



Southeastern Minnesota Synod
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
 God's work. Our hands.

Southeastern Minnesota Synod Council
Meeting Minutes
April 15, 2023

The Southeastern Minnesota Synod Council met on April 15, 2023, via Zoom.

Members present:

Rev. Collette Broady-Grund, Rev. Jenna Couch, Rev. Shelley Cunningham, Matthew Huggenvik, Karen Myers, Deacon Amanda Sabelko, Gary Schindler, Ramona Skare, Rev. Dr. Kristen Venne, Dr. Mary Veiseth, Rev. John Weisenburger, Treasurer Jeff Chestnut, Secretary Rev. Josh Enderson, Vice President Lisa Dierks, and Bishop Regina Hassanally.

Absent:

Rev. Kris Ferkin, Hannah Herfindahl-Quint, Marshall Laidlaw, and Carolyn Solberg.

WELCOME

- Vice President Lisa Dierks welcomed the council to the meeting and began with devotions.

CALL TO ORDER & OVERVIEW OF AGENDA

- Vice President Dierks presented the agenda. No additions or amendments were made to the agenda.
- Karen Myers motioned to approve the agenda as presented.

SC23.04.13 Motion to approve the agenda.

Motion approved.

CONSENT AGENDA

- February 25, 2023 Council Meeting minutes
- Reports from Staff, Committees, & Tables
- Gary Schindler made a motion to approve the Consent Agenda.

SC23.04.14 Motion to approve the Consent Agenda.

Motion approved.

VICE PRESIDENT'S COMMENTS

- Vice President Dierks then updated the council on the work of the Nominating

Committee. She noted that most people who are currently on synod council and are eligible for a second term have turned in a nominations form. She noted that a few other positions are still open on various committees, and that these positions would need to be appointed by council if they are not filled by the time of synod assembly.

BISHOP'S COMMENTS

- Bishop Regina Hassanally updated the council on the work of the Office of the Bishop. Some highlights from these comments are as follows:
 - Administrative Work:
 - Office Space Task Force Update: The Sisters of St. Francis will be terminating all leases at Assisi Heights in 2024, which means the Synod Office will have to be in a new space by then. The task force is working on evaluating needs and looking for new space and has been talking with staff about what their needs in office space might be.
 - The new office administrator is working out well.
 - Auditors have been in the office since end of March and have been working with Rev. Emily Carson.
 - Final updates on the 2024-2025 Spending Plan have been made.
 - Ministry Updates
 - The Bishop has been sitting with the Global Ministry Table and with the bishops of our global partners.
 - The Office of the Bishop is working with a few congregations who are looking at disaffiliation, as well as working with congregations where there is tension between rostered leaders and the congregation.
 - She noted that there are several ordinations coming up, as well as some new experiments with ministry

and partnerships
happening.

- The Bishop mentioned that she has been invited to go to South Sudan, but the details are tentative at this time due to tensions in the area.
- She noted that she continues to serve on the boards of Lutheran Social Services and the MN Council of Churches.

FINANCIAL REPORTS

- Treasurer Jeff Chestnut reported on the finances of the synod.
- The February financial reports reviewed. Treasurer Chestnut noted that this report reflects the first month of the fiscal year and that it is hard to pick up trends at this point.

SC23.04.15 Motion to receive the February financial report. **Motion approved.**

2024-2025 SPENDING PLAN FOR MISSION AND MINISTRY

- The 2024-2025 Spending Plan for Mission and Ministry, which had been previously presented and had been discussed in an online caucus meeting, was again brought before the council.
- Bishop Hassanally and Treasurer Chestnut presented the final Spending Plan, as it has been updated over the last few weeks.
- A few items were lifted up from the Updated Spending Plan:
 - Revenue was kept the same as the year prior. The Annual Fund revenue has been lowered to \$40,000, as that is more accurate to what is likely to come in.
 - Global Ministry Team discretionary funds were lowered from \$9,000 to \$5,000. This keeps it in line with what is budgeted to other tables and reflects the fact that they have access to designated funds.
 - Rent has been set at \$25,000, which is likely a realistic amount, but this won't be known until a new office space is secured.
 - The proposed Spending Plan has a \$4,700 deficit.
- Rev. John Weisenburger motioned to approve the Proposed 2024-2025 Spending

Plan for Mission and Ministry for
presentation at the 2023 Synod Assembly.

SC23.04.16 Motion to approve the Proposed 2024-2025 Spending Plan for Mission and Ministry for presentation at the 2023 Synod Assembly. **Motion approved.**

CONSTITUTIONAL CHANGES

- Several amendments to the Synod's governing documents were brought before the council.
- Two were amendments to Continuing Resolutions and several were recommended amendments to sections of the Southeastern Minnesota Synod Constitution approved by the 2022 ELCA Churchwide Assembly.
- Update to S12.01.A18.
 - This amendment updates the list of congregations of the synod.
 - Secretary Rev. Josh Enderson motioned to amend S12.01.A18. "Congregations by Conference and Physical Address" to remove the following congregations: United, Frost; Bethany, Frost; South Blue Earth, Bricelyn; Medo, Mapleton; Rochester House Church, Rochester; to add Connections Shelter Church, Mankato; and to change the name of St. Paul ELCA/UCC, Lewiston to St. Paul Evangelical Church.

SC23.04.17 Motion to amend S12.01.A18. "Congregations by Conference and Physical Address" to remove the following congregations: United, Frost; Bethany, Frost; South Blue Earth, Bricelyn; Medo, Mapleton; Rochester House Church, Rochester; to add Connections Shelter Church, Mankato; and to change the name of St. Paul ELCA/UCC, Lewiston to St. Paul Evangelical Church. **Motion approved.**

- Update to S7.34.02.C05.
 - This amendment better aligns our late resolution policy with our one-day synod assembly structure.
 - The changes presented are the portions marked with a strikethrough:
 - The Synod Assembly may allow an exception to the submission deadline of S7.34.02.B08. provided:
 - ~~a. any late resolution shall be submitted to the Committee on Reference and Counsel by 3:00 p.m. on the first day of the Synod Assembly, and~~
 - ~~b. the Synod Assembly, by motion passed by majority vote, specifically orders that such late resolution be placed on the Synod Assembly agenda.~~
- Bishop Hassanally made a Motion to amend S7.34.02.C05. to remove S7.34.02.C05.a. “any late resolution shall be submitted to the Committee on Reference and Counsel by 3:00 p.m. on the first day of the Synod Assembly, and.”

SC23.04.18 Motion to amend S7.34.02.C05. to remove S7.34.02.C05.a. “any late resolution shall be submitted to the Committee on Reference and Counsel by 3:00 p.m. on the first day of the Synod Assembly, and.”

Motion approved.

- Amendments to Recommended Provisions to the Constitution for Synods as approved by the 2022 Churchwide Assembly.
 - Several amendments were presented to non-required provisions within the synod’s constitution. These amendments were approved by the 2022 ELCA Churchwide assembly. If approved, these amendments would align our

constitution with the Model Constitution for Synods.

- Recommended amendments may be approved by a majority vote at any subsequent meeting of the Synod Assembly without presentation at a prior Synod Assembly.
- Secretary Rev. Enderson made a Motion to recommend the 2023 Southeastern Minnesota Synod Assembly approve the recommended amendments to the Synod Constitution as approved by the 2022 Churchwide Assembly to S7.14., S7.21.01., S7.22., S7.24., S7.26., S7.27., S8.42., S11.10., S14.13., S14.15., and S14.34.

SC23.04.19 Motion to recommend the 2023 Southeastern Minnesota Synod Assembly approve the recommended amendments to the Synod Constitution as approved by the 2022 Churchwide Assembly to S7.14., S7.21.01., S7.22., S7.24., S7.26., S7.27., S8.42., S11.10., S14.13., S14.15., and S14.34.

Motion approved.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

- The Synod Council entered executive session at 10:08am to discuss and make changes to the roster.
- Rev. Jenna Couch made the motion to enter executive session.

SC23.04.20 Motion to enter executive session.

Motion approved.

- The following actions were taken during executive session.

ROSTER CHANGES.

- On Leave From Call (New—Needs Approval)
 - Rev. Kary Jonas; 1st Request; start date: 03/15/2023; approved at synod council meeting: 04/15/2023.

- Rev. Patrick Ziems; 1st Request; start date: 04/23/2023; approved at synod council meeting: 04/15/2023.
- Bishop Hassanally Motioned to approve the On Leave from Call (New) Roster Changes.

SC(ES23.04.21) Motion to approve On Leave From Call (New) Roster Changes.

Motion approved.

- On Lead From Call (Yearly Renewal—Needs Approval)
 - Rev. Charles Leonard; 3rd and Final Request; approved at synod council meeting: 04/15/2023.
 - Bishop Hassanally Motioned to approve the On Leave From Call (Yearly Renewal) Roster Changes.

SC(ES23.04.22) Motion to approve On Leave From Call (Yearly Renewal) Roster Changes.

Motion approved.

- Call to Interim Ministry/Bridge Ministry Through Synod Council (Needs Approval)
 - Rev. Cheryl Indeher, On Leave from Call to Interim at Grace, Fairmont; Effective: 04/02/2023; approved at synod council meeting: 04/15/2023.
 - Rev. Mary Kaye Ashley, Interim at St. John's, Kasson, to Interim at Grace, Austin, with Oakland, Albert Lea; Effective: 05/01/2023; approved at synod council meeting: 04/15/2023.
 - Bishop Hassanally Motioned to approve the Interim Ministry Through Synod Council Roster Changes.

SC(ES23.04.23) Motion to approve Call to Interim Ministry Through Synod Council Roster Changes.

Motion approved.

- Retirement Status (Needs Approval)
 - Rev. Kristen Schlauderaff; Effective: 04/01/2023; approved at synod council meeting: 04/15/2023.
 - Rev. Carol Sinykin; Effective: 06/01/2023; approved at synod council meeting: 04/15/2023.

- Bishop Hassanally Motioned to approve the Retirement Status Roster Changes.

SC(ES23.04.24) Motion to approve Retirement Status Roster Changes.

Motion approved.

- Death (Acknowledge Only)
 - Rev. Gerhardt Knudson: 03/03/2023.
- Mona Skare motioned to leave executive session.

SC(ES23.04.25) Motion to leave executive session.

Motion approved.

- The council left executive session at 10:14 am.

WORDS OF APPRECIATION FOR OUTGOING MEMBERS

- Vice President Dierks then offers words of thanks and appreciation to those council members who were ending their terms.

ADJOURNMENT

- Vice President Dierks declared the meeting adjourned at 10:20am.
- The next meeting of the Synod Council will be the Council Orientation in July 2023.

Submitted,
Rev. Josh Enderson
Synod Council Secretary

APPROVED 09/23/2023 JE