

Synod Council Meeting

February 2, 2019

Present: Bishop Gonia, VP Earline Bohling, Jody Brammer-Hoelter, Dennis Reynolds, Diana Biggs, Todd Herreid, Rev. Terry Schjang, Ray Ferry, Susan Mitchell, Debra Dew, Rev. Dave Palma-Ruwe, Rev. Julie Brooks, Terry Cole, Rev. Matthew Weber, Jeff Fairfax, Terry Cole, Rev. Sara Wirth, Rev. Reba Kiger-Kolash, Amelia Decker, Jay Voth

Absent: Maggie Neiberger

Guests: Deacon Erin Power, Rev. Leslie Welton, Ruth Hoffman, Rev. Matt Barnhouse, Rev. Sarah Moening, Rev. Kent Mueller, Janice Ladd-Horkey, Tina Kvitek

The meeting opened at 9:30 a.m. with worship led by Pr. Leslie Welton and Pr. Matthew Weber.

SC 02.19.08 Motion was made by Diana Biggs and seconded by Terry Schjang to approve the minutes as amended. The motion passed.

SC 02.19.09 Motion was made by Dennis Reynolds and seconded by Terry Cole to approve renewal of on leave from call status for Rev. Nathan Blum. Bishop Jim would like to have a conversation with Pr. Nathan about his continuing openness to a call. Our approval must be ratified by the Conference of Bishops. **The motion passed.**

Synod Assembly 2019

Erin Power

All advance material is available on the website. Council members are to register themselves. Janice will make hotel reservations for lay leaders on Council; rostered leaders should make their own hotel reservations. Congregations will be reimbursed for the additional night required for Council meeting prior to Assembly.

Ray Ferry volunteered to be the Council 'wrangler' at Assembly. Council meets Thurs. afternoon May 2, with dinner together that evening. If necessary, we will meet Friday morning as well. We will invite the Deans to join us for lunch on Friday.

Jeff Fairfax may be able to use the 15-passenger van, if we are able to coordinate a meeting spot.

Educate, Equip & Enact

Bishop Gonia

Ministry Excellence Fund update

There are 432 members on the rosters; 225 on the retirement roster, 207 on the active roster. Of the active, 189 are pastors and 18 are deacons. On retirement, 210 are pastors and 15 are deacons.

Ministry Excellence Fund is available to active ministers and candidates. 81 received grants. (35-40%)

Stewardship for All Seasons

\$190,000 spent to support this program. The grant paid \$3,220 for congregations (instead of \$9,000)

2 cohorts have completed Stewardship for All Seasons: 14 congregations in the first, 18 in the second.

The 3rd cohort will be beginning shortly with 27, possibly 29 congregations participating

25 rostered members have received scholarship to take the CLU course on executive skills.

20 spots are available for free coaching; 19 have signed up.

Messiah Mountain

Bishop Gonia

Messiah Congregation has voted to give the property to RMS. 2 teams have been working on a plan for taking stewardship of this property and developing a ministry there. The ministry will be focused on adult faith formation, particularly retreats, but will be available for individuals as well. The team hopes to expand awareness of the property to the larger faith community. The final structure for management, and the extent of renovation is still being determined by the teams. The teams still need to have a conversation with Messiah about their financial involvement in getting the property 'marketable'. An Advisory Board will be created to take over management, and with ultimate responsibility resting with Council.

Dennis reported that we have a title report, and a title commitment is available for \$1,100. A phase one environmental study (record scan and risk assessment) has been completed, and does not show anything of concern. Based on county records the property's assessed value is \$650,000. A realtor said the value, if sold, is much greater. A 'home inspection' is scheduled to determine what issues need to be addressed immediately.

Jeff reports that the bunkhouse is usable, but not beautiful. It was last renovated in 2004. The Lodge needs more updates.

SC 02.19.10 Motion was made by Jay Voth and seconded by Susan Mitchell to receive the property from Messiah English Lutheran Church, known as Messiah Community Church, subject to inspection findings acceptable to both parties. The motion passed.

Strategic Plan 2.0/ Feasibility Study

Bishop Gonia

If he could change the names of the MRAs, they would be "Identity", "Collaboration", "Leadership" and "Innovation." A fifth MRA has been added: "Growing in Generosity"

Bishop Jim provided the current iteration of the Strategic Plan, showing where we will focus our energy.

He presented information about a 'feasibility study' for a capital campaign, being conducted by GSB, Evan Moilan's firm. The study includes creating a presentation about potential areas of support, individual interviews and surveys, intending to determine whether there is capacity in the RMS to have a successful capital campaign.

SC 02.19.11 Motion was made by Terry Cole and seconded by Ray Ferry to accept the working draft of the Strategic Plan, as presented.

Discussion followed about re-examining staffing at the Office of the Bishop. Council members perceive that the staff is stretched very thin. If our goals include adding programs or responsibilities, our staff may be at the breaking point. We may need to add staff before adding programs.

Debra suggested that we could use MMRC as a site for leadership training. Amelia suggested that our advocacy efforts include community organizing to leverage people power. Ruth is concerned that using the term "capital" campaign may set up unanticipated expectations.

The motion passed.

Susan Mitchell offered to lead devotions at our May meeting, and is asking for someone to co-lead with her.

The meeting adjourned at 11:50 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Jody Brammer-Hoelter