Northwest Washington Synod Assembly moves to adopt the Fiscal Year 2022 General Fund Budget ending January 31,**

2023 as presented by the Synod Council.

BREAK

The bishop declared a break of twenty minutes and encouraged members of the assembly to be back in their seats at 2:50 PM.

PLENARY 4

FINAL CREDENTIALS REPORT

Carsten and Joyce Thode announced as of 2:51 PM, 332 voting members checked in.

Rostered 130
Word and Service 11
Word and Sacrament 119
POC 28

Lay - 202

Male 77
Female 121
Non-Binary- 4
Youth 12
Young Adults 28
Observers 4
Visitors/volunteers 200+

REFERENCE AND COUNCIL REPORT

Rev. Tor Berg announced there are no resolutions received before the March 31st deadline.

Bishop Shelley and Vice President Kay Edgerton announced the Grace Grants recipients.

This year awarded \$150,000 in Grace Grants. The grant amount ranges from \$2,000 to \$20,000. The winners are as follows:

Bethlehem Sedro Wooley-\$1150.00
Church of Steadfast Love, Seattle-\$2,000
Gloria Dei Lutheran, Lynnwood- \$2,000
St. Matthews Lutheran Church, Renton, \$2,000
Mount Si Lutheran Church, North Bend, \$3,000
Faith Lutheran Church, Seattle-\$5,000

Echoes, Bellingham-\$7,194
Seattle Covenant Lutheran, Seattle, \$7,656
Grace Chinese, Sammamish, \$8,000
Luther's Table/Roots of the Table, \$10,000
Church of the Apostle, Seattle, \$12,000
Salt House Church, Kirkland, \$12,000
Lakeridge Church, Seattle, \$18,000
Bethany Lutheran, Bainbridge Island, \$20,000
Emmaus Table, Seattle, \$20,000
Stillaguamish, Stillaguamish, \$20,000

Bishop Shelley thanked the congregations who applied. There were 40 applicants, we would have loved to be able to award all of you. We encourage to apply again next year. Thank you, Grace Lutheran Church, for giving us this living legacy. Next year is our last year unless others wish to contribute.

ADJOURNMENT

The assembly was adjourned at 3:12 PM.