



Southeastern Minnesota Synod Council Meeting Minutes February 21, 2026

The Southeastern Minnesota Synod Council met on February 21, 2026 via Zoom.

Members present: Rev. Shawn Brooks, David Holger, Matthew Huggenvik, Rev. Cheryl Indehar, Barbara Lake, Bradley Leathers, Rev. Sam Mailleue, Roy Srp, Ed Taylor, Dr. Joyce Thompson, Treasurer Tammy Dahlvang, Secretary Rev. Josh Enderson, Vice President Lisa Dierks, and Bishop Regina Hassanally.

Absent: Rev. Jessica Bakken Busch, Rev. Anna Ferro, Jennifer Levison, and Sam Pollack.

WELCOME & DEVOTIONS

- Vice President Lisa Dierks welcomed council members and gave a devotion to begin the meeting.

CALL TO ORDER & OVERVIEW OF AGENDA

- Vice President Dierks called the meeting to order at 9:07 am.
- She then presented the agenda.
- Barb Lake motioned to approve the agenda.

SC26.02.01 Motion to approve the agenda.

Motion approved.

CONSENT AGENDA

- November 22, 2025 and November 24, 2025 Synod Council meeting minutes
- Reports from Staff, Committees, and Tables
- Congregation Constitutions
 - Grace Lutheran, Fairmont
 - Council Action: to thank Grace Lutheran Church in Fairmont, for the work done on the constitution and bylaws; to express appreciation for the way the congregation bylaws have been codified in the document as a model for other congregations in the synod; and to accept the constitution approved by the congregation on February 21st, 2026 as consistent with the 2025 Model Constitution for Congregations of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and the constitutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and the Southeastern Minnesota Synod.
 - Redeemer Lutheran, Good Thunder
 - Council Action: to thank Redeemer Lutheran Church in Good Thunder, for the work done on the constitution and bylaws; to express

appreciation for the way the congregation bylaws have been codified in the document as a model for other congregations in the synod; and to accept the constitution approved by the congregation on February 21st, 2026 as consistent with the 2025 Model Constitution for Congregations of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and the constitutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and the Southeastern Minnesota Synod.

- Barb Lake motioned to approve the consent agenda.

SC26.02.02 Motion to approve the consent agenda.

Motion approved.

VICE PRESIDENT'S COMMENTS

- Vice President Dierks then gave the following comments:
 - Nominating Committee Update:
 - Synod Secretary Nominations: Nominations for the position of Synod Secretary come from synod council and are then put before the synod assembly for nomination. This will be done at the April meeting.
 - She reminded other council members to complete the nomination acceptance form if they wish to serve a second term on council.

BISHOP'S COMMENTS

- Bishop Regina Hassanally gave the following comments to the council:
 - Administrative Updates:
 - She noted that it has been a busy winter with many obligations and travel.
 - She was recently in New York working on a grant with Bishop Emerita Rev. Leila Ortiz.
 - The Bishop recently attended a Portico Board meeting in Arizona and found it to be a productive meeting.
 - The synod staff is working on upcoming events:
 - They recently hosted Advent worship in December.
 - Councils as Leaders is coming up in March.
 - Synod Assembly planning is underway, as well as thinking about the layout of future assemblies. A think tank is underway to investigate other ways to lay out assembly.
 - Tanzania Visit
 - The Bishop and a delegation from the SEMN Synod recently traveled to the Central Diocese of Tanzania. Dr. Joyce Thompson also was a part of this delegation. The Bishop and Joyce walked through some slides from this trip and discussed some of the highlights from this visit. The primary reason for this visit was the dedication of the Bishop Regina Girls Secondary School.

FINANCIAL REPORTS

- Treasurer Tammy Dahlvang updated the council on the synod's finances and presented the latest financial reports. She lifted up these items from the report:
 - She noted that our yearly year-to-date income is down, which was to be expected. But year-to-date expenses are also down significantly.
- Rev. Sam Mailleue motioned to receive the financial report through January 2026.

SC26.02.03 Motion to receive the financial report.

Motion approved.

- Treasurer Dahlvang also noted that there was a CD, held at the Mission Investment Fund, that is coming due and needs to be renewed. Rev. Emily Carson understands that it being held for a possible Bishop transition in the future. This will be allowed to roll over. This was a point of information for the council.
- Spending Plan Task Force Update
 - Bishop Hassanally gave a brief update on the Spending Plan Task Force. They will be meeting this week. She noted that some congregations have lowered their giving, which will have to be reflected within the spending plan.

CHURCHWIDE ASSEMBLY CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENTS

- Secretary Rev. Josh Enderson presented several constitutional amendments which were made at the 2025 Churchwide Assembly. These were made to the non-required provisions of the Synod's constitution and require the upcoming synod assembly's approval before they are ratified.
- The various amendments were discussed.
- Barb Lake motioned to recommend amendments to S11.04., S7.26., S9.04., S10.05., S10.07., S10.08., S10.09., S13.40., and S13.41. for approval by the 2026 SEMN Synod Assembly.

SC26.02.04 Motion to recommend amendments to S11.04., S7.26., S9.04., S10.05., S10.07., S10.08., S10.09., S13.40., and S13.41. for approval by the 2026 SEMN Synod Assembly.

Motion approved.

COUNCILS AS LEADERS

- Vice President Dierks noted that the Councils as Leaders event was coming up on March 14 in Austin. She encouraged those attending from council to register and reminded them of Rev. Matt Larson's request for council members to assist with this event.

SYNOD ASSEMBLY

- Bishop Hassanally updated the council on plans for the upcoming Synod Assembly on May 2. She walked through the plans for speakers and scheduling.
- She reminded the council on the registration process for council members.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

- Dr. Joyce Thompson motioned to enter executive session.

SC26.02.05 Motion to enter executive session.

Motion approved.

- The council entered executive session at 10:11am to discuss changes to the roster. The following action items were taken during this session:
- Call to Specialized Ministry Through Synod Council (Needs Approval)
 - Rev. Paul Graham, On Leave to Interim Pastor at St. Olaf Student Congregation—Effective: 01/14/2026. Approved at Synod Council Meeting: 02/21/2026.
- Bishop Hassanally motioned to approve Call to Specialized Ministry Through Synod Council Roster Change for Rev. Paul Graham.

ES(SC26.02.06) Motion to approve Call to Specialized Ministry Through Synod Council Roster Change for Rev. Paul Graham.

Motion approved.

- Death
 - Rev. Gene Hasselquist, 02/07/2026.
- On Leave From Call (New—Needs Approval)
 - Rev. Peg Marose—Start Date: 12/03/2025. Approved at Synod Council Meeting: 02/21/2026.
 - Rev. Andrew (Drew) Yackel—Start Date: 12/15/2025. Approved at Synod Council Meeting: 02/21/2026.
- Bishop Hassanally motioned to approve On Leave From Call (New) Request for Rev. Peg Marose and Rev. Andrew (Drew) Yackel.

ES(SC26.02.07) Motion to approve On Leave From Call (New) Request for Rev. Peg Marose and Rev. Andrew (Drew) Yackel.

Motion approved.

- On Leave From Call-Continuation (Study—Needs Approval)
 - Rev. Dean Smith—3rd and Final Request. Approved at Synod Council Meeting: 02/21/2026.
- Bishop Hassanally motioned to approve On Leave From Call-Continuation (Study) Request for Rev. Dean Smith.

ES(SC26.02.08) Motion to approve On Leave From Call-Continuation (Study) Request for Rev. Dean Smith.

Motion approved.

- Rev. Sam Mailleue motioned to adjourn executive session.

**ES(SC26.02.09) Motion to adjourn executive session.
Motion approved.**

- The council adjourned executive session at 10:16am.

ADJOURNMENT

- Vice President Dierks declared the meeting adjourned at 10:18am.

The next meeting of the Synod Council will be TBD via Zoom.

Submitted,
Rev. Josh Enderson
Synod Council Secretary

APPROVED 03/31/2026 JE