

**ROCKY MOUNTAIN SYNOD COUNCIL  
SYNOD OFFICE  
DENVER, COLORADO  
September 17-18, 2010**

Members present:

Bishop Allan Bjornberg	Doug Cook
Vice President Linda Bobbitt (via videoconference)	Dave Cruson
Treasurer Dennis Reynolds	Chuck Exley
Secretary Katherine Cruson	Peggy Fetchenhier
Kathy Armstrong	Dana Peterson
Jim Bailey	Linda Schlitt
Sue Brandt	Harold Stitt

Members absent: None

Synod staff members present: Cheryl Almquist (Friday), Dan Bollman (Friday), Jim Hytjan, Janice Ladd-Horkey, Kent Mueller, Linda Staats (Friday), Willie Hobbs (Friday)

Synod staff members absent: Madelyn Busse

Guests: Pr. Steve Loy (videoconference on Friday)

Opening worship led by Bishop Bjornberg based on I Corinthians 13 and including believing, teaching, confessing the faith. The members of Synod Council were installed by Bishop Bjornberg.

The meeting opened Friday, Sept. 17, 2010, at 9:35am with a welcome by Bishop Bjornberg.

**Report from ELCA Church Council: Pr. Steve Loy, member of ELCA Church Council** via videoconference.

Synod Council received written highlights from April 2010 Church Council which contained Revision of "Ministry Policies," Revision of "Definitions and Guidelines for Discipline," and Revision of "Vision and Expectations." ELCA had \$76.5 million revenue in 2009. 79.1% of the total revenue was from "mission support," \$65 million down to \$59 million from 2008 to 2009. ELCA members show continued generosity to Disaster Appeal.

**Bishop: review of scope of Synod Council work**

Bishop mentioned the diversity of the synod. According to the Rocky Mountain Synod (RMS) Constitution, Synod Council is a policy setting entity, not a managerial entity. RMS Constitution Review (comparing ELCA, RMS and congregation constitutions) and a chart of Synod Council Duties were handed out. For later in the meeting, council members should be aware of \*C6.05 "terminate its relationship" concerning congregations leaving the ELCA.

**The Budget Development Process: Dennis Reynolds**

By early November Dennis & Cheryl Almquist meet to begin the process. This year they will try to have committee members as part of the budget planning. The Executive Committee presents a budget to Synod Council in January. It is then presented to Synod Assembly for approval. The budget year is Feb. 1 to Jan. 31. The 2011 budget is approved in 2010. Committees, etc. can

present ideas for 2011 and 2012 budgets. Dennis suggested making a list of unfunded requests, which someone could fund separately. About 15% of the budget is salaries. A total amount is budgeted for salaries. 50% of RMS revenue from congregations goes to ELCA.

### **Task Forces, Boards, Committees – Katherine Cruson**

Election to Executive Committee tomorrow – a person may self-nominate or nominate another with permission. There are two two-year terms and two one-year terms. The four officers also serve on the Executive Committee. The appointments needed to Synod Council, synod boards, committees, task forces and workgroups were listed. (See Saturday page 5 for lists of volunteers.) Recommendations for appointments will be appreciated for these vacancies:  
Synod Council: Metro East lay male, Utah lay female (try to find a young adult for either)  
Mission Outreach Board: New Mexico lay or clergy (to replace Robert Sandoval)  
Congregation and Leadership Health: Wyoming lay or clergy  
Campus Ministry: Border lay or clergy, Utah lay or clergy  
Congregational Ministry Board: Utah lay or clergy  
Consultation Committee: 2 lay  
Committee on Discipline: 4 lay and 2 clergy  
Global Mission Committee: 3 lay or clergy (there are 1 lay and 2 clergy on the committee)

### **Finance Report: Dennis Reynolds**

Self-sustaining items are not included in this report (such as World Hunger, Theological Conference, Synod Assembly). Total revenue as of August 31, 2010: \$1,704,096. Total expenses as of August 31: \$1,742,887. The Balance Sheet lists assets of \$1,194,397.27.

Bishop introduced the staff and told their job descriptions: Cheryl, Janice, Kent, Willie.

### **Vice-President Linda Bobbitt** (via videoconference):

What does “the synod” mean? What is the purpose of the synod and synod council? (VPA)  
Synod Council works with three types of ministry teams: Oversight, Catalyst, and Self-Organizing. She encouraged members to sign up as a liaison for a group they are passionate about or interested in. Synod Council is trying to build relationships with committees. With the tight budget, we need to look at several ways of raising money to fund special projects. Work groups are for short-term projects with Council members and sometimes additional members.

### **“Working Rules for Synod Council”**

Show up, listen, read material, ask questions, have fun, learn from one another, share faith stories, speak your mind, seek advice from others, be aware of ministries throughout the synod, support one another – camaraderie, discuss concerns/problems, take turns, the function of the group is communicating well back and forth—not broadcasting, avoid “group think”

Synod Council work groups:

1. Lease Study – Dennis Reynolds: Re-negotiating the RMS office site lease seems timely. Written report. 10 year lease was signed in 2002, but could be re-negotiated.

### **MOTION:**

**SC2010.09.01. RMS Treasurer Dennis Reynolds and Jerry Rehkow be in conversation**

**with the management of the current office space to renegotiate a lease, with the intention of entering into the most advantageous agreement, extending the lease for 2 to 5 years. Approved.**

The lease must be approved by Synod Council in January, 2011.

**MOTION:**

**SC2010.09.02. Synod Council appoint an ongoing Synod Office Site Task Force to continue to consider future possibilities for when the lease expires. Approved.**

2. Telling the Story – Kathy Armstrong
  - a. Long term plan: by 2011 a short video will be produced about each ministry, including devotions, to give to each congregation. Financial and technical arrangements are being investigated.
  - b. Short term plan: gathering information about ministries to go on Landscape, synod website and YouTube.
  
3. Bishop Election Process: Bishop Election Design Team

Background information about the workgroup was shared by Bishop Allan. A concern was stated about February being early for congregations to elect their voting members. Fall 2010: how do we choose the call committee? If the process is approved, the Executive Committee and bishop will gather call committee names, then the committee will be approved by Synod Council via teleconference. A suggestion is to change “Call Committee” to another name, because the procedure is not quite like a congregation call committee. Gifts of process and systems are necessary for this committee. Sept. – Nov. 2<sup>nd</sup> sentence: “voting member of the synod”  
Feb. 2012: Can we legally not allow nominations from the floor? Bishop will check with ELCA. Synod Council agreed it would be best not to have nominations from the floor. Bishop Allen should be used as a resource, but not be totally involved in the process.

**MOTION:**

**SC2010.09. 03. Adopt the general process for the Bishop Election Process as outlined in this draft. Approved.**

**Report of the Bishop: Allan Bjornberg**

Written report. Few congregations are in conflict. Valley, Denver, the property is under synodical administration. Family of Christ, (also called Familia de Cristo and Avondale) is also under synodical administration. RMS is preparing to list both properties for sale. Congregations leaving or contemplating leaving: As of Sept. 2<sup>nd</sup> 10,400 congregations were listed in ELCA: 529 had taken first vote to leave: 362 passed, 167 failed. 236 have taken 2<sup>nd</sup> vote: 222 passed; 14 failed. Three former American Lutheran Churches (ALC) congregations in RMS have left the ELCA: Bethel in Colorado Springs, CO, Faith in Security, CO and Lutheran Church of the Cross, Evergreen, CO.

St. Luke’s, Colorado Springs, CO took a second vote to leave, which was almost unanimous; ELCA legal counsel recommends, “That St. Luke’s, Colorado Springs, CO, be released upon notification from ELCA Evangelical Outreach and Congregation Mission that there is a

satisfactory separation agreement regarding the covenant for repayment of \$40,467 in Mission Partnership Support funds.” (See SC2010.09.09.)

Our Savior, Roy, Utah: some members of the congregation questioned the process of the vote. Three visits from the Office of the Bishop have occurred. In late August the 2<sup>nd</sup> vote was 2/3 to leave. Letters from others members request to remain in ELCA: Synodically Authorized Worshiping Community (SAWC) status is a possibility for those members. (See SC2010.09.10.) Faith, Castle Rock, CO will take their 2<sup>nd</sup> vote Sept 26. Abiding Hope and St. Philip in Littleton and Joy in Parker may explore creating a SAWC on the west side of Castle Rock.

Candidacy Committee recommends reinstatement of Dale Pohland to the clergy roster; he is serving as a chaplain with Hospice Care of Boulder.

**MOTION:**

**SC2010.09.04. Extend a call to specialized ministry to Dale Poland to serve as chaplain at HospiceCare of Boulder and Broomfield Counties. Approved.**

**MOTION:**

**SC2010.09.05. Move to Executive Session. Approved.**

**MOTION:**

**SC2010.09.06. Move out of Executive Session. Approved.**

Bishop Bjornberg is chairman of the ELCA Conference of Bishops. North American Lutheran Church was formed for congregations unhappy with the ELCA. Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Services (LIRS) Director will be in the synod office Wednesday.

**Dan Bollman:**

Written report: Currently there are the lowest numbers of clergy vacancies. Outdoor Ministry – Sky Ranch is a vibrant, vital place of ministry.

**Saturday, Sept. 18**

Opening Worship was led by Pr. Jim Hytjan using Psalm 93.

**Staff Reports:**

**Linda Staats:** written report

**Kent Mueller:** written report

Video-streaming (one-way broadcasting) will be explored for more communication connections. Skype is one-to-one. Facebook and twitter links are on e-Connection. Some proprietary videoconferencing material is from the synod office.

**Jim Hytjan:**

His written report told of a way of engaging in conversation with congregations – sharing visions and ideas and programs.

First Bethany Evangelical Lutheran Church, Bannock St., Denver, CO needs 4 Synod Council members plus some congregation members to study some maintenance and management of the property and future use, including replacing stained glass. Harold Stitt volunteered to serve.

**Lutheran Youth Organization (LYO):**

The youth will focus on being advocates for the Malaria Initiative past the church, into the community. “Pocket LYO’s” may be started in areas other than the Front Range. They plan to add \$1.50 to registration fee for youth gatherings to get money for LYO travel and national network participation. The Sky Ranch retreat in November will encourage youth and young adults to develop leadership in their congregation.

**MOTON:**

**SC2010.09.07. Move to elect by acclamation Linda Schlitt and Kathy Armstrong to one-year terms, and Chuck Exley and Miguel Hernandez to two-year terms on the Synod Council Executive Committee. Approved.**

**Liaisons:**

Lutheran Advocacy Ministry NM – Jim Bailey  
Lutheran Advocacy Ministry CO-  
Congregation and Leadership Health – Doug Cook  
Global Missions -  
Congregational Ministries Board -

**Work groups:**

Audit – Linda Schlitt and Dennis; Dennis will contact Greg Bickle  
Lease - Dave Cruson, Dennis Reynolds, Kent Mueller  
Policy Review (personnel, investment, etc.) - Dennis, Dave. Kathy Armstrong, Linda Schlitt, and Miguel Hernandez may know some people who may serve--give names to Dennis, Janice or Bishop.  
Bishop “Call Committee” (Election Process Work Group): Katherine Cruson

**CREDO:** Linda Bobbitt, Doug Cook, Bishop Allan, Chris Adams, and Peggy Fetchenhier attended a three-day event at PLTS about theological reflection.

**Secretary’s Report: Katherine Cruson****MOTION:**

**SC 2010.09.08. Adopt minutes of May 26, 2010 with one correction: p. 3 line 9 add “Vice President Linda Bobbitt made detailed budgeted personnel costs available to Synod Council members.” Approved.**

Suggested Synod Constitution Revisions were presented. **Consensus that most of the presented revisions be presented to Synod Assembly. Consensus that corrections of**

**typographical and grammatical errors and numbering changes may be included.** A summary will be given to Synod Council members before being sent to congregations six months before Synod Assembly.

Permission and procedure for email voting should be specified in a bylaw or a continuing resolution. RMS will wait for the ELCA recommended wording, which may be brought to 2011 Churchwide Assembly.

**MOTION:**

**SC2010.09.09. St. Luke's, Colorado Springs, CO, be released upon notification from ELCA Evangelical Outreach and Congregation Mission that there is a satisfactory separation agreement regarding the covenant for repayment of \$40,467 in Mission Partnership Support funds. Approved.**

**MOTION:**

**SC2010.09.10. To postpone consideration of the request from Our Savior Lutheran Church, Roy, Utah to withdraw from the ELCA, until the January 2011 Synod Council meeting. Approved.**

**MOTION:**

**SC2010.09.11. Move the previous question. Approved.**

SC2010.09.10 approved.

This action implies Synod Council is giving serious consideration to the request to leave.

**MOTION:**

**SC2010.09.12. Move to change the meeting schedule for the fall (September) and winter (January) Synod Council meetings to Friday 12:30pm to 6:30pm and Saturday 9am to 1:30pm. Approved.**

Meeting adjourned at 11:56am.

Katherine Cruson, Secretary

Janice Ladd-Horkey, Recorder