

**ROCKY MOUNTAIN SYNOD COUNCIL
CAMINO REAL HOTEL, EL PASO, TX
April 29, 2009**

Members present:

Bishop Allan Bjornberg	Pat Holman
Vice President Linda Bobbitt	Allison Johnson
Treasurer Dennis Reynolds	John Knutson
Secretary Katherine Cruson	Jan Krakow
Kathy Armstrong	Jeff Louden
Jim Bailey	Paul Rosin
Sue Brandt	Robert Sandoval
Dave Cruson	Jeff St. Clair
Chuck Exley	Mike Muirhead
Peggy Fetchenhier	Richard Nehring
Vera Guebert-Steward	

Members absent: Chris Larson Renquist

Synod staff members present: Dan Bollman, Madelyn Busse, Jim Hytjan, Janice Ladd-Horkey, Kent Mueller, Linda Staats

Guests: Pr. Steve Loy – member of ELCA Church Council

The meeting opened Wednesday, April 29, 2009, at 4:05pm with a welcome by Vice President Linda Bobbitt followed by introductions of all attending. Vera prayed.

Assembly matters: Madelyn Busse

Theme: Miracle on the Border. People on the border live with barriers all the time. She stressed the importance of all of us being hospitable. Assembly bags were made by a women's cooperative. Volunteers are needed for assembly duties. Crosses made of barbed wire are from Carlsbad churches.

Budget: Dennis Reynolds, Treasurer

Budget adjustments. Major cuts were made in January. Seminary cuts were \$5,000 apiece. Staff changes will affect the budget. Budget changes from the budget passed in 2008 to adjustment as of today: \$480,000. May need to revisit in September for another round of budget cuts. Or Executive Committee may meet if earlier cuts are needed. Reserves may be spent down to \$200,000. If there is a windfall, the plan is to return some money to reserves. Betela Seminary and campus ministry can find ways to generate funds. Campus Ministry is challenged to re-create their ministry.

SC2009.4.1. MOTION: To present the 2010 Budget Proposal to Synod Assembly as it is stated today.

Campus Ministry

Campus ministries committee uses a granting system. A total budget is divided among the campus ministries depending on each campus's needs. Local ministries write checks for campus

pastors. Grants would not be the sum total of the budget for a campus ministry site. Synod Council wants to encourage conversations. Creative reaching out can include alumni, grant writing to other resources.

ELCA Church Council member Steve Loy:

Welcome to the Border Conference.

1. Highlights of Church Council meeting: Nov.,2008: 1st recom. and 2nd recom.
2. Highlights of Church Council meeting: Mar. 2009: 1st recom., 2nd recom., 3rd recom.
Ministry policies were approved several years ago by a majority, so it is inappropriate to impose at this time that Church Council must change the prior policies by a 2/3 vote.
4th recom. : Should there be 65 synods? Will there be geographical changes in synods?
Malaria initiative will be delayed until 2011 Churchwide Assembly.

All Mission Outreach Board grants are automatically reduced by 7%. \$400 million is the total amount for new ministries.

Churchwide staff members are extremely dedicated, experienced – go far beyond a “normal” workload.

Reports from Staff:

Bishop Bjornberg:

Staffing: One year ago there were 4 fulltime assistants to the bishop plus Kent Mueller. Now we are not replacing Madelyn’s position. Madelyn offered to contract for the Candidacy committee and First Call Continuing Education part of the portfolio if Executive Committee and bishop approved. For the rest of portfolio Bishop will take campus ministry, global mission. We are adding fulltime Youth and Family Ministry position with Linda Staats. Mrs. Staats’s salary package for 14 days a month is \$30,000 plus benefits= \$40,000 in budget. Staff travel is outside that number. She will be traveling probably in and out once or twice a month – yet to be determined. Housing – room, bath, maybe a kitchen to rent. She is not the youth pastor, but one who facilitates the ministry. She will begin July 1st.

SC2009.4.2. MOTION: To offer the position of Youth and Family Ministry to Linda Staats effective July 1st. Approved unanimously.

The treasurer and the bishop will be direct with the assembly about budget matters. Synod Council members should be at the assembly microphones to answer questions, give rational, stand up with leadership decisions.

Bishop Bjornberg’s term is up in 2012. Pastors entering their last years of tenure need to put an infrastructure in place for their successor. Attention to the process of electing a bishop will be entered into at September Synod Council meeting with assistance from Synodical Relations in ELCA. Sierra Pacific spent a year doing a synod profile, then identifying potential candidates framing answers to questions. Process needs to begin at least a year earlier. 2011 -profile become public. Building lease thru Jan. 2012. SC establish a Task Force to look at space issues. The Office of the Bishop may ask the building manager for a one-year extension so the new bishop can help with the decision process.

Healthy Leaders and Congregations

Vice President Linda Bobbitt mentioned the importance of Faith formation.

Communication within the synod:

1. Set up a social network on Ning. Small groups can be set up also.
2. Meet with all boards and committees: This has begun with the Congregational Ministry board, Campus Ministry chairman, Church & Society Board facilitator. Relationships are important. Communication has been good through staff; relationships between groups is needed. What will be relationship with Synod Council? Linda proposes we have a “Committee Meeting Day” in the fall. We need to draft an agenda, look at constitution “limitations,” there could be tables of faith formation, justice, etc., to gain an understanding of what other boards and committees are doing. Synod Council approved Linda mentioning the Committee Meeting Day at Synod Assembly. Conference of Deans: the deans also desire to support communication, connectedness. We might consider creating a document—“Relational Agreement,” which articulates the working protocols with one another, defining the ministry of the dean. If this document is approved, changes to constitution may be approved at 2010 synod assembly.

Synod Council decided in January to not bring a resolution to synod assembly about our priorities. At Synod Assembly John Knutson will move to affirm the priorities.

Jim Hytjan announced that Prince of Peace, Casper WY, voted to negotiate with Assembly of God in a land and building swap which would add several thousand square feet to their space.

SC2009.4.3. MOTION: To approve SC minutes of January 23-24, 2009. Approved.

Small group discussions; groups for Faith Formation, Healthy Congregations, Connections:

1. What is the group to do? What are we looking for?
2. How are you going to find out what is happening in our synod?
3. Who will act as chair of the little group?
4. How will we communicate with Synod Council members not present?

Next meeting, September 18-19:

Role of Synod Council as liaison

Begin discussion of the process of electing a bishop in 2012.

Building lease thru Jan. 2012: Establish a Task Force to look at space issues.

Synod constitution changes: 1) approved by Churchwide Assembly 2) suggested by synod task forces, relationships with boards, committee, and deans.

For this meeting, present options, instead of filling a void. Have a focus ahead of time in order to focus the discussion.

Closing prayer by AB.

The meeting adjourned at 6pm.

Katherine Cruson, Secretary

Next meetings: September 18 – 19, 2009; Jan. 15-16, 2010